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## Madness or a method? : modernisation through bureaucratisation and precarisation

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## Madness or a method?

### Modernisation through bureaucratisation and precarisation

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*Not for school but for life we learn*

Seneca the Younger

#### 1. Introduction

In July 2014, the Polish Parliament amended the previously amended Law on Higher Education. Interestingly, after three years of the validity of the second version of the act, it was decided to change the principles of scientists' promotion, for it had turned out that at this time only four persons succeeded in obtaining titular professorships on the previous terms (*Awanse naukowe...*, 2014), which are unable to be obtained by those officials of the Ministry and related institutions who had got their professorships before. Now therefore, in the set of requirements eligible for professorship, conjunctions *and* were changed to *and/or*. This does not change the fact that the already initiated procedures are continued in accordance with the – much smoother – provisions of the first and second versions of the act.

In the eligibility criteria for habilitation, the requirement to have in scientific achievements 'a work published in whole or substantial part' or 'a mono-thematic cycle of publications' was changed to the requirement to have a cycle of publication 'thematically interrelated' (*Awanse naukowe...*, 2014). The latter regulation gives chances, even though modest, to achieve habilitation on the basis of interdisciplinary research rather than merely within a single discipline – as defined by the Ministerial bureaucracy.

In the eligibility criteria for the Ph.D., the requirement to have in the scientific achievements at least one book or a publication in a reviewed scientific journal of at least national range was changed to a journal indicated in the Ministerial list (*Awanse naukowe...*, 2014). This means the substitution of a quasi-substantive criterion for a bureaucratic one. On the other hand, however, reports from international scientific conferences were withdrawn from the scientific achievements for more enigmatic 'materials' from conferences (*ibidem*).

## 2. Multiplication of the professorial population

In December 2014, in one faculty of the Rzeszów University, a meeting of the Faculty Council took place devoted to the application of an associate professor for the titular professorship. The application and the candidate's achievements were reviewed and opinions were given by four reviewers (*Protokół...*, 2014). The candidate indicated in his output 90 publications (including four monographs), wherein a half of the output was achieved after the habilitation; it can thus be concluded that the habilitation had been obtained on the base of the embarrassingly poor output of 45 publications. The candidate's Hirsch index ( $h=2$ ) was not mentioned in either the application or opinions. The reviewers assessed the candidate's organisational achievements positively, as well as – even though somewhat less enthusiastically – his didactic achievements, while the assessment of the scientific achievements was much worse.

The first reviewer assessed the achievements critically by pointing out the candidate's lack of criticism, the reporting style of his publications and above all the lack of 'what is the core of scientific work [...] – building generalisations' (*Protokół...*, 2014: 2). Nonetheless, the reviewer assessed the candidate's formal application positively by explaining during the public discussion that many existing holders of the titular professorships have even more embarrassing scientific 'achievements', there are therefore no reasons to begin cleansing Polish science with this particular candidate. In other words, the applicant should be given a professorship out of pity or kindness.

The second reviewer stated that 'the candidate to the title holds *fairly* [italics ZR] numerous and valuable' scientific achievements (*Protokół...*, 2014: 5). The reviewer also expressed a positive opinion of the application.

The third reviewer presented an ambiguous assessment of the candidate's scientific achievements by indicating the non-scientific style of the candidate's writing, 'absolutely uncritical acceptance by the author of the facts and assessments' (*Sprawozdanie...*, 2014: 8) and the fact that his writing includes 'pure facts and descriptiveness' (*ibidem*). Despite this, the reviewer expressed a positive opinion of the candidate's application.

The fourth reviewer fiercely criticised the candidate's academic achievements by indicating their casual nature, the lack of the candidate's insight, their imitative qualities, the 'fragility of the analytical layer' (*Protokół...*, 2014: 10) in his works, a general sense of vagueness, narration which is 'far from clear and precise' (*ibidem*: 11), the non-scientific and journalistic style of his publications, a lack of precision, the use of 'a colloquial language, deviating far from academic standards' (*ibidem*) and even lingual nonchalance, including satire and school formulations. The reviewer indicated that within the candidate's overall output there are no publications in reviewed nationwide journals and that his scientific achievements are primarily composed of post-conference publications, which have 'no elements of scientific analysis' (*Protokół...*, 2014: 11). It should thus be stated here that the candidate's publication achievements would not give him grounds to apply for the degree of doctor on the basis of the current regulations.

Further on the reviewer stated that many of the candidate's post-habilitation articles include 'mere summaries of public [...] documents [...] while others [...] have a character of journalistic expression' (*Protokół...*, 2014: 12). The reviewer therefore expressed a negative opinion of the candidate's application by indicating that his publication achievements after the habilitation are 'definitely too modest to be regarded as a sufficient basis for awarding the title of professor' (*ibidem*: 13) and even 'burdened with [...] a luggage of methodological and workshop errors that may provide a basis for' questioning if, in the post-habilitation period, 'elements of a regress in the scientific development of the assessed candidate did not appear' (*ibidem*). The

reviewer indicated both the candidate's scientific immaturity and his hurry to catch the end of the procedure with the old rules of the act before the provisions tightened the criteria by which one obtains a professorship.

After considering the arguments of the reviewers, the Commission for the Assessment of the Scientific Achievements of the Candidate opted to grant the title of professor to the candidate despite the fact that, in a public discussion of the application, a member of the Commission indicated the candidate's ignorance of scientific standards. In a voice from the floor, a question was raised whether it is appropriate to grant a professorship to a person who has no publications indexed in the Web of Science or even in nationally-reviewed journals. The Faculty Council answered this question in a secret ballot, in which there were 75% of positive votes, 11% negative and 14% abstentions.

Generally, therefore, what counts in the procedures granting the title of professor is the formal correctness of the application while the quality of the scientific achievements is meaningless. The Ministry is interested in the growth in the population of scientists rather than in the quality of science, and scientific institutions are interested in such a resolution since they are accounted for on that basis (Niesiołowski-Spanò 2014; Śliwerski 2014). The members of the Faculty Council understand it perfectly. The inevitable result is – against the Ministry's vain declarations – a toleration of 'the ways to learn and promote shortcuts' (Śliwerski 2014), i.e. a lowering of the scientific level and a depreciation of the titular professorship and, as a result, demoralisation of the youth and the decline in the prestige of science, to which its members seem to contribute without any considerable moral dilemmas. As Stanisław Lem pointed out: 'Today everybody can be a professor in Poland [...] but this appalling quantity does not want to transform into quality' (Szubartowicz 2005).

Against Ministerial declarations, the parameterisation of the achievements of candidates to subsequent scientific degrees does not lead to its objectification but reinforces its discretion, only shifting – slightly – a form of the discretion from the candidates' friendly assessment within respective faculty councils to the parameters determined arbitrarily by – frequently essentially incompetent – ministerial officials (Czachorowski 2014, Hudzik 2014). Colleagues from faculty councils therefore make

decisions advantageous to candidates for purely social reasons in order to maintain or improve the candidates' well-being but often also that of the faculty members. This especially applies to cases of poor scientific outcomes of faculty members equal to those of the given candidate (Hartman 2015). What causes anxiety is candidates with achievements well above the average, simply because this may cause very unpleasant consequences in the form of the increased scientific level of candidates, which would not be dealt with well by the mediocre majority.

It turns out that 43% of full-time employed scientific workers in Poland publish nothing at all, they thus can be assumed not to work scientifically (Kamiński 2014). Half (50%) of 'scientific production' is made by 10% of scholars (ibidem). The systemic regulations promote the former at the expense of the latter by providing hardly any tools to eliminate non-productive individuals from academia and by offering very weak tools of a financial support to leaders. The whole mechanism is based on the vulgar socialist perception of scientific institutions as ones of social security. The Ministry's ideology of the efficiency of the current production of the labour force is no alternative because it does not apply to the quality of 'scientific production'; what it does apply to is – at best – a formal control of 'academic teachers' rather than scientists.

### 3. Ideology

The bureaucratic creativity of ministerial officials grows constantly. In September 2014 they proposed a further complication to the assessment of the scholars system, referred to as the 'indices of scientific excellence', by its differentiation in individual disciplines or 'areas' (*Stanowisko...*, 2014). In the bureaucratic system 'all kinds of regulations are needed in order for the bureaucracy to do its work. They invent all sorts of controls, regulate them and adjust everything possible. [...] When adjusted[,] it is really fine [...] – for the bureaucracy' (Rajca 2014). What is required within the bureaucratic system is ideology rather than reason (ibidem).

Currently, the official ideology is peripheral neoliberalism. It is based on two assumptions: (1) the model of dependent development, involving imitation of forms accepted in the core countries, abstracting the norms of the core (Rykiel 2011), and (2)

the recognition of the university as an enterprise, one which is to produce a labour force capable of immediate employment in the semi-peripheral economy. From the former assumption comes the myth of a peripherality of Polish science and the minor productivity of Polish scholars (Wagner 2014), as well as the belief in the beneficial impact of commercialisation as the way out of peripherality. Commercialisation generates 'a model of academic Fordism whose indicator[s are] parameterisation and standardisation' (Śliwerski 2014). Low cost-absorption deepens the peripheralisation of Polish science since education is treated in terms of the improvement of the process of the 'production' of graduates on the labour market. 'For the government this is possible due to shortening the time and cost of this "production"' (ibidem) while forcing public universities into self-financing limits the possibility of the development of science and its international competitiveness. Commercialisation fits the latter assumption, whose implementation is aimed at 'practical teaching' at the university level and the cooperation of science with business.

Incidentally, this is consistent with the spirit and letter of the documents of the Bologna Process, in which the nature of the functioning of universities, i.e. making science, disappeared while academic quantity is to be identified with suitability for permanent employment (Klimczak, n.d.). 'It results directly from the Bolognan documents that a priority for universities is to educate the competitive graduate on labour markets, i.e. mobile or easily able to adapt to the new situation. These terms, belonging, after all, not to the discourse of knowledge, but to economics, are to be the new pillars of universities' (ibidem: 7). In the documents analysed by Anna Klimczak (n.d.), the term *mobility* appears 38 times, *attractiveness* and *attractive* – 19 times, *competitiveness* – 16 times, *employability* – 14 times, *intellectual* – only once while terms *thinking*, *critical thinking*, *independent thinking*, *intellect* and *intellectualism* do not appear at all in the documents on European universities! In the light of these documents, the university does not aspire to educate intellectuals but 'socially and culturally well adapted individuals' (Klimczak, n.d.: 10).

