
Summaries

Przegląd Socjologiczny Sociological Review 39, 333-344

1991

Artykuł został zdigitalizowany i opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

*EDMUND WNUK-LIPIŃSKI*SOCIAL INEQUALITIES:
PRELIMINARY FORMULATION OF PROBLEM

Socio-political transformations after the Second World War led to changes in the system of classes and strata while the voiced ideology was placing social equality among fundamental goals of the new order. Meanwhile, the functioning of the new socio-political system led to gradational differentiation with new characteristics.

That new differentiation was being described in categories of social "restructuralization" (W. Wesolowski's conception of "decomposition of social position characteristics"). The conception of the thesis about decomposition — apart from its merits — resulted in concentrating attention on symptoms of obliterating class-stratum differences neglecting a competitive thesis about "cumulation of social position characteristics".

A point of departure for the new way of thinking about social inequalities is their definition: "to social inequalities we include these gradational defferentiations, on which individuals locate themselves in a socially invalid manner".

Acceptance of "social validation" as a criterion of distinguishing social inequalities has far-reaching theoretical consequences. Among others, problems of inequalities are not treated abstractly (static distributions of social position characteristics) and a conclusion is drawn that society cannot exist without some degree of gradational differentiations, with a postulate of egalitarianism referring to only some of them.

In further parts of the article, the author analyzes problems, which may emerge in the course of studies on social inequalities in consequence of the theoretical perspective accepted here.

*BARBARA POZNAŃSKA*SYSTEM OF INEQUALITIES IN THE SOCIETY OF
THE 2nd REPUBLIC OF POLAND (1918–1939)

Presentation of social inequalities poses a number of difficulties due to a big differentiation of the society in the 2nd Republic of Poland (intercrossing of class-stratum divisions of the society with the level of incomes, education, social origins or ethnic origins, and historical traditions) and a significant role played by the State in the economy. Hence difficulties connected with placing intermediate social strata between the bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy, on the one hand, and declassed elements, on the other hand.

Following Zarnowski, the most important dimensions of social inequalities have been

considered: wealth — mainly the level of incomes and consumption (especially the so-called income earmarked for current consumption — an important element of prestige), participation in the structures of power, and social prestige resulting from these factors.

Eight levels of consumption have been distinguished (accompanied by a much bigger number of strata and groups composing them). The most characteristic groups in the 2nd Republic of Poland were the aristocracy, the so-called *etatistic bourgeoisie*, and the *intelligentsia*. With regard to their life styles, participation in the structures of power and prestige, these groups constituted elements of different consumption levels.

Participation in the structures of power was connected with one's social origins in *intelligentsia-gentry-middle-class strata* (with a special role of the *etatistic bourgeoisie* — particularly after the May coup d'état). After 1926 an increasingly stronger role began to be played by groups representing the Polish legions, which were establishing gradually their closer and closer ties with the *bourgeoisie* and the landed aristocracy.

The problem of prestige has received relatively little attention in this article due to shortage of developed studies on the social awareness.

ANNA FIRKOWSKA-MANKIEWICZ

GENETIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOURCES OF DIFFERENTIATION IN INTELLECTUAL LEVELS

Contrary to ideological and political declarations voicing equality of all people in the sphere of individual characteristics and skills of man, such equality does not exist.

Solution of the dilemma of heredity and environment as factors shaping human personality and mainly its intellectual level consists today in a common acceptance of the interactionist stance. This solution arouses two problems: (1) what are proportions of genetic and environmental factors composing man's intellect?; and (2) through what mechanisms and environmental measures can intellectual efficiency be developed? This leads to two postulates for the State, which is interested in developing and utilizing its own intellectual potential. They are: a postulate speaking about the necessity of equalizing economic, educational and cultural conditions of families' existence in order to ensure an equal start, and a postulate assuming free social mobility (vertical mobility). These postulates belong to the ideology of the Polish People's Republic.