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that, in September 2014, the Minister of Science and Higher Education expressed the opinion that 'if science is to be the driving force of the economy, it must be useful' (*Polski Kongres...*, 2014). It clearly results

from this enunciation that science per se is useless, an opinion that sounds odd coming from the mouth of the minister of science, or else a full professor. It also coincides with the slogan known to the present author from the times of his activity in a students academic circle in the 1960s: 'With socially useful work we serve the Party and the socialist Fatherland'. Times, however, have changed and it is why the minister added that 'persons who leave the walls of the university can then be employers and may have ideas how to change higher schools. Therefore they should be included in the work of universities' (*Polski Kongres...*, 2014).

#### **4. *Doctor horroris causa***

The Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw, eagerly availed itself of this incentive. It hurriedly awarded a Ph.D. to the president of the Business Center Club. A concept of the dissertation was presented at a seminar in December 2013. The concept was positively appraised on 18 December, the reviewer pointed out, however, 'a scanty list of references and a vagueness of the methodological proposals' (Kublik 2014c). On 26 February 2014, at the request of the dean, the Faculty Council opened the Ph.D. A month later, on 26 March, the candidate had already submitted the written work (Kublik 2014c). Then a seven-member doctoral committee was appointed. On 1 April, the first reviewer refused to write his review. On 23 April, another reviewer was thus appointed who submitted his review on 20 May. The third reviewer submitted his review on 1 June. On 10 June the commission for doctoral dissertations committed the dissertation to the defence, and the public defence took place on 30 June (Kublik 2014c). The whole procedure thus lasted four months. 'To write the dissertation, from the presentation of its conspectus, took the same amount of time. This is an unprecedented pace' (Kublik 2014c).

The candidate's doctoral dissertation showed no signs of scientific work (Kublik 2014c), including 'less than 50 pages of a low-quality essay plus as many again in worthless "recommendations"' (Nowak 2014b) and 'some scanned data sets with no source indicated' (Kublik 2014c). The essay was supplemented by 'annexes including [...] extracts from the statutes [...] of the institution' (ibidem) directed by the candidate. The latter admitted that he did not carry out any research for his dis-



sertation but merely had 604 conversations (Kublik 2014c; Nowak 2014b) because he 'has no experience in constructing scientific works' (Nowak 2014b) and 'as a practitioner, he recognised it makes no sense to deal with literature' (ibidem). The references placed at the end of the dissertation were accidental, including items not referred to in the text (ibidem). This work does not meet the criteria of 'the doctoral dissertation [and] generally should not be considered as such' (Kublik 2014c).

The reviewers pointed out the candidate's serious methodological shortcomings (Nowak 2014b), and observers noted its platitudes (Żakowski 2014). Even worse, during the public defence, at which a participant noted the candidate's 'buffoonian tomfoolery' (Nowak 2014b), the latter 'could not answer to the point any of the questions [asked by] reviewers [or] the public' (Nowak 2014b). Apparently he did not understand the questions (ibidem). His dissertation was of the level of a B.A. thesis from a parochial college (Nowak 2014b; Śmigiel 2014). The acceptance of this work as a base for giving a doctorate in the most prestigious university in Poland can be thus recognised not only as grotesque but as a profanation of the entire university ethos (Nowak 2014b).

This case demonstrates the current mechanisms for granting academic degrees and titles to businessmen and 'independent experts' (Nowak 2014b). It exposes both the intellectual level of Polish businessmen and the dubious intellectual power of the ideology of the rapprochement of the university to business (Nowak 2014b). Not only is the embarrassing scientific level of the Ph.D. in question, so too are the overt and embarrassing conflicts of interest of the supervisor, reviewers and the Faculty (Kublik 2014c). The candidate is a member of the Council of Entrepreneurship of the Faculty of Management. The aim of the Council is to arrange orders for research to the Faculty, internships to students and jobs to graduates. In this faculty, the doctorate should not be available to the candidate who, in turn, should not have applied for it (Żakowski 2014). The supervisor of the Ph.D. is a co-founder of the Business Center Club and the long-time chairman of its board, i.e. a colleague of the candidate who is the president (ibidem). The supervisor should not have taken on this function (Kublik 2014c). Contrary to the provisions, the chairmanship of the doctoral committee was entrusted to a professor not employed at the University of Warsaw as his

main job (Kublik 2014c). One of the appointed reviewers refused to review the work because of his incompetence in the field, the Faculty Council therefore appointed another reviewer of the work in management who is actually a specialist in optoelectronics; interestingly, however, he had already reviewed dissertations in the social sciences and the humanities (Kublik 2014c). Needless to say, the review by the latest reviewer was friendly (*ibidem*).

The Dean and the Faculty Council should know about all these formal and ethical obstacles, for their job is, *inter alia*, to 'teach the future leaders of the Polish economy the standards of the civilised world' (Żakowski 2014). Members of the Faculty Council are, in turn, expected to observe the principles of transparency and equal opportunities and to avoid conflicts of interest rather than promote them along with nepotism (*ibidem*). The Faculty Council and the supervisor, however, 'wished to honour his colleague, friend and sponsor' (Kublik 2014c). They did not want to harm him, wishing to retain him among themselves as a sponsor (*ibidem*). It is therefore not surprising that the widely and publicly ridiculed Ph.D. was recognised by its supervisor and reviewers as meeting the requirements of the doctoral dissertation. As a result, however, a 'great harm' (Kublik 2014c) was inflicted on the candidate by exposing him to such criticism.

Worse still, 'when the scandal broke, no stakeholder reacted' (Żakowski 2014). The candidate did not apply for the cancellation of his Ph.D., the supervisor 'did not try to explain anything, the dean did not convene a press conference to officially apologise, the Faculty Council did not convene an extraordinary' meeting (*ibidem*), the Council of Entrepreneurship was silent on the compromise of its members, and the BCC - of its president (Żakowski 2014). The University and the Ministry were also silent, pretending that nothing had happened (*ibidem*). The impression was therefore growing that it was neither a mistake nor awkwardness but 'a manifestation of the - accepted - pathological norm, which happened to be revealed, shocking others' (Żakowski 2014). It was not a shame, but a horror.

It is hard to believe that this is an isolated case. Much, if not all of it, indicates conscious violation of rules, regulations and norms as in: 'the choice of a friendly supervisor, reviewers from outside of the discipline [...] and the incredible pace [at

which it was conducted]’ (Kublik 2014d). Courtesy (‘humanitarian’) reviews and opinions abound in Polish science and the scientific milieu ‘tolerates or does not combat effectively enough unethical actions like negative reviews with positive conclusions, unreliable reviews or dissertations with conflicts of interests’ (Niesiołowski-Spanò 2014).

The positive side of this question is the obligatory open access to works for the scientific degree, which allows for successful social control of the production of work of those aspiring to be scientific. This opportunity was taken advantage of by the participants from the University of Warsaw, who organised a public reading of the businessman’s dissertation (Żakowski 2014) and who categorised it as ‘a doctorate-like product’ (Śmigiel 2014).

Fortunately, the informal social control turned out to be successful. Eventually, the Faculty Council did not accept the defended doctoral dissertation as the basis for granting a Ph.D. to the candidate (*Szef BCC...*, 2014). The Council acknowledged that journalism is not a sufficient basis for a Ph.D. and that ‘the economic activist is not a scientist’ (Kublik 2014d). 72% of the members of the Council voted against recognition of the dissertation as the basis for granting the degree of doctor, 8% were for, 11% abstained and 8% of votes were invalid (Kublik 2014b). The businessman regarded this decision as unfair, arguing that the professors were unduly pressured by the media (*ibidem*).

In mid-October the case was commented on by the Minister who recalled, in his letter to the rectors, that the ‘Code of ethics of the academic worker’ has held true since 2012, in which it is noted that ‘reviewers and advisers “should refuse to participate in the assessment process in all those cases when there is a conflict of interest between them and the assessed person”’ (Kublik 2014b). Paradoxically, the debate about the quality of scientific work and ethics in science has been revived (Kublik 2014c), including issues of standards, criteria, norms and values rather than merely just the competitiveness and efficiency of such work. However, it is feared that these facts and, especially, the awareness of the relationships between them, will reach the governmental level all too slowly. The belief that the case of the businessman ‘should show the community that such behaviour will no longer be accepted’ (Kublik 2014d),

seems somewhat naive, especially far away from the metropolises. It is also difficult to assume that unethical behaviour will disappear simply because 'another code of ethics' (Niesiołowski-Spanò 2014) has been published.

### 5. The production of the labour force

Meanwhile the vision of the university as a producer of the labour force for the current needs of the semi-peripheral labour market is in good heart. Another businessperson indicates (Bochniarz 2014) that in Poland unemployment among persons under 25 years of age exceeds 23% while economic activity of this age group equals 33% because most people of this age are still being educated while those who work, are employed below the level of their qualifications (ibidem). So far, successive governments have recognised this fact as a success, vindicating their educational policy. By way of contrast, the business community feels concerned about this fact. They note the dotage of the young generation whose representatives (*bamboccioni*) are living for a long time with their parents. This phenomenon applies to 40% of the population aged 25 to 34, moreover, the generation 'of the current youth may be the first one after the war who will have worse living conditions than their parents had' (Bochniarz 2014). According to this author, it results from the fact that the success of the transformation 'awakened aspirations, which, as a result of the collision with the reality, have no chances' of being realised (ibidem).

Henryka Bochniarz (2014), however, refuses to believe that these facts mean that something is wrong with the Polish labour market. Indeed, the situation is rather familiar on the European scale. The author explains it thus: under globalisation, 'the production of European firms is being transferred to countries with lower labour costs, caused by unfriendly legislation and high costs of labour in most core countries' (Bochniarz 2014) of the European Union, including 'rigid regulations of the labour code' (ibidem). Producers, and thus also jobs, are being transferred to the Far East because it is 'cheaper and without over-regulation' there (ibidem). Europe, on the contrary, to the visible disappointment of this author, recognises the protection of labour rights as an important part of human rights, not allowing – at least overtly and massively – slave labour whose different forms are huge in Asia. This very fact

explains – although the author seems not to understand – why Europe, producing 20% of GDP, bears 50% of the social expenses in the world. Recognising the phenomenon of the dual labour market (cf. Boeke 1953), the author reduces it, however, to the excessive ‘protection of the longer working employees vis-à-vis those beginning their work’ (Bochniarz 2014), ignoring the fact that the dual labour market is the very nature of semi-peripheral capitalism and capitalism in general (Wężyk 2014).

H. Bochniarz (2014) suggests another reason for the unsatisfactory life chances of the young generation: ‘a low level [of education] and its misalignment with the needs of the labour market’ (ibidem). The education system ‘still to a limited extent educates personnel for the knowledge-based economy and is little open to the world’ (ibidem). Only 38% of those graduated and 35% of employers are satisfied with education (ibidem). The latter, when asked what university graduates are missing, mostly point to a lack of professional knowledge (Bochniarz 2014), apparently not understanding the true function of universities. Despite these shortcomings, higher education is ‘a guarantee of success’ (ibidem) because unemployment among those higher educated is 5.4% in Poland (Bochniarz 2014) and M.A. graduates earn ca 42% more than those with only secondary education (ibidem), even though the former work beneath the level of their qualifications or contrary to the education. As it can be seen, the latest phenomenon is a warning that soon neither a diploma nor a good post will be any protection against job loss and livelihood, for this is the logic of neo-liberal global capitalism (Wężyk 2014).

H. Bochniarz does not seem to understand that the reason lies beyond the education system, with the semi-peripheral labour market. Its semi-peripherality consists of the fact that the aspirations of the employees and standards of human rights are in common with those of the core while the expectations of employers, their capital resources and the related spatial mobility remain at the level of the periphery. Entrepreneurs, including H. Bochniarz, propose to gain an advantage by limiting social aspirations. She argues that you ‘cannot tantalise the young [by saying] that they should have only contracts for an indefinite period and all other options are “junk”. [...] In times of uncertainty when orders are unstable flexibility in hiring is required by entrepreneurs [because otherwise] they will *not cope in the mar-*

*ket'* (Bochniarz 2014; italics ZR). It is hard to state this more clearly: was thus hardly possible to point more precise it is the semi-peripheral entrepreneurs who are unprepared for the challenges of the market. The education of graduates according to the current needs of these entrepreneurs does not therefore seem reasonable and, it has little to do with the training of personnel for the knowledge-based economy and open for the world, since it is not certain if the profession, which the graduates are now adjusted to, will even exist ten years hence (Bartulewicz 2015). At the same time, as research by the OECD indicates, Poland is the third largest relative provider of junk contracts in the world – after Chile and Spain and before South Korea (Staszewski 2014/5).

Without a deep restructuring of the Polish economy, in which only 1.9% of employees work in knowledge-absorbing branches (*Polska gospodarka...*, 2014), higher education would have to be reduced to the level of vocational schools. To make it possible, political will is needed (Pańków 2014, Zybertowicz 2014). This does not currently exist. There is little likelihood of the toxic state policy of putting responsibility onto the universities for those things the state itself should assume responsibility for (namely job creation) altering. Indeed, the state seems incapable of generating employment (Śliwerski 2014). 'It is not universities who graduate the unemployed but the government – by creating no jobs and massively extending education – they contribute to this' process (*ibidem*). The proposal by H. Bochniarz and entrepreneurs of her sort is simply one of deprivation and precarisation, if not a social revolution (Urbański 2014).

It is difficult not to notice that H. Bochniarz falls 'into the trap of market fundamentalism' (Zawadzki 2014a) which involves 'granting to the market a prime role of the regulator of social life' (*ibidem*) and the recognition that it is 'obvious' that education be subordinated to market demands. It is assumed that this widespread 'fundamentalist way of thinking' (*ibidem*) has no alternative, it should thus form the basis of the reform of the higher education in Poland (Zawadzki 2014a). 'In place of the community of reason, a processing of students for enterprise appears' (Sztompka 2014). Traditional academic culture is displaced by corporate culture (*ibidem*). The concentration on the transformation of the universities into enterprises for the pro-

duction of 'cheap, loyal and disposable labour force for the needs of the labour market means that all of society will pay for this experiment. [...] Targeting the indicators of profitability and antagonistic competition results in *marketolatrida*' (Śliwerski 2014), i.e. the propagation of the 'idolatry of competitiveness and marketability' (ibidem).

Market fundamentalism is dangerous for society because it deepens the crisis of the young generation in the labour market (Zawadzki 2014b). The state of the labour market, including the organisation culture and business ethics, is recognised as a question that requires no need reflection. The graduate is therefore only interesting as labour force, not as a human being – together with his/her culture of work and employment rights. Organisational culture in Poland is 'dominated by the imperative of economism and a primitive version of capitalism. Employees are treated as a means to achieving business goals [and] financial goals definitely prevail over social goals' (Zawadzki 2014a). The social irresponsibility of business dominates (Zawadzki 2014b).

Professionally-oriented education at the tertiary level in fields related to management is a significant reason for this state of affairs. In Poland 'the primitive, Taylorian and Fordist management of organisations dominate, de-humanising the social dimension of labour[, ...] reproduced in [...] most universities, where representatives [...] of business are invited for shaping curricula and management efficiency is conditioned by economic success' (Zawadzki 2014). A 'management of organisations by semi-illiterates, narcissists and psychopaths who are destroying the social fabric' (ibidem) ushered in under the pretext of the effective implementation of business objectives becomes increasingly commonplace.

However, the basic competence of the modern labour market includes independence, responsibility, creativity, initiative and the ability to work in a team (Zawadzki 2014b), i.e. the development of cultural competence from the beginning of the process of education. This is lacking in the Polish education system. Indeed, the system's adjustment to the current needs of the labour market even deepens this lack (Arum, Roksa, 2010). What inevitably dominates, then, is the education of pupils, then students and finally employees, and people in general, into conformity in relation to the content of information provided, including learning by heart rather than

for critical discussion and the habit of expressing one's own opinion (Zawadzki 2014a), which rises to the rank of courage. The basic role of education, especially university education, is therefore shaping citizenship attitudes in order to influence the shaping of social reality (Sztompka 2014), including market reality (Zawadzki 2014b). This means the ability to act in disputes, create consistent and robust narratives about reality – which are not simply reduced to numbers and facts – and actions for social good (Zawadzki 2014a).

In contrast to the labour market, the university must operate with a view to long-term objectives, without being reduced to the role of a warehouseman supplementing current labour-market shortages (Zawadzki 2014a). It has to educate citizens rather than employees on today's – but not yet tomorrow's – labour market (Sztompka 2014). As such, it must voice opposition to the immediate requirements of employers, and even work to shape these requirements for the common good (Zawadzki 2014a). 'Market fundamentalism, the professionalisation of education and the progressive corporatisation of Polish universities results in the erosion of the mission of cultural education' (ibidem). It also degrades the labour market.

### **6. Regulation, audit culture and *scoriosis***

Interestingly, entrepreneurs' complaints about the over-regulation of the European labour market on the one hand, and their call for 'practical' education at universities on the other, which the Ministry has eagerly acceded to, is in a clear contradiction with the over-regulation of the 'enterprise', which the university is being transformed into. This contradiction is neither seen by the Ministry, nor by entrepreneurs. A partial explanation for this paradox lies in the nature of the bureaucratic system. At the level of the state, the system operates in the interests of the social group of politicians who are alienated as a social class. This class is interested in the growth of the bureaucracy as the potential electorate of the ruling parties, which the bureaucracy's economic and professional prosperity depends upon. Entrepreneurs do not seem to mind the growth of bureaucracy as long as it applies to the regulation of science and education or, more extensively, culture. This seems bizarre in the context of the experience of the post-communist quarter of a century, in which the activ-



ity of the bureaucracy was not only mindless but even also unlawful on occasion. And in both cases, it was painful for many entrepreneurs.

In higher education, regulation manifests in two main forms: (1) the national qualifications framework (KRK) and (2) *scoriosis* (Zabel et al., 2014). The former consist of – to put it briefly – the requirement to prepare more and more detailed and less and less meaningful summaries, training plans and syllabi. The institution of syllabi penetrated into Poland in the 1990s from the Anglo-Saxon countries, initially to non-public higher schools. Syllabi were intended for students who were to learn from them about the programme of teaching and faculty requirements. After syllabi had spread in public universities this function became obsolete. Now students have no common access to syllabi and they often have no idea that the syllabi exist. The latter thus become primarily a tool of senseless control of the faculty by the administration. The expansion of the scope of this type of control results not only from a distrust of incompetent officials to academics but also from the misunderstanding by the former of the nature of the scientific and educational process, in which the introduction of the results of the newest research to learning is a significant advantage to the process rather than a lack of subordination to the previously written plans of the classes. For this reason, the requirements of the KRK are subjected to mild obstruction by the extensive group of affected teachers. Generally, however, the over-regulation of the academic ‘labour market’ means that members of the academic community are losing their subjectivity, ceasing to decide about the direction, rhythm, time and duration of their creative work, they are becoming ‘ordinary wage earners who perform tasks scheduled in advance’ (Sztompka 2014). In this way, the Bolshevik mode of social justice is being done. According to this model, the ideals of equality are the Fordist conveyor belt and clock card which reflect the hours of coming to and from work, regulation that, fortunately, has yet to be applied to Polish universities. ‘These are rational concepts in the world of business pragmatics, i.e. degrees, financial settlements, educational performance, scientometric indicators, etc. [...] The advantage of these solutions is perfect order as a value in itself’ (Galar 1997: 129).

Meanwhile, universities 'begin to resemble intellectual deserts. They are like soullessly managed factories that, instead of [possessing an] intelligentsia, produce an intelligent-like product[, ... and] exams [...] are being changed in an administrative procedure that may be appealed to the NSA [Supreme Administrative Court]. The thinking process was replaced with the Bologna Process' (Suchodolska 2014). The time of eccentric lecturers and examiners has ended, those whom students were afraid of but loved all the same. 'They are replaced by dull experts, bureaucrats, tests slaves' (ibidem). The most intelligent and brilliant lecturers do not receive academic promotions (ibidem). Trust has been replaced by incessant audits, continuous, meticulous, meaningless reports, which are read by nobody but 'such a control gives the impression that every scholar pretends (s)he works, cancels classes and reads lectures from a booklet from years before' (Sztompka 2014), (s)he must thus be incessantly controlled. This pushes people out of the academic world - 'the brightest, those most needed for the university mission' (Anonim II, 2014). 'The culture of audit and the emphasis placed on competitiveness have [...] impacted on universities and research institutions in many countries' (Hájek 2014). The results of these on science, academic careers and publication strategies, have been subjected to numerous analyses (cf. Holmwood 2010).

In this context, a new disease entity appears - *quantofrenia*, whose symptoms are: bibliometrics, scientometrics and parameterisation (Sztompka 2014). What is observed in society is 'a dramatic loss of confidence in universities and professors' (Sztompka 2014). The place of masters and scientific authorities is taken by handy-men, foremen and managers (ibidem) who, in fact, deal with scientific research but whose real forte is in the preparation of reports and plans. These reports are not necessarily consistent with the state of scientific knowledge, common sense or the canons of the mother tongue but they are compatible with the requirements of the KRK.