While analyzing the second problem in this article, attempts were made to investigate to what extent the postulate about egalitarianization of environment and school was influencing children's intellectual level. The conclusions presented here are based on the surveys encompassing children from Warsaw born in 1963, which took place in the years 1974–1976.

It appeared that egalitarianization of urban and school conditions had not only failed to level off individual differences among children but it had even made them more visible, while achievement of a hypothetical minimum of positive stimulation of the family environment had not been causing any longer a perceptible improvement in children's intellectual levels.

Thus, it can be expected that the policy of egalitarianization of environmental conditions uniform for all people will level off inequalities of genetic nature. On the other hand, there should be ensured a chance of social mobility irrespective of social origin, and political, religious affiliations, etc. according to possessed intellectual capacities.

IRENEUSZ BIALECKI

INEQUALITIES IN ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Evolution of the structure of social origin of those learning shows predominance of the process of autoselection over selection (entrance exams and drop-outs). The most important stage is here

continuation of education after completing the primary school at the secondary-education level. Workers' children go up to the so-called basic vocational schools for their most part while children of white collar workers — to grammar schools. It is at this level that reproduction of the occupational structure takes place.

Within the school system itself there can be observed a very big differentiation of levels of teaching and evaluating performance of students. A positive correlation between urbanization level and level of a school (along with subjectivity of grades) may lead to a situation when the best students from two different types of schools at the secondary-education level are separated by a bigger difference than the best and the worst students in the same school.

Entrance to secondary-level schools preparing for academic studies (mainly grammar schools), and among these schools — to those with higher teaching standards is strongly correlated with social origin, and even more strongly with parents' occupational structure (the share of intelligentsia children going up to universities is twice higher than the corresponding share of children of white collar workers and 18 times higher than that of unqualified workers' children).

In the social opinion, inequality in access to education is perceived an unequal distribution of the so-called schooling resources. Inequalities, whose source lies outside the school, should be levelled of by the school, which should ensure education as long as someone wishes to learn.

Theoretically, two types of inequality are possible: interschool differentiation and environmental (social) differentiation. This distinction is important for the educational policy (it allows to determine empirically where bigger outlays should be allocated).

Changes in the school system paving the way for reduction of inequalities existing outside the school should concern, among others, perschool education and shifting the selection stage to the highest possible stages of education (because each school selection always reflects socio-cultural differentiation).

After presenting the situation in Poland in the seventies, and against the background of socialist countries and some West European countries there are discussed principles of the past educational policy in Poland and formulated three general criteria of distribution of "schooling resources".

BOGDAN MACH

SOCIAL MOBILITY IN POLAND: 1945–1980

Social mobility was analyzed in this article from the viewpoint of development of the social system and with reference to social inequalities. An inequality in an uneven distribution of broadly-understood privileges, benefits and prerogatives among social positions. Mobility is a consequence of accessibility of social positions for individuals with regard to their social origin.

The problem of mobility concerns also equality in the process of recruiting to unequally rewarded positions and not equality in rewarding them. Inequality in positions coexisting with absence of mobility implies intergeneration reproduction of this inequality (perfect social stratification). Inequality in positions coexisting with such pattern of mobility, in which individuals from different social origin categories have equal chances to hold any positions, is inequality without stratification. In reality — departing always from its ideal pattern — the pattern of mobility decides to what extent inequality in positions assumes the form of stratification. The role played by inequality in positions within the system depends on a degree to which it is "stratified" (i.e. inherited). Accordingly, two interrelationships could be formulated here. With a fixed level of inequality in positions, the weaker the stratification (a) the stronger the social validation of this inequality (the so-called "democratic" legitimization of inequality) and (b) the higher the economic effectiveness of the system (it is here that the so-called pragmatic-systemic or functional elements of legitimization of the system occur).

In this way, social mobility through its relationship with legitimization is an important factor in stability of the system.

Further parts of the article contain results of empirical studies on mobility in Poland and their interpretation with regard to problems of inequalities. The article ends with presentation of mobility in international comparisons.