*Scoriosis* is, in turn, an unpleasant affliction of the ministerial administration. It results from the parameterisation of the assessment of the scientific achievements of scholars and the academic units they are employed in. '*Scoriosis* is a relatively new disease. Individuals afflicted [are] ready [...] to reduce the assessment of scientific achievements [...] to understood numbers of scores gained' (Zabel et al., 2014).

Scholarly status is a function of points allocated according to arbitrary administrative criteria. The minimal size of the scored article is counted in pages. [...] While awarding subsidies to a university, under- and post-graduate students and habilitations are counted; very few are[, however,] interested in what the students were taught and what these dissertations contribute to science' (Sztompka 2014).

A much 'older and more pervasive disease entity is *expertosis*. 'Those infected by expertosis live in the deep conviction that only experts are able to assess scientific results, provided, of course, that it is the infected who will be recognised as an expert in the discipline' (Zabel et al., 2014). Generally therefore, as a result of the sequence of the pseudo-reforms of 2005-2014, 'Polish higher education is worm-eaten by grant, scores, enquiry [and...] ranking diseases (Śliwerski 2014), while a 'society of *neoprimitivism*' is developed in the country, guided by 'fear, uncertainty or excessive obedience and conformism' (ibidem).

Victims of the regulations rarely succumb to them with enthusiasm. Their first reaction is often reluctance, although conformism and permissivism of the academic community are also observed (Sztompka 2014). In authoritarian and totalitarian systems, this reluctance used to be broken by commandments, intimidation or punishment systems. In democratic systems, on the contrary, the effectiveness of motivational techniques is relied upon (Czachorowski 2014). These days, a technique, which in this context raises high hopes, is gamification. It consists in the use of 'game mechanics to encourage people' to do what they 'usually do not want to or do not know they can do that differently' (ibidem). 'The gamification technique is based on pleasure that comes from overcoming successive challenges, competition[ and] cooperation' (ibidem). It was found, however, that awards are one of the weakest and least durable stimuli to increase involvement, because they are effective only if they are additional to other stimuli or if they motivate practices in which creativity or inventiveness of players is not expected (Czachorowski 2014). The ministerial implementors of scoriosis evidently assumed that scientific work is a thoughtless repetition of routines. Parametric evaluation should thus be changed from the assessment tool of scientific activity into its objective.

The results of scoriosis are not only painful but certainly different from what has been assumed. They shape the attitudes of the victims of this project and, after successful infection with scoriosis, they are unlikely to take any activity that is not rewarded by points, possibly in exchange for money. A commercial mentality thus dominates (Sztompka 2014). 'Assessments, scores [and] money help. If[, however,] they become the sole or main motivational mechanism, they lead to social distortions both in education and in social life' (Czachorowski 2014). As a result, parameterisation, which was supposed to increase the efficiency of Polish science, leads – in the form of scoriosis – to the accumulation of the symptoms of social pathology (Czachorowski 2014; Śliwerski 2014), including plagiarism, ghost-writing and guest authorship. It is therefore doubtful that scoriosis is a more appropriate tool of civilisational advancement of science than curiosity, cognitive passion, satisfaction and social mission (Czachorowski 2014; Sztompka 2014). There is a major difference between these alternative proposals. In contrast to the elements of scientific and intellectual ethos, scoriosis may simply be ordered, imposed and controlled.

An inherent result of scoriosis is a rapid increase in the number of pseudo-scientific pseudo-publications, including 'co-operatives' (Śliwerski 2014), whose share-holders reciprocally publish the texts of co-holders. In order to gain points, score-hunters have to publish a lot, even though it is not necessarily great in credibility. The rush to accumulate scores causes more and more worthless texts to be published while valuable texts wait a long time in for their prestigious publishing houses to turn them out. Low input scientific works are unprofitable and that is why large, once reputable, publishing houses reduce costs dramatically. This has a negative impact on quality. The cancellation of a professional orientation, at least in some editorial offices of the Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, results in the publication of books with orthographic errors. So far, then, it can be said that 'scoriosis develops well in Polish universities. And the worst is still ahead' (Czachorowski 2014).

Grant disease or *grantiosis* is a variation of scoriosis. It consists of replacing a large part of the financing of research institutions with the system of grants. Obtaining a grant requires internalisation of the funders' thinking, it therefore undermines academic freedom (Graczyk 2015). In this way, the university ceases to be a

community and becomes a precarising and precarised trader, competing with similar institutions, 'adopting its clients to an effective auto-recycling' (ibidem; cf. Section 9).

### **7. The dual market of intellectual work**

Reference was made above to the concept of the dual labour market, assuming that it applied to graduates. It is worth noting, however, that this phenomenon also applies to the intellectual labour market. With respect to universities in Poland, it is an entirely new phenomenon, inextricably related to the Ministerial pseudo-reforms and to neo-liberal ideology. There is nothing surprising in this, since these reforms are carried out under the banner of efficiency (implicitly economic) and the adaptation of graduates to the current needs of the labour market. The financing of universities in Poland is, in this context, related to the law of supply and demand, where graduates are the product. The intellectual 'labour force' should be adjusted to this supply and demand. The 'labour force' should be flexible, mobile and efficient not so much intellectually as formally. Labour rights, ensuring a stability of employment, are an important obstacle to the flexible labour market. As such, they are being effectively limited.

A quarter of century ago, Polish scientific and didactic institutions went out of communism with generally low salaries, compensated by fixed and safe employment for an indefinite period, usually in the form of tenure, while the Ministry financed salaries of all scientific and didactic employees – from full professors to assistants. Post-graduate students, as potential scientific workers, were granted scholarships comparable to the assistant salary.

The initial stage of reform began when the Ministry ceased financing the assistants' salaries and post-graduate students' scholarships. This resulted in a de facto liquidation of the assistant posts at universities. The assistants' teaching duties were taken over by post-graduate students who taught within their duties, i.e. getting no remuneration. The post-graduate students' scholarships have been limited by quantity and reduced by amount to the level comparable with the cost of a quarterly ticket for the public municipal transport.

In the second stage of reform, tenured employment was limited to full professors while other scientific and didactic workers were offered contracts of employment for a specified period, usually several years. It applied – to a varying extent – to the majority of the respective employees, i.e. assistant professors and associate professors with habilitations completed.

This was the basis of the development of a dual intellectual labour market that was to be flexible by design. The formal foundation of the dualism was the first amendment to the Law on Higher Education (cf. Section 1), which assumed that recruitment to the category of full professor was to be difficult as it practically transformed this category into a closed caste. Because it might result in an extinction of the caste within one generation's time span and, moreover, undermine the model of the scientific career that was aimed not at scientific work but at a persistent pursuit of scholars to the titular professorship, the amended act required further urgent amendment. This has not changed the fundamental structure of the dual labour market, in which titular professors fell in the first labour market, and other scholars – especially those in the lowest posts, employed under junk contracts – fell into the second labour market.

It is worth noting, however, that the duality of the intellectual labour market has its specificity in relation to the dual labour market outside science. The former is based, more or less everywhere, on the nourishment of outsiders 'ready to forgo wages and employment security in exchange for the prospect of uncertain security, prestige, freedom and reasonably high salaries that tenured positions entail' (Afonso 2013). Paradoxically therefore, the intellectual labour market, i.e. academia, resembles a drug gang (Levitt, Dubner, 2005). In the latter, a street dealer earns less than a legally employed unskilled worker. 'If you take into account the risk of being shot by rival gangs, ending up in jail or being beaten up by your own hierarchy, you might wonder why anybody would work for such a low wage and at such dreadful working conditions instead of seeking employment at McDonald's. Yet, gangs have no real difficulty in recruiting new members' (Afonso 2013). The latter agree to be exploited and that is why gang bosses grow richer and richer without sharing their wealth with subordinates. 'The reason for this is that the prospect of future wealth,

rather than current income and working conditions, is the main driver for people to stay in the business: low-level drug sellers forgo current income for (uncertain) future wealth. Rank-and-file members are ready to face this risk to try to make it to the top, where life is good and money is flowing. It is very unlikely that they will make it (their mortality rate is insanely high) but they[ a]re ready to [...]get rich or die trying' (Afonso 2013).

The situation of the intellectual labour market differs, however, in that that it is prestige that has traditionally been the most desirable resource while income was a minor or secondary issue, although the advancing commercialisation of science, including Polish, undoubtedly changes this attitude. 'The academic job market is structured in many respects like a drug gang, with an expanding mass of outsiders and a shrinking core of insiders. Even if the probability that you might get shot in academia is relatively small [...], one can observe similar dynamics' (Afonso 2013).

The rationale for the duality of the intellectual labour market is the ideology of 'do what you love' (Tokumitsu 2014). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, an average post-graduate student in the United States 'could yet give up easy money in the financial or legal sector' (ibidem) in order to pursue his/her passion for science. 'The prize for the realisation of this higher calling should be employment on the academic labour market' (Tokumitsu 2014). However, over 40% of scientific workers in American universities are assistant professors who 'receive low pay, cannot rely on social benefits nor job security' (ibidem), they thus cannot plan their future in the institution in which they work and frequently they cannot plan their future at all.

The motivations of post-graduate students deciding 'to perform work that requires huge qualifications for extremely low wages' (Tokumitsu 2014) differ from the motivations of drug dealers. The main difference is the strongly internalised belief that 'academic research should be conducted with a pure love of wisdom and pay for this kind of work is only a supplement, if it occurs at all' (ibidem). The present author, presenting his hobby, put it in this way: 'I was lucky enough to realise most of my passions at work, which sometimes was even paid for' (Rykiel, n.d.). That having been said, it is worth noting that 'the belief that through our work we get some intangible benefits and that we are committed to our profession much more than

would be attached to the “normal” work, makes us simply ideal employees in conditions where it comes to yielding the maximum value at the lowest cost’ (Brouillette 2013).

The dualisation of the intellectual labour market ‘is the strengthening of this divide between insiders in secure, stable employment and outsiders in fixed-term, precarious employment’ (Afonso 2013). One of the underlying structural factors of the dual intellectual labour market ‘has been the massive expansion in the number of PhDs all across the OECD’ (ibidem) between 2000 and 2009, in which Poland was the only exception, where the rate dropped, although only slightly (ibidem). The general ‘result is that the core is shrinking, the periphery is expanding, and the core is increasingly dependent on the periphery. In many countries, universities rely to an increasing extent on an “industrial reserve army” of academics working on casual contracts because of this system of incentives’ (Afonso 2013).