KRYSTYNA JANICKA

INEQUALITIES IN THE PROCESS OF ATTAINING SOCIAL POSITION

The analysis presented in this article has been based on the national survey of men aged 18–65 years conducted in 1978. After discussing the concept of inequalities and its operationalization, the author presents a theoretical context of studies on social inequalities and ambiguity of an equality criterion, as well as socio-economic effects of not perceiving by politicians a collision between principles of egalitarianism and effective functioning of social institutions. Next, the author defines basic assumptions and results of the correlations analysis referring to social determinants of the process of attaining a social position, and fixes the share of individual factors and all factors taken together in this process.

In the process of attaining a social position, the author has distinguished three sequences of inequalities: at the threshold of school career, at the threshold of professional career, and in relation to the final position (in the course of studies).

It has been determined which of the four characteristics of positions taken into account have the biggest impact on social position and what their role is according to social origin.

The final part of the article discusses correlates of the respondent's socio-economic position, and next correlates of his (her) social position attained on the first job and – at the threshold of professional career.

ANDRZEJ RYCHARD

INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM ON SOCIAL INEQUALITIES. PROPOSITION OF SCHEME FOR ANALYSIS

Apart from the proposition of a scheme for analysis the article contains hypotheses concerning the influence exerted by the political and economic system on emergence of social inequalities in Poland at the end of the seventies and at the beginning of the eighties. To start with the author expresses his opinion on alternative views on sources of inequalities: the system or the realization of principle "to everybody according to his(her) work".

The main analytical proposition is a research directive stating that social inequalities should be analyzed jointly with the problem of their validity (or its absence).

The scheme of analysis is based on distinction made among three types of relations between the political and economic system, and three types of social inequalities connected with them. A fundamental relation is dominance of politics over economics existing in a more overt or covert manner at times, which leads to a situation, in which commonly practised principles are not validated, while validated principles are not common. There dominate two contradictory principles "to everybody according to his(her) work" and "to everybody according to his(her) political usefulness". Any attempt at more consistent introduction of one of these principles undermines the other one. The problem of reformability of the system may be approached in this context.

At the end of the article, the author poses a question about the shape of mechanisms generating social inequalities at the present stage of introducing the economic reform.

JOANNA SIKORSKA

DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN CONSUMPTION

Consumer goods being an object of distribution are produced in conditions of limited resources and they do not satisfy all social needs. The main problem here is to construct such mechanism of distribution, which would be socially accepted and – controlled.

There exist two principles of consumption fund distribution: according to quantity and quality of work and according to needs (social alimentation). If differentiation of consumption (as an effect of operation of distribution mechanisms) is to be subject to changes then description of this differentiation must be referred to a norm based on scientific or social criteria. Two kinds of norms, i.e. measurable ones e.g. biological or welfare minimum and qualitative ones express a direction of changes in proportions of distribution. Inequalities are perceived as socially unauthorized differences. Definition of these norms and their boundaries calls for studies both on an area of acceptance of effects of the existing mechanism of goods distribution and – on social vision of justice and equality itself. These studies may be helpful in predicting social conflicts.

The performed studies have revealed that the level (and structure) of consumption are affected cumulatively by socio-occupational and demographic characteristics of households, with education and number of persons in a family generating deeper differences in consumption levels than socio-occupational category. The level of education (higher) is linked with a smaller number of children and a wider scope of using the social fund.

Uneven economic development (periods of growth and slow-down) was causing, apart from a permanent deficit of consumer goods and sharp increases of prices, further consequences such as unbalanced growth rate of consumption, differentiated growth rate of wages in different branches (generating a spiral of pressures on wage increases), and acceleration of growth of cash incomes in periods of deteriorating market supply. Simultaneously, proportions of wages among social groups did not change, while growth of absolute differences in wages itself (accompanied by relatively insignificant growth of real wages) led to the deepening of inequalities.

The situation of chronic shortage of goods leads to creation of privileges. The system of privileges in the second half of the seventies transformed itself from a mechanism protecting living standards into a covert and uncontrolled mechanism of rewarding certain social groups. Moreover, pay privileges appeared against the background of division of the economy into sectors (productive and nonproductive) and branches, which caused that the same occupation was remunerated differently according to branch, etc. Branch preferences were strengthening inequalities among regions and between urban and rural areas. Those phenomena found their reflection also in distribution of the consumption fund, with the welfare fund growing more slowly than the wage fund.

The performed studies have confirmed the hypothesis that a common character of proegalitarian attitudes is rather an index of intensification of the sense of social inequality than a desire to realize absolute egalitarianism.

ELŻBIETA SKOTNICKA-ILLASIEWICZ

GENESIS OF INEQUALITIES IN PARTICIPATION IN CULTURE

A relatively homogeneous code is a condition of existence and proper functioning of complex social systems. The language constitutes a base of this code. Within the expanding system of symbolic meanings a special role is played by the canon of representative (national) culture, which is a basis for communication among members of the national culture and for the understanding of the historical heritage (one of main elements of national identity). The sustaining of this identity lies at the foundations of consolidation of social and political interests of a contemporary nation.

Contemporary democratic societies transmit the cultural heritage through three institutions: family, school and institution of culture (mainly mass media). To fulfill this task it is necessary to know the code and create a previous communication channel (basing on reliability of a sender).

In the interwar period, the intelligentsia stratum was performing a model-creating function in accordance with its tradition of a carrier of the cultural heritage during the partitions time. Sociopolitical transformations, especially after 1948, deprived it of this function and negated the identity of the intelligentsia culture of tradition with the nation's cultural heritage.

Directives flowing from official channels ordered not the widening of the historical culture by including into it peasant and working-class traditions but the cramming (and impoverishment) of the historical culture of the nation into frames of newly-created culture, which did not have its carrier and was falsified under a meticulous supervision of the official ideology.

The intelligentsia despite official endeavours – continuing to affirm its importance not only due to traditions but also its real role in the industrialization process – found itself in privileged conditions as a result of its contact with the real cultural tradition.

Peasants and workers were deprived of their culture of traditions in consequence of great migrations (contrary to beliefs that social mobility processes would change their cultural orientation automatically) and they became an anonymous mass.

Artificially maintained traditions of social struggles in the situation of political success following 1945 could not be understood by newly-emerging industrial environments.

On the other hand, the promoted model of social aspirations connected with acceptance of functions of education and participation in culture was closest to the intelligentsia traditions, which preserved its model-creating functions after all. The preserving of these functions involved a sacrifice of 36-year sense of status discordance, which led to a growing gap between the intelligentsia and the society at large springing from a conviction about a fuller participation in the national culture and fuller interpretation of contemporary times on the basis of this culture. Consequently, there was undermined the idea of equal chances in access to the national culture. That inequality was caused by impervious and unreliable channels of education and mass communication, whose function should consist in levelling cultural differences perceived as socially unjust.

Social needs released a pressure on creation of reliable auxiliary channels, which could be performing functions of integrating the entire nation. One of them was the system of religious education. The Catholic Church was always deeply involved in the main stream of the national heritage and, moreover, it was playing till recently the role of the main representative of culture from outside groups of direct reference in the countryside. However, that was always an influence exerted in accordance with a doctrine – this time the Church doctrine.

Growth of social awareness and consecutive socio-political upheavals paved the way for releasing the flow of information outside censorship. But that information system, unlike the Church one, was largely of an exclusive character. The situation changed after August 1980 but the question remains whether and when barriers to participation in the national culture as a result of the erroneous policy of education and mass media will be levelled off.

JOANNA SIKORSKA
ANDRZEJ RYCHARD
EDMUND WNUK-LIPIŃSKI

SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN POLAND – INSTEAD OF SUMMING UP

The article has two goals, i.e. more precise definition of key concepts used for describing social inequalities and formulation of a research problem ensuing from the authors' stance.

The basic concept is the term "social inequalities" perceived against the background of such concepts as "social differentiation" and "validation". While focusing our attention on the problem

area of inequalities we place emphasis on dynamics (process), but when describing differentiation our attention is paid to the effect (state) of this process, i.e. to (a) position of individuals (groups) on gradation or nominal scales or (b) we describe the picture of stratification in social awareness.