The relations between the first and second intellectual labour markets, i.e. the ‘boundary of the insider and outsider group varies across countries[...]. This does [not] mean that the absolute number of faculty has diminished, it has actually increased substantially, but it has been massively outpaced by the expansion of teaching staff with precarious jobs and on low incomes. [...] The person mentioned [...] declares a take-home pay [...], which is sadly not that far away from the [...] hourly rate of the drug dealer, but for a much more skilled job’ (Afonso 2013). The ‘prestige’ and ‘scientific’ character of research and academic work ‘are too often used to justify bad employment conditions by tenured faculty or ever more powerful university administrators’ (ibidem) and the Ministerial bureaucracy. However, ‘emotionally satisfying this work, it will still be work’ (Tokumitsu 2014). A rejection ‘of this perspective may end up in consent for the most cruel forms of exploitation and injustice, which will be felt by all staff’ (ibidem).

## 8. Precarisation

According to Guy Standing (2011), the precariat is a new social class which is an indirect consequence of the neo-liberal economic model. It was born from the assumption that growth and development depend on market competitiveness. Any



action must therefore be aimed at the maximisation of competitiveness, and market rules should penetrate all aspects of life. The flexible labour market is one tool to achieve this state. Flexibility is best achieved by the discharge of risk and uncertainty onto employees and their families. Flexibility applies to wages, employment, jobs and skills.

As the Weberian ideal type, the precariat is an emerging social class, characterised by a combination of uncertainty or precarity with proletarianisation (Standing, n.d.). The term *precarious* applies therefore to the state that is not certain, safe or stable (Vostal 2014). If ignore employers and the self-employed, the main distinction on the labour market concerns wage earners and salaried employees. 'The former cover the demand for hourly work or piecework, according to the principle "pay for the effort"' (Standing n.d.). The latter (salaried) are rewarded with trust and consideration for their availability and loyalty (compensation-for-service) – (ibidem). The interests and norms of the salariat are inherently closer to the interests of managers and owners, 'while hired workers are, from their very nature, alienated, require discipline, subordination and the combination of motivation and sanctions' (Standing, n.d.). Formal control is essential for the social position of precarians.

The precariat includes the exploited people on junk contracts, those employed part time (Wężyk 2014), the self-employed serving one or two customers, and more rarely those 'whom the duration of contracts of employment is gradually reduced, while tasks are added under threat of dismissal' (Pańków 2014), as well as 'social and cultural workers – at the mercy of capricious funders – and young academics' (ibidem). On the global scale, the number of the precariat is estimated at  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of all employees (Standing 2011).

For the identification of the precariat it is important to identify a lack of seven forms of work-related security, which after the Second World War were recognised as inalienable labour rights of the industrial proletariat. These are (Standing 2011):

- (1) the protection of the labour market, i.e. full employment;
- (2) the security of employment, i.e. the protection against arbitrary dismissal;
- (3) the securing of jobs, i.e. limiting forced spatial mobility of workers;
- (4) work safety, i.e. health, safety and the reduction of working time;

- (5) securing the reproduction of experience, i.e. the opportunity to use the competence;
- (6) income security, i.e. the provision of regular fixed income;
- (7) providing representation, i.e. having a collective voice in the labour market, including the freedom to form unions and the right to strike.

Generally therefore, the precariat is defined by what it is not (Standing, n.d.). Now a key element of the uncertainty of work is the uncertainty of employment, i.e. no long-term contracts and protection against a loss of employment. The precarians therefore 'do not feel a part of the solidary workers community, which makes them operate with a sense of alienation and instrumental treatment' (Standing, n.d.). Precarians 'are expected to perform work when and only when it is needed, in terms independent of their choices' (ibidem). The precarians feel 'their work is instrumental (to survive), occasional (take any occasion) and uncertain (precarious)' (ibidem). In the era of 'the flexible labour market, the number of people assigned only temporarily to their jobs increased significantly' (Standing, n.d.). Having a provisional occupation may indeed be beneficial, provided, however, this gives satisfaction to the employee (ibidem).

When, on the contrary, 'jobs are becoming "flexible", focused solely on earnings, with the remuneration inadequate for socially decent maintenance and dignified life, there is no longer "professionalism", which is related to belonging to the community of standards, ethical codes and mutual respect, based on competence and respecting the long-existing norms of behaviour' (Standing, n.d.). The regime of the flexibility of labour therefore implicitly rejects the ethics laid down by strong professional communities (ibidem).

Precarisation is not only a question of the insecurity of employment, fixed-term contracts and minimal labour protection. It is much more important that it is largely a state, 'which does not offer career opportunities or provide a sense of professional identity. It does not necessarily entitle the few to state and corporate privileges' (Standing, b.d.; cf. Wężyk 2014) that several generations of the salariat and industrial proletariat recognised as a matter of right. 'Such is the reality of the system that cultivates the way of life based on competitiveness[... and] flexibility' (ibidem),

extolling its advantages. Those who are not precarians, have no private time because 'each hour of inactivity of the precarian equals the lower remuneration on the scale of months[...] and the man quickly becomes an eternally busy slave' (Pańków 2014). 'The result of this is a growing mass of people' (Standing, n.d.) being in a situation that can be described 'only in categories of alienation, anomie, anxiety and susceptibility to anger' (ibidem; cf. Wężyk 2014). Its warning sign is a lack of political commitment, including decreasing turnout in successive elections and the increase in the number of invalid votes, a phenomena politicians are yet unable to understand. This is due to the fact that precarians are systematically losing their citizen rights: (1) cultural, because they do not belong to the dominant group; (2) political, because they do not feel represented by the political parties; (3) economic, because they cannot perform their work relevant to the direction and level of their education (Wężyk 2014). Generally then, the precariat is 'the first class in history overqualified in relation to the tasks it performs' (ibidem).

The neo-liberal project crumbles before our eyes, although it 'still lives by the mental inertia of policy makers and the interests of the favoured' (Pańków 2014). An even worse, although unavoidable, result of this fact is a susceptibility to populist, xenophobic and neo-fascist (Standing 2011), if not terrorist, rhetoric. The precariat thus turns out a dangerous social class, born by the illusion of freedom and prosperity that was supposedly ensured by the neo-liberal programme.

### **9. The junked society of global capitalism**

In the globalised capitalist economy a process can be noted that Piotr Graczyk calls *junkisation*. According to the author the term is synonymous with the *innovation-based economy* whose nature is 'continually faster and faster producing still new types of commodities, the condition of which is a smooth and quick removal of the existing types' (ibidem). Junkisation originally applied to commodities. Capitalism is, however, 'a system changing commodities in our life span' (Graczyk 2015), junkisation therefore applies to work or, rather, 'work'. The use of the quotation marks stems from the fact that 'the difference between work and non-work is exactly this realm that effectively eliminates the process of junkisation' (ibidem). Junkisation is usually

identified with precarisation, which applies, however, not only to production, and even not only to the economy, but to society in general – based on the cult of creativity and innovation (Graczyk 2015).

‘In innovative and creative capitalism, commodities quickly [...] become garbage’ (Graczyk 2015). This results from the fact that in the era of post-modernity a much faster obsolescence of goods is going on than their physical wear and tear, and the satisfaction applies not to the possession of the goods, but to their acquisition, followed by their equally rapid abandonment (Bauman 1998). The nature of contemporary capitalism is one of staging time, of managing time, ‘a game of conversion, of objectification itself’ (Graczyk 2015) – privileging the here and now rather than the long duration. The point therefore is ‘to have to buy as often as possible new things [-] under threat of death, under the threat of annihilation of individuality[; ...] in order that no one could feel sure of his/her status, each his/her pleasure [was] lined [...] with anxiety about the future’ (Graczyk 2015) – and not the anxiety concerning impending death but ‘uncertain future pleasure, which becomes a myth and a god annunciated in all advertisements’ (ibidem).

In order to be able to buy more new items, money is needed, which is achieved by work, ‘anything that does not bring it’ (Graczyk 2015) is not considered work. In order to work, you have to subordinate the ‘proposed’ working conditions. ‘These conditions are increasingly junk, [because] employers prefer as flexible as possible forms of employment [...] exposing them to the least costs and, above all, at the least commitments’ (ibidem). This offers to employees a temporality of their status, i.e. a lack of any guarantee for the future (Graczyk 2015), which explicitly encourages submission. An employee, applying each time for a job, must not only – as Karl Marx wrote – sell his or her labour force but ‘form himself or herself so that his or her product on the labour market – namely himself or herself – would have a chance to sell’ (Graczyk 2015). ‘The employee literally becomes garbage, a rubbish[,] which remains after the incarnation in one of the junked professional roles, characterised by increasingly shorter usability. Moreover[,] the employee is garbage, which [should] clean itself up after use [...] in a certain professional role[...:] is rubbish, which itself

must undergo a process of recycling to be able then to gain attractiveness in the next professional role' (Graczyk 2015).

The recycling process, which has replaced education, is not in fact work any longer, but one's whole life (Graczyk 2015). It depends on the competitiveness ('quality') of the employee whether (s)he will be 'relegated to the role of a clochard or will retain the technological attributes of humanity' (ibidem). In order to survive, 'it is not enough to work better than others[;] it is necessary to live better than others, to be better than others' (ibidem). The impermanence and uncertainty of professional roles and attributes of society ruins solidarity and 'forces as to internalise the rules of competition as the only way' to survive (Graczyk 2015).

In the global capitalist economy, a global class structure is being formed. On the top, there is the 'plutocracy, a tiny minority of disgustingly rich oligarchs' (Wężyk 2014). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the value of the assets of the 358 richest people in the world - USD billionaires - was as much as 45% of the total income of all humanity while the three richest persons earned annually more than the GDP of the 48 poorest countries (Rykiel 2006: 91). Since then, these inequalities have increased significantly (Wężyk 2014). The middle class is located much lower, i.e. the salariat or people employed full-time with labour privileges and retirement packages. It is worth noting that while in the twentieth century the size of the middle class increased, it is now decreasing, following the rule indicated by K. Marx. Lower down the social hierarchy there is the proletariat, which is also decreasing in size, while the precariat is the only social class whose size is growing (Wężyk 2014).

In semi-peripheral societies - like Poland - the class situation consists of 'a breaking up of the possibility of obtaining class consciousness by the lower strata' (Graczyk 2015), which are bound to imitate the upper strata as the most market attractive and to play 'the role of the middle classes, although in reality they are only their precarised dummy' (ibidem). In Poland, this is manifested in the fact that 'precarised employees vote [...] for [...] right-wing parties [...], overtly representing interests of the global higher strata and their powers' (ibidem), thus they hysterically support reforms eliminating the remnants of welfare state functions' (Graczyk 2015).