We are interested in the mechanism of emerging inequalities and principles of its operation only from the viewpoint of its validity. In order to identify an invalid differentiation it is necessary to confront differentiation with social vision of desirable state, i.e. social norm.

Norms function at three levels:

- at the level of ideology – as canons of social justice boiling down to two principles: (a) application of an equal measure in evaluating work, and (b) equality of chances;
- at the level of socio-economic policy where principles of “justice” and “equality” are translated into the language of economy – in different proportions. Alongside these mechanisms there still operate spontaneous processes;
- at the level of social awareness where visions of justice are not always conformable with the official ideology and, moreover, they reflect a degree of validations of actually functioning mechanisms of distribution.

Inclusion of the “validity” category to conceptualization of the social inequalities notion assumed investigation of a certain mechanism, i.e. analysis of inequalities as a process. We want to describe in categories of inequalities invalidated principles of access to goods and to social roles (positions).

Validity appears in two types of phenomena:

1. as a certain “objectively existing mechanism”, owing to which the system attains its identity (among others, through allocation of individuals and groups to particular positions)
2. as recognizing concrete mechanisms creating inequalities to be just. The combining of analysis of inequalities with the concept of validity will allow to show a process how inequalities arise in the context of wider mechanism of steering (exercising of power) in political and economic systems.

The official ideology apart from two basic principles (norms) serving validation of social differentiations (“to everybody according to his(her) needs” and “to everybody according to his (her) work”) contains still the third principle, which does not appear overtly but determines considerably the operation of the two earlier principles. That is a principle “to everybody according to his (her) functional usefulness for the system” assuming its concrete form of “according to his (her) usefulness for accomplishment of goals considered to be important by the authorities at a given time”. A general characteristic of this mechanism is rewarding loyalty towards some non-statutory norms and not performing a professional role. The other characteristic is a covert form of rewarding combined with illegality of these principles. The above characteristics may provide a point of departure for operationalization of the principle of “functional dispositiveness”.

This presence in practice of the three types of principles, which are mutually incoherent prompts a supposition that the system does not have any coherent normative basis at all, which would allow to validate social differentiations. It leads to the vicious circle of crises and renewals, where particular principles occur with a different force.

ZYGMUNT GOSTKOWSKI

INDICES OF GAP BETWEEN TOWN AND VILLAGE IN REALIZED PURCHASING POWER AND INDIVIDUAL MOTORIZATION IN THE DECADE OF 1960–1970. METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSALS

One of aspects of the social macrostructure problems are problems connected with a gap existing between the town and the village. Due to existence of such a gap a postulate of equalizing living conditions assumes fundamental importance. This gives rise, however, to elaboration of

possibly synthetical national indices and analysis methods allowing to measure the situation in this field and follow its development over time. Their existence would allow a current evaluation of degree to which this postulate is realized in the entire society.

Hence, it is the aim of this study to propose some such indices and analyze realization of the egalitarianization postulate in relation town-village over the decade 1960–1970. The author presents indices of this gap between the town and the village in the field of realized purchasing power (understood as value of retail sales in socialized trade per capita) and individual motorization (e.g. the number of registered passenger cars per 1000 inhabitants). The analysis is supplemented with methodological conclusions. The article ends with outlining a proposition of further studies.

GRZEGORZ LISSOWSKI

DECOMPOSITION OF SOCIAL MOBILITY TABLES

Two components can be distinguished in the mobility process: exchangeable mobility connected with individual characteristics and structural mobility i.e. mobility forced out by characteristics of social structure. Volume of exchangeable mobility is connected with openness of society. While distinguishing these components of mobility, two approaches were applied: (a) traditional one boiling down to the formulas: “exchangeable mobility = total mobility – structural mobility”, and (b) exchangeable mobility is treated as a basic one and observed mobility is a modification – by a structural factor – of the basic formula (by an exchange of positions).

A new approach to the analysis of social mobility has been applied in the article. It consists in presenting a table of mobility in the form of flows in network and in using the theory of flows in networks for description of social mobility and distinguishing its kinds. This approach has made it possible to elaborate a new, fuller typology of socio-occupational mobility. Types of mobility distinguished within it are connected with different sources of mobility: structural mobility – with changes of structure, step by step mobility – with characteristics of social structure, and exchangeable mobility – with individual characteristics of particular persons. Step by step mobility distinguished from traditionally understood exchangeable mobility can be divided into: (a) that connected with changes in structure, and (b) that connected with an exchange of positions.

The author has also described methods of calculating volumes of mobility, both that observed and potential for all kinds of mobility. This is accompanied by presentation of ways of decomposition of mobility tables into a number of component tables representing particular kinds of mobility. The author also proposes new relative measures of mobility allowing to compare volumes of particular kinds of mobility in tables of mobility compiled for various aggregations.

The performed analysis has also encompassed relations between used criteria for evaluation of openness of social structure. The discovered contradictions between them justify a thesis that a comprehensive evaluation of social structure openness cannot be restricted to information contained in mobility tables. The analysis of the ways of evaluating networks used in the theory of flows in networks has allowed to determine which additional information about the process of attaining socio-occupational positions should constitute a basis for evaluation of social structure openness.

MICHAŁ POHOSKI
SEPPÖ PÖNTINEN

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL ORIGIN AND EDUCATION IN THE PROCESS OF ATTAINING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION IN POLAND AND IN FINLAND

Comparison of social structure and mobility in two countries with different socio-economic and political systems may allow to determine both common and specific characteristics concerning mobility and advancement.

In order to analyze the process of socio-economic achievements, there were compared achievements in the field of education and professional and economic position compiling the path model parameters for each of them. The data presented in the article are based on the findings of studies carried out in 1972. Ultimately, 6,800 persons aged 30–39 years from Poland, and 215 and 174 persons aged 25–44 years from Finland and Norway respectively were encompassed by the analysis. Original samples were much bigger.

Among variables analyzed in both surveys were respondents' incomes, place of dwelling, occupation, prestige of occupation, education, father's occupation, father's education, sex and age. It was impossible to secure full comparability of the variables.

In the result of the analysis, taking into account a number of reservations due to not full comparability of the variables, there was discovered a general similarity of the structure of indices of the process of socio-economic achievements in the three countries. It must be resulting most probably from functional requirements posed by the contemporary economy. Apart from similarities, the authors discovered also differences in the degree to which social origins affect achievements in the area of education and social position. On the other hand, no differences were discovered in the impact of social origins on incomes, but it must be remembered that a category of self-employed persons was not included into the analysis.

MAGDALENA SOKOŁOWSKA

HEALTH DIMENSION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

A correlation between different mortality indices and social categories of population has been observed for a long time. A similar tendency is displayed by indices of diseases and of biological and psychic functioning. The analysis described in the article encompassed difficulties and problems encountered by sociological studies of health in the aspect of social inequalities. These difficulties concern both the existing empirical materials (available statistics of morbidity do not lend themselves for any deeper sociological analysis) and gaps in the theory.

A matter of fundamental importance for the formulating of research area is choice of indices of good and bad health and the building of a social model of health. Empirical studies of this model should be focussed on three areas (indices): (1) factors of risk; (2) state of health; and (3) use of health service. (In the future the index "state of health" should be replaced by "not full fitness"). The next problem to solve is choice of social inequality indices relevant to problems of health. The British mortality statistics use the social class concept (from I to V). This concept has, however, changed since the time these statistics were first introduced. A point of departure in the studies discussed in this article was a socio-occupational group composed of three variables: education, occupation and held position.

Various studies, among others the famous British "The Black Report" confirm an inter-relationship between social position and health, and indicate that deaths and diseases are connected with inequalities in living conditions or more broadly with this which can be called "style of life" (it was stated that differences in access to health service did not condition differences in health). Direction of this interrelationships is, however, unknown. The analysis shows, among others, that there can be questioned the hypothesis linking closely the lowering of socio-occupational position with a bad state of health, because differences in health among particular social groups exist in all periods of life and are the strongest in the reproduction age.