'In this way, most Poles are flying down [...] the economic structure and trying to slow down the movement[,] stomping on the heads of the poor, who have fallen lower than themselves (ibidem). The only actual beneficiary of this situation is global capital, i.e. international corporations and their shareholders (Węzyk 2014).

### **10. Precarisation in the market of intellectual work**

The question of precarisation also applies to the intellectual labour market, including universities (Hartman 2015), at least according to the philosophy of the Ministerial reforms, as a result of which a part of salariat is drifting towards the precariat (Standing, n.d.). This also applies to customising forms of university education to the current needs of the labour market, namely internships, which are also favoured by the Ministry. Trainees, who work for some time for little pay or else for free, are doing minor jobs in enterprises. Free training is, however, 'the worst form of exploitation' (Tokumitsu 2014). Besides, there is also good reason to think that internships are a symptom of the government's inability to reduce unemployment. The government tries to do this by the professional 'activation' of graduates; the activation often, however, turns out to be a costly and inefficient form of assistance for the unemployed (Standing 2011). Indeed, despite the rhetoric of 'learning on the job', 'these activities generate high administrative costs, [...] and] the value that is produced is very limited both for the organisations and trainees' (Standing, n.d.).

In Polish universities, overt precarisation began with the change in the rules of the employment of security contractors and cleaning crews in the name of obedience to the logic of minimising costs (Pańków 2014). According to this logic, this process also extended, albeit in a less visible forms, to academic staff (Graczyk 2015). Exploitation in universities 'is just a symptom of pupation of this institution into an enterprise, in which academics [are] forced [...] to become some kind of managers. The are to compete with the 'quality' of their research [...] and create attractive offers for students. The managers still at risk of redundancy 'on the top' of the structure correspond to increasingly cheaper labour 'at the bottom' (Pańków 2014). Even worse, '[d]irectors and deans feel like managers whom they are usually not, do not want to be and are unable to' (Hartman 2015). Universities are thus 'left [...] in the hands of

people who do not know how to manage (ibidem). That is why universities are poorly organised and [...] seldom professional (ibidem).

Junk employment at universities and the over-production of doctors is a problem known in the West for years. It especially applies to humanists. In the United States, only every fourth post-graduate student has a chance of permanent employment in science and the first regular job is obtained on average at the age of 37 (Leszczyński 2015). The reserve army of labour, that of the academic precariat, is thus growing – ‘highly educated people, but poorly paid, without a permanent job and no prospects for one’ (ibidem). In Poland, on the other hand, we have to get accustomed to the unemployment of graduates, and now we tame the phenomenon of precarians with doctorates. It is paradoxical because – in relation to the standards of the developed countries – there are rather few people with doctorates in Poland (Leszczyński 2015). Generally, the most likely to be pushed into precarity – on the global scale – are educated young people who may expect to never be able to enter the strata of middle and higher incomes (Wężyk 2014).

The perversity of this situation is that ‘[p]eople working at universities like to think that they managed to avoid the corporate treadmill’ (Tokumitsu 2014). If, however, exploitation is concerned, ‘managers of corporations could learn a lot from academia[, i.e. how] to create a job [...] where people let themselves be persuaded to work with huge mental and emotional involvement for 50-60 hours a week for the payment of less than the waiter’s salary[; how] to make [...] employees [...] deny they work at all[; how] to adjust [...] corporate culture so that [...] the labour force also fell in love with their work’ (Bousquet, n.d.).

The most important aspect of precarity in the intellectual labour market is the external conditioning of the reproduction of the ‘intellectual labour force’. ‘Market ideology, commodification and corporate governance cripple academic life across the world. Those realities have troublesome, yet unequally distributed, implications for individual academics: increasing stress, burnout, and psychological discomfort’ (Vostal 2014: 40; cf. *Komitet Kryzysowy...*, 2014; Graczyk 2015; Hartman 2015). Fortunately, however, in Central Europe, despite the neo-liberal ‘model adapted by the [...] political class, and despite repeated attempts to “tame” [...] academia and apply the prin-

ciples of commodification and marketi[s]ation, [...] academia still resists the relentless managerial and business ideology' (Vostal 2014: 40).

In Poland, resistance traditionally embraced 'enclaves of organisational chaos, gaps of competency mismatch, episodes of professorial arbitrariness and fireworks of improvisation' (Galar 1997: 129) that marked the path, 'on which the lively students' intelligence can train activities under conditions of incomplete information, adapt to unexpected developments, resistance to unjust defeats and scepticism to official authority' (ibidem). Over the years they have, however, done so less effectively. Currently, sabotaging the neo-liberal model and the culture of audit is done rather by the semi-peripheral organisational culture. The reform of science, even though based on a hybrid of negative characteristics of two models – American and West European, can be implemented with conviction or without it, and with sense or without it. In Poland it resembles a saddling of the cow, which actually does not kick but does not go, either (Hartman 2015). The professorship puts up passive resistance to the Ministerial reforms because the latter – leading to the precarisation of a significant part of the academic community – also results in the degradation of the status and prestige of professors (ibidem).

In Polish science, the precarisation process includes employment on the basis of short-term contracts, loss of academic freedom and a threat to the funding of science (*Komitet Kryzysowy...*, 2014), as well as a growing number of bureaucratic conditions, which employment at the university is dependent on (Graczyk 2015). 'Stable and reliable scientific work is being limited' (*Komitet Kryzysowy...*, 2014) and permanent employment fades. Young scientists are the first victims of this process, and many of them are forced to give up their academic careers (*Komitet Kryzysowy...*, 2014; Musselin 2014). The precarisation process affects not only the – already mentioned – graduates and post-graduates, but also doctors and assistant professors.

In the case of doctors, this results from the requirement to obtain habilitation in a few post-doctoral years in conditions of employment for a specified period, low salaries and perks, out of economic necessity, with the possibility of extra work in non-public higher schools (Kublik 2014a). Employment contracts are often dependent on the results of 'recruiting students and include a shorter period than the statutory



time devoted to overcoming successive thresholds of the professional career' (Osiński 2014). Assistant professors work thus 'in the knowledge that their research, intended to result in [...] a habilitation, may be interrupted in the middle due to problems with recruitment' (ibidem). The situation of the intellectual precarians is different from that of the industrial proletariat because 'nobody expects [a miner] to buy himself a pickaxe or suit for wages' (Kublik 2014a), while assistant professors finance their books with their own money, as they do for conferences trips, often during their holidays (ibidem).

In the case of associate professors after habilitation, precarisation results not only from the relatively low – in relation to the West European qualifications and standards – salaries but also from the withdrawal – within the framework of the Ministerial reforms – of hiring policies by tenure for a contract of employment for a specified period, with a violation of the acquired rights that guaranteed a permanent contract after a five-year fixed-term of employment. This regulation has turned into fiction the sabbatical, which was guaranteed by law. A polarisation therefore occurred at universities for the tenured *professoriat* and those precariat who are uncertain of their near future, and are 'forced to take a junk extra job outside the university and chucked into competition for the basic salary' (Szenajch 2014).

The ideology of the 'work of love' leads to exploitation within the exciting professions, where overtime, low pay, and even a free job become the norm (Tokumitsu 2014). Nothing in fact 'facilitates the exploitation more than the workers' belief that they are doing what they really love' (ibidem). The ideology of doing what you love fits perfectly into the mythology of neo-liberalism, where everyone is supposed to be the architect of their own fate. The function of the ideology is in fact a presentation of exploitation as advantageous for those who are far from benefiting from it (Tokumitsu 2014). This ideology masks the mechanisms of exploitation 'and thus becomes the perfect tool of the ideology of capitalism' (ibidem). 'The main objective [...] is to hide the fact that to treat work as work could establish appropriate restrictions, demand fair wages and fix the hours of work allowing rest and family life' (ibidem).

The common basis of the precarisation process in Polish science is a model of the scientific career aimed not at making science but at the aspiration to achieve the

titular professorship. The tool in this process and the career path is a systematic increase in a formal bureaucratic control (Hudzik 2014) with no idea of quality supervision. This results from the obvious lack of understanding of the essence of scientific work by the ministerial bureaucracy. As a result, contrary to the declared objectives of the Ministry, the professional level of work for successive academic degrees is decreasing in the process of the pursuit of the growth in the population of senior researchers, required to satisfy the formal requirements of the Ministry, which are intended to ensure an adequate scientific level of institutes, departments and universities. 'The pacified scientific community, lacking a strong representation in the public sphere' (Hudzik 2014: 139), is '[p]owerless against the arrogance of power [and] conformist' (ibidem), it therefore takes on the existing rules of the game.

### **11. Semi-peripheral mentality**

What has taken place in Poland for a couple of years now is not so much a discussion about the crisis of the university as two parallel monologues on the subject. There is widespread, although by no means universal, agreement on the fact in Academia that the crisis is caused by 'under-funding, the commodification of education, excessive regulation and supervision, forcing universities into goals and standards of activities from outside the academic world [... and] precarisation of scientific work' (Szenajch 2014), i.e. a departure from full-time employment 'towards short-term work ordered ad hoc' (ibidem). On the side of the government, administration and business 'it is still possible to talk publicly without embarrassment about students as "products" or [...] "customers", to state that the university "is also a firm" while the public tasks of the university are reduced to the production of "employable" human capital for the needs of local businesses' (Szenajch 2014). From this perspective, the university's social responsibility becomes synonymous with corporate responsibility (ibidem). It is hard to avoid the impression that such a perspective results from the semi-peripheral mentality, associated with the complexes of the nouveau riches cloaked with the appearances and forms of the core rather than its own norms. Because of Polish scientists at Harvard University, 'Poland is not perceived as a peripheral country' (Wagner 2011) while in the domestic Ministry of Science and

Higher Education and the mainstream media she is. This suggests a peripherality of the government and the media rather than of science.

The above mentioned 'objectifying, oppressive and reductionist discourse in academic debates about the crisis of the university has been multilaterally criticised and scathingly ridiculed. Economic metaphors [... b]ecame dangerous, however, when [...] universities began to be managed by the MBA graduates (or people with similar intellectual formation)' (ibidem).