For the time being a precise determination of relationships between social position (class) and health is rather difficult not only due to changing contents of concepts related with social position problems but also due to a conviction that a relationship between social class and health is not an outcome of a single process. More light should be shed on the problem of upbringing of children and its relationship with vertical mobility and state of health. This problem points out how imprecise the occupational class is as a predictor of future social position and health. Occupational classes are heterogeneous and, consequently, both patterns, housing conditions and values are too diversified

and such is also social experience of persons, which should be taken into account in studies of mobility and health conducted over appropriately long periods of time. Lack of more precise knowledge about social structure and its implications for behaviour and its changes is the main cause of uncertainty how to approach the problem at all.

Sociological studies are most often focussed on relations between a specific state of health (or illness) and some other single component of a continuous process connected with it.

However, it is our main goal to understand structural influences on life cycles of individuals or relationships between the structure, individual behaviours and effects in the sphere of health.

WIELISLAWA WARZYWODA-KRUSZYŃSKA

SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN THEIR INTERGENERATIONAL ASPECT

The studies dealing with social inequalities have been omitting so far intergenerational comparisons, because for ideological reasons the belonging to a given generation was not treated as a factor behind a handicapped social position.

As a result of socio-political, demographic, civilizational and customs changes, the concept of "youth or — young generation" has undergone changes. Among others, the period of life called "youth" has been elongated, and the percentage share of this category in the entire population has increased. And one of major consequences of these changes has been a growing gap in education between generations. Moreover, due to an increased share in process of industrialization and in modern production, as well as observance of an ideological principle of evaluating people according to their input of work there has been changed the youth-adults relation in its subjective dimension. The young generation has rejected the authority of their elders and demanded equal rights in access to desirable goods and values, and equal principles of social differentiation used in relation to both generations. The existing situation has caused that young people have begun to perceive their position in categories of social inequalities and evaluate it as inferior. In connection with an overwhelming influence of the centralized authority on distribution of goods and material standard of particular social categories and groups, youth addresses its claims mainly to the authority and it is along this line that the principal source of conflict begins to appear.

The analysis performed in the article is an attempt at proving how in the situation of checked social mobility based on democratic mechanisms of selection (replaced by political loyalty criteria), on the one hand, and enhanced sense of value of the young generation based on acquired education and qualifications, on the other hand, it was possible for the sense of relative social deprivation with regard to possibilities of occupational promotion, earnings and access to material goods, including such basic ones as housing, and a possibility of shaping one's own life by oneself to appear among the young generation.

The empirical basis for this article has been provided by the surveys carried out in Lodz in December 1980 — January 1981 within the so-called "Lodz Series" on a representative sample of married and professionally active men aged 21 — 65 years amounting to 975 persons (hence omission of the category of people in their postproductive age in the analysis).

ANITA WOJCIECHOWSKA

MATERIAL SITUATION OF SOCIO-OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS AND ITS PERCEPTION. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES OVER THE YEARS 1965—1980

The article aims at evaluation of an increase in material affluence of the society as declared by the socialist ideology and especially of reduction of disproportions in this sphere between social classes and strata, and reflection of changes in material situation in social awareness.

Material situation has been determined by means of housing conditions and possession of durable consumer goods. The society's housing situation is an area on which cumulate global effects

of economic, political, social and demographic phenomena and processes — both planned and spontaneous.

The social differentiation of housing conditions has been approached on the basis of the following characteristics: (a) forms of flat use; (b) separate dwelling; (c) size of flat; (d) number of dwellers per flat and room; and (e) available technical-sanitary amenities (number of dwellers per one flat appears to represent a relatively good empirical indicator of a general housing standard).