Much less attention was paid to the role of universities in the creation of cultural capital as a base for the reproduction of, or change in, the social structure (Sroczyński 2014). During the twentieth century, the university was an instrument of social advancement 'wherever it appeared as widely available, cheap, or free, public education. The end of the twentieth century showed, however, to students [...] that this great civilising project is coming to an end' (Szenajch 2014) due to the devaluation of diplomas, which is the result of 'the acute diversity of their prestige' (ibidem). Already noted earlier, however, 'the ethos of meritocracy [as] an axiom of "social advancement through education" was frequently [...] just a fig leaf to conceal the naked [...] inequality of position and opportunities' (ibidem) by 'moralising the praising of "individual responsibility"' (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 2010). It is certainly related to the nature of university education as the basis for skills and the need for an in-depth understanding of the social mechanisms, cultural differences and different world views of citizens (Szenajch 2014) of the democratic state, which the 'practical' apprenticeship to the current needs of the labour market by no means assures.

From the above we see that the basis of university education should be a critical social commitment, but this is explicitly inconsistent with the postulate of ideology-free research, similar to the fact that far from ideological neutrality, sociological research is carried out for companies, political parties and governmental agencies (Szenajch 2014). The point, however, is that in the latter case an impression is made that ideological involvement in the neo-liberal project is not such a commitment. In this context, 'the peak ambition of [...] young engineer[s] does not have to be the construction of new gadgets for the needs of industry (which encourages them to the media on a par with the Polish government)' (Szenajch 2014) but, for instance, 'an all-

terrain wheelchair that can be built and repaired for pennies in each bicycle workshop under the sun' (ibidem).

This would, however, require university education in the way that 'graduates would change our peripheral economy' (Szenajch 2014), that 'it would respond to the needs of citizens, and not citizens to the needs of the economy' (ibidem). This in turn would require a serious 'increase of investment in the public education system' (ibidem), including tutoring (Nowak 2014a) not only at universities but also in schools, and permanent replenishment of library resources on the latest literature (Kublik 2014a). This would also require recognition for overt demagoguery saying that we cannot afford it (Szenajch 2014), similarly as – according to politicians – we cannot afford basic research, we should thus mainly finance applied research (Ulanowski 2013), which private business derives profit from (Wężyk 2014). This is a classical example of the semi-peripheral mentality, the result of which is the strengthening of underdevelopment. If we consistently 'financed exclusively applied research, we would produce only better and better spears' (Ulanowski 2013). In fact, we cannot afford 'several years of boredom in the Prussian-style school for subsequent generations of students' (Szenajch 2014). Meanwhile, one can observe at the university 'a permanent and intensifying process of [...] adapting programmes of [education] to the capabilities and needs of students' (Klimczak, n.d.: 5), i.e. 'the style of the parental affirmation recommended in relation to infants' (Furedi 2008: 151-152).

Everybody who has dealt with science knows that measurable results 'are usually achieved slowly, in a team, in lively, intensively communicative environments, in a way which is difficult to plan, [which] often [occurs] by chance, and as a by-product of other studies [... and] almost exclusively in excellent infrastructural, financial and labour conditions' (Szenajch 2014). It is a pity that successive ministers of science and higher education do not know that, which probably stems from the simple fact that prominent scholars do not become ministers. A bizarre example of this was a statement by the current Minister on 29 December 2014 on a talk show, when, in the course of wishing New Year's greetings for 2015, she also wished that Polish science would become one of the major players in the world. This should be

regarded as an embarrassing example of the Ministry's helplessness, from which the public is entitled to expect activities that will enable such an eventuality rather than wishes. Indeed they 'should have academic and intellectual values, rather than economic' ones (Szenajch 2014); not the logic of 'individual and group competition, centrally administered standardisation, quantitative measurement of efficiency, short periods of settlement, [...] a rapid return on investment [...] and] job insecurity' (ibidem), which is the model of the corporate world. In Poland, real actions will be replaced by empty gestures 'until the level of funding of science does not come close to the level in West European countries' (Kublik 2014a; Szenajch 2014).

The current university reforms are conditioned by the structural context, i.e. the Bologna Process and the semi-peripheral mentality. The reforms have two main objectives: overt and covert. The overt objective is 'pulling away the young, talented people from intellectual work – reading books, writing, lecturing – for quasi-business activities boiled down to raise money for the company formerly known as the University' (Nowak 2014a; cf. Kublik 2014a). The covert objective 'is more demonic and agrees with the direction of global [...] changes; it is the consistent weakening of the libertarian instinct, involving the creation of favourable conditions for the exchange of academic freedom (freedom *tout court*) for tangible assets. This is grist to the mill of cynical people who listen to those who cannot rule. The truth for them is what helps those in the exercise of power' (Nowak 2014a).

In the semi-peripheral niche created this way there is a favourable climate for pathological activities in academia, if not for the culture of cynicism. For cultural reasons, advances in science are granted in a friendly mode. 'To the east of the Elbe up to the Pacific [...] it is just like that. [...] Courtesy reviews [...] will be practiced for many years ahead. Similar to shooting away people not belonging to their own tribe' (Hartman 2015).

## 12. Science vs ideology

The Weberian postulate to rid social sciences of value judgements for judgement about values is difficult to achieve because science is not only a source of knowledge, it is also a source of ideology. The positivist postulate of a value free sci-

ence collides therefore with the Leninist postulate of the 'party-oriented science', i.e. not only socially committed but also explicitly opting for one side of the political dispute. While there is no apolitical, disinterested and objective science (Szenajch 2014), a specific phenomenon of 'regime sociology' appears in this context (Bilewicz 2014). Three main features are characteristic of such a sociology. Firstly, it easily crosses the boundaries between science and journalism. Secondly, it permanently engages in justifying the policy of the ruling party or the opposition, and thus also potentially the government – current or future. Thirdly, it creates the phenomenon of 'the national sociologists on duty' who, using their academic positions, play the social role of media celebrities, proclaiming their own political opinions, having no significant relationship with the social status of the researcher (Hudzik 2014), because they legitimise authoritatively spewed colloquial views, often banal, and usually unrelated to the academic competence of the speakers (Sztompka 2014). The result is to bring – in the perception of the media audience – social sciences to the role of the political parties propaganda tube, and scientific discourse to the issue of the choice 'of one of the constructed "narrations"' (Bilewicz 2014).

It is worth however noting the fact that the 'national sociologists on duty' and sociological media celebrities are subjected to equally dramatic choices as their less dutiful and less celebrated academic colleagues: (1) to publish or perish, and (2) to be in the centre of the public debate or in its periphery, i.e. in academic science (Hudzik 2014). This is related to the fact that the exercise of political power, which also decides on the organisation and financing of science, is not governing but ruling (ibidem: 137). Every government has thus at their disposal 'servile scholars, opportunists, lured with benefits in the form of prestige [and] real power to sit on all kinds of national commissions determining the allocation of funds, academic degrees and titles. Such individuals corrupt science, [...] when [...] they perpetuate the belief in the legitimacy of the state control of science while, on the other hand, [...] they refer to the American patterns of the solutions in the organisation, financing and evaluation of science, [...] although] these are two completely different traditions and cultural games that cannot be reconciled' (Hudzik 2014: 137-138). 'Experts, functionary scholars, authorised by the government and the media generally as "outstanding", forge

the public debate when they take the language of their principals – official, gradually undergoing a ritualisation, transforming in the newspeak [...]. Their public statements [...] not so relate to the reality but form it' (ibidem: 138).

The mechanisms for the organisation of Polish science provide a relatively small number of persons associated with the current governmental team control over the allocation of power tools, i.e. functions in the central institutions, funding for research and evaluation criteria of that research. Thus, the process of appointing a team of experts evaluating grant applications provides a reproduction of the same group of people, appointed from among the 'eminent scientists', while the criteria of excellence are known only to ministerial officials (Hudzik 2014: 138). It is possible, however, to suspect that the 'excellence' of these scientists is to fulfil a range of academic, administrative and political functions at the same time, often in the situation of a conflict of interests between these different social roles. Speaking about the autonomy of science while invoking of arbitrary clerical decisions smacks of hypocrisy (ibidem).

The rules of the public game, including 'quantifiable criteria for the selection of academics' (Chudzik 2014: 139), are established by journalists (Bourdieu 1996). Nominees for the role of 'prominent intellectuals' have to pay for their 'success' in 'the mainstream media with the ensuing possibility of shaping the public opinion' (Chudzik 2014: 139). The price is to accept the dominant view in the media of 'ways of thinking, formulating opinions and asking questions' (ibidem) and granting them a monopoly on the definition of the common good, as well as a change in the language, imposed on subjects by the ruling (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 2010). Who in fact 'does not have their own tongue, does not possess their own existence. They must live the life of someone else' (Rymkiewicz 2014). The criteria set by the media for 'outstanding' intellectuals is far from factual. The media success of Józef Tischner and Leszek Kołakowski, neither of whom were deprived of respect in academia and neither of whom changed into 'politicians nor silly celebrities' (Hudzik 2014: 140), were unique because of that.

### 13. Vulgar idealism vs practical realism

An important element of the semi-peripheral mentality is a community of values, norms and, especially, forms and appearances in line with the core, when dispatching capabilities, structures and mechanisms specific to the periphery. The consequent frustrations are discharged by shifting responsibility for the discrepancy between aspirations and capabilities or skills of their implementation onto scapegoats, selected on the basis of generalisations, clichés and stereotypes. One of the scapegoats of bad journalists and unfulfilled scientists, who decided to meet as – equally bad, as it emerged – politicians, has in recent years been a myth of the peripherality of Polish science as has the limited productivity of Polish scientists (Wagner 2014), who are willingly presented as a bunch of freeloaders fattening up on the taxes of ‘the representatives of the nice, cultured middle class’ (Leszczyński 2015). All this is discussed in the context of unwavering faith in the beneficial impact of commercialisation on the way out of this peripherality. In this context, Polish scientists are accused of failing to comply with the market rules of the game, including low levels of efficiency and competitiveness. This is supposed to be supported by the international rankings of universities and the number of publications and citations of Polish scientists in prestigious journals. In accordance with the nature of the stereotype, however, when the facts contradict the stereotype, so much for the facts.

The point is the long-observed brain drain from the periphery and semi-periphery to the core. As a result, many people who have Polish citizenship and who publish in the most prestigious journals, do not work in Poland. These are publications of Poles but are included in the achievements of the institutions employing them. ‘Poles publish well [...] when they have adequate working conditions for doing so. Pragmatic Americans can perfectly organise scientific work and take advantage of the fact that, in their home countries, thousands of scientists do not [have] adequate working conditions. Because in America science and scientist are appreciated’ (Wagner 2011) – unlike in Poland.

In the core countries ‘progress in science is being done thanks to the work of thousands of scientists who come [...] from all over the world to work in excellent conditions to develop their research projects’ (Wagner 2011). Publications produced



there are predominantly authored by foreigners working there (ca 80% in natural sciences) although educated in their own countries. Poles form a significant group among them (*ibidem*). There are two reasons why they do not do this at home: a pitifully low level of funding of science in Poland (Table 1) and embarrassingly low salaries of researchers in Poland – compared with both their colleagues abroad (Table 2) and earnings in other sectors of the Polish economy.

Table 1. Expenditures on science in selected countries, 2009

Country	Expenditures on science					Population (mln), 2013	GDP <i>per capita</i> (rank), 2006
	% GDP	mln USD	in relation to Poland (mln USD)	USD per capita	in relation to Poland per capita		
United States	2.60	370,363	210.0	1,171.66	25.5	316.1	8
Germany	2.50	70,157	39.8	870.43	19.0	80.6	19
Italy	1.10	19,141	10.8	320.08	7.0	59.8	22
Poland	0.27	1,840	1.0	47.79	1.0	38.5	62

Source: own calculations based on Wagner (2011)

For comparison with the data in Table 1 it is worth noting that the budget of only one American university – Stanford – was 2,900,000,000 (2.9 mld) USD in 2006, i.e. 158% of the expenditures on science in Poland.

Only in this context – the relationship between pay and performance – does it make sense to compare the productivity of Polish scientists with their foreign colleagues. In Poland, 100 employees accrue 24 scientific publications while in Germany it is 45 (Wagner 2011), i.e. 1.9 times more, with salaries that are 3.3 to 5.6 times higher (Table 2). In addition, among the publications in Germany, there are many works authored by Polish scientists working for German institutions while the reverse situation rarely holds. Conducting research in Poland is definitely more difficult than it is in the core. It requires huge levels of self-sacrifice, and huge reserves of energy and optimism to get past all of the obstacles that are in one's way (Wagner 2011). In

Poland, young, talented researchers are employed on junk contracts while required to publish at the global level. This regulation is based on the naive assumption that in this way science at the global level will be created even though the publishing cycle in prestigious scientific journals is longer than the duration of the junk employment contract (Leszczyński 2015). In this context, the results of the scientific work of Polish scientists are satisfactory; and if take into account the fact that in Poland only half of academics publish at all (Kaminski 2014), it should be noted that the performance of the latter is – in relation to expenditure – very high. The National Centre for Science provides funding of research grants for only 12-13% of applicants, the processing of applications has not, in this situation, made much sense; the determination of winners by lot could be proposed instead (Śliwerski 2014).

Table 2. Average salaries of selected categories of scientific workers  
in selected countries

Country	Assistant professor		Full professor (tenured)	
	EUR	in relation to Poland	EUR	in relation to Poland
United States	4820	8.2	5785	5.1
Germany	3277	5.6	3744	3.3
Italy	2500	4.3	4000	3.5
Poland	586	1.0	1127	1.0

Source: own calculations based on Wagner (2011)

In terms of the gross domestic product per capita, Poland is located between Oman and Chile (Wagner 2011), while in terms of the number of publications Polish scientists are expected to achieve results comparable with countries ranked 40 to 50 positions higher (Table 1). This is a model example of the semi-peripheral mentality, characterised above. It consists of the proclamation of slogans of vulgar idealism,

bolstered by voluntarism, an antidote to which can be found in practical realism. Interestingly, however, the very same politicians and journalists who make scientific comparisons between Poland and the United States and Germany do not undertake such comparisons in relation to the achievements of industry (Wagner 2011).

It should therefore be clearly stated that Polish scientists are not peripheral, science in Poland is. The principal reason for this is the mismatch of working conditions in Polish scientific institutions with European standards, a situation which is being 'repaired' by the policy of pseudo-reforms, which reflects the mentality of their creators rather than the conditions for effective, creative research and teaching. Poland is a country, 'in which perfectly prepared scientists [...] do not have conditions to work and develop' (Wagner 2011). Now the point is whether Poland is to be a country producing a cheap labour force or a country of 'creative people who will not have to emigrate in order to continue their scientific activity' (ibidem).

For the time being, notification by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education that in 2015 state spending on science will increase 'very clearly' (*Nauka cieszy się...*, 2014) looks like a grim joke, for it is an increase from 0.39% to 0.42% of GDP (ibidem) while an expenditure of 3% of 'GDP on science is a necessity' (Osiatyński 2011). Although the government has announced that by 2020 these expenses will increase to a decent level of 2% of GDP (*Nauka cieszy się...*, 2014), these announcements, for several key reasons, must be treated with a high degree of scepticism. Firstly, for the post-communist twenty five years, the tendency in question has been precisely the opposite. Secondly, for seven years under the current governmental coalition very little has been done to reverse this trend. Thirdly, a civilisational leap in just five years in question seem therefore very unlikely, the more so that - fourthly - the parliamentary elections are expected twice before 2020, the results of which can change not only the government but also its scientific policy. Fifthly, optimistic statements of governments are a regular part of what is elegantly called the political game before any election, and less elegantly - the routine beguiling of voters.

#### 14. The order of science vs the order of bureaucracy

It could be argued that the semi-peripheral mentality is a bureaucratic mentality, which does not require creative thinking but commands and directives. 'Officials do not care for either culture or science [...] because they do not understand them. [...] The officials are not to talk to but to tell them what to do' (Nowak 2014a). 'Conversation with officials to refer to the order of imponderable values will not be helpful. The official will not understand the argument that the University does not accustom the workers to a particular profession but only learn to think and ask questions about the meaning of ethical behaviour, citizenship, membership of a national community, and the like; [...] that one thinks about things completely free of the association with the economy and well-being. The official will expect of academics conformity, obedience to constituted norms' (Nowak 2014a).

The problems of Polish universities are not primarily bureaucratic requirements bloated to ridiculous sizes, despite the fact that they blur high standards through parameterisation, mass education, the collapse of the culture of being, loss of mutual confidence and mental destruction of the foundations of the reliability of scientific work (Śliwerski 2014). The real problem is the incompetence of bureaucrats who can invent these requirements yet fail to meet them (Nowak 2014a).

The aforementioned Piotr Nowak deftly summarises the contradiction between the order of science and that of bureaucracy. 'Get away from us. I do not care what you think about us. You are not needed for us. Science can do without officials, the ministry, the successive directives, quirks and regulations. You are trying to force the authorities of academia into submission and obedience, what I perceive as a brutal attack on the freedom of thought. Violating the university autonomy, you threaten rectors with the introduction of the board of trustees, bring on the University another inspector with a certificate of graduation in Business Administration. You believe he will work wonders, will be more effective than many rectors who show - in your opinion - the "unproductive" - in your opinion - sentimentality, of protecting from liquidation disciplines seen as "unnecessary" from the perspective of the market values. Closing directions, releasing people from work, increasing the number of student groups, raising teaching hours - all this, of course, in the name of

saving, in the name of balancing expenditure and “income” from ministerial subsidies – this is your recipe for the renewal of the institutions of the University. You are dangerous parasites devastating the space of freedom, in which science develops. You do not understand it and therefore, like any parasite, you want to liquidate the body which allows your existence. Yet the death of academia will also be your death’ (Nowak 2014a).

The Ministerial reforms have created a complex bureaucratic system, ‘in which the scientist is treated as a notorious deadbeat who must be carefully accounted for at all times, for otherwise (s)he will not produce anything, and who is paid a pitiful pittance’ (Leszczyński 2015). In the case of Polish universities and research institutes, all limits of bureaucracy had long since been exceeded (ibidem).

According to the order of science, the university is not the place for wholesale distribution of diplomas and production of ‘badly educated graduates who end up unemployed not because they chose “unprofitable” direction, but because they are still – after five [...] years of studying – uneducated’ (Nowak 2014a). ‘The question of the usefulness of the humanities, their innovation and ability to apply research results in a free market’ (ibidem) is absurd. That is why it ‘has nothing to do with preparing students to a profession’ (ibidem). Financing teaching depending on the population of students is another absurdity. In my teaching practice, I happened to run classes for which students – despite the early hour – came in such numbers that there were not enough seats for them in the classroom so they stood in the hallway and sat on the stairs, rather than leave this optional lecture. Sometimes, however, I also read a lecture for two students interested in the subject, that I value much higher than a lecture for the hordes of troglodytes resistant to knowledge and not interested in studying.

## 15. Conclusion

The essence of a real university was always to be found in its eccentric and mad professors – legends and university authorities. But their time is running out (Suchodolska 2014). They have been murdered by dull bureaucrats, for whom the only known forms of freedom are the freedom of trade and of formal control. Frus-

trated politicians, uncertain of the prospect for the government after the next election, are willing to act quickly and thoughtlessly or not to take any necessary measures for fear of a decline in popularity among voters. Besides they do implement someone's group interests, though certainly not the interests of the university as a community of scholars, because they will no longer be scientists. Politicians are not willing or are unable to provide proper funding for science 'at the appropriate level, enabling the efficient functioning of the university, [...] they [thus] bring legislative changes forcing the reduction of spending at the expense of workers and the quality of work' (Osiński 2014). Once authoritative Professors, through their 'passive consent to human harm, risk rolling to the position occupied [...] by [...] people who received promotions and honours due to ignoring the problem of values and morality' (Osiński 2014). Professors, indeed, 'because of [their] experience and knowledge should not have any illusions about the results of neo-liberal and neo-colonial development of the country, including universities. [...] He/She should be [...] at the head of those who in the name of values, morality and humanity are protesting against the solutions, in which the short-term and apparent savings dominate over man' (Osiński 2014).

The point, however, is not pure, or even naive, idealism but the understanding of the functioning of the contemporary social world in which the state is an instrument of class rule, 'state policy lowers living standards in the interest of capital' (Wężyk 2014). Lowering taxes on the rich, giving tax relief to multinational corporations and maintaining an army of bureaucrats to manage a complex system of benefits (ibidem) and, especially, control are, at best, subsidies for the middle class while 'the established inequality drives expansion of the precariat' (ibidem), of which scholars are increasingly becoming a part of.

Among the New Year wishes for 2015, the greatest satisfaction came from the wishes of a post-graduate student of mine who wished me, among other things, 'relentless passion'. And that is what I am going to stick to in my scientific, teaching and publishing activities as long as my strength permits. With the support of the editorial team, it will find an expression in the publishing policy of our journal *Przestr-*

zeń Społeczna (*Social Space*). We shall not be subjected to the madness of modernisation through bureaucratisation and precarisation.

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