The analysis encompassed next relationships, which occur consecutively between housing conditions and material equipment of households, on the one hand, and particular characteristics of social position such as education, incomes, affluence, social origin, occupation and age, on the other hand. The housing conditions appeared to correlate most strongly with socio-occupational status, and equipment of households with education and occupation.

Despite the fact that differences and disproportions in material equipment of households in durable consumer goods underwent a reduction over the years 1965—1980, while the range of goods commonly possessed was expanded, a characteristic feature of the late seventies was a conviction about growing inequalities. Egalitarianism became even more important for the society in the situation when its realization was threatened. The intelligentsia was the group characterized by the strongest sense of deprivation in 1980 even though that group could boast the highest level of material conditions (despite the fact that the level of earnings was rising relatively more slowly in this group). The greatest sense of dissatisfaction could be observed among young representatives of this group.

It can be generally stated that evaluation of the same level of housing conditions is connected with socio-occupational characteristics and financial situation of families, while housing requirements and aspirations — with level of education and age.

IRENA MACHAJ

PROBLEM OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN TOWN EXPANDING RAPIDLY UNDER INFLUENCE OF INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX IN CONSTRUCTION

The article is a modest contribution to the discussion on problems of social inequalities. It deals with selected problems of inequalities exemplified by the situation prevailing in a small town (Leczyca) in Lublin administrative province, which has been witnessing intensified social processes released by a coal-mine being built in its vicinity since the mid-seventies. The survey, on which the article is based, was conducted in 1979 on a representative sample of 520 inhabitants of Leczyca.

The aim of analyses performed in the article is to investigate main dimensions of socio-demographic differentiation and determine those factors which account for the biggest differentiation of the local community and which may become a source of the sense of injustice among certain categories of the town's dwellers.

The basic thesis contained in the article says that as a result of inflow of new inhabitants and objective changes in the town's socio-economic situation there take place major transformations in its social structure, which lead to increasingly bigger and wider social differentiations (new occupations, bigger differentiation of wages and housing conditions, etc.). These transformations creating new possibilities for socio-economic promotion lead to emergence of inequalities and social conflict. Such inequalities and conflicts spring up from the main division of the inhabitants into "old residents" and "newcomers".

ZDZISŁAW ZAGÓRSKI

SELECTED PROBLEMS OF CLASSES AND STATE OF STUDIES ON CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE CLASS IN POLAND

The article is composed of two parts. The first part discusses old and new research problems concerning social classes in general and the contemporary Polish middle class in particular. The

second part describes the state of studies on the middle class in Poland and lists major book publications of both sociologists and historians.

It is difficult to present the state of studies on a chosen social class taking into account the unsatisfactory state of the theory of society and the theory of classes, and shortages of empirical studies on social classes.

In connection with changes in services in Poland, both composition and situation of the middle class have changed, while the prevailing ideology is sometimes used, whenever a "desirable" situation occurs, to manipulate the concept of middle class and goes as far as suggest its complete liquidation calling it "an upper class force threatening the foundations of socialism..."

There has not been settled satisfactorily as yet a fundamental question of boundaries among social and non-social types and forms of ownership existing in Poland.

The literature of the subject has not emphasized strongly enough relations between economic, political, cultural, ideological and awareness characteristics of classes, which generates a tendency to attribute mechanically to aggregations considered to be classes oftentimes outdated, traditional-historical political, cultural, awareness, etc. characteristics. Descriptions of the Polish middle class often contain stereotypes based on superficial observations of West-European societies from the 19th century and the Russian society till the 30's of the present century.

The analysis of a specific situation of the middle class allows to propose for verification the following typology of the contemporary Polish middle class: A – Narrowly – middle class type; B – Widely-middle class type; and C – Open-middle class type, which is divided into: (1) widely-middle class type, (2) proletariat-working class type; (3) peasant type, (4) intelligentsia type, (5) socialized type, (6) opportunist type.

Till the present time, there has not come out in Poland a single book publication devoted exclusively to the middle class as a certain whole class. The results of studies completed hitherto are not comparable and they are unable to abolish existing stereotypes of the official propaganda.

The past studies concerned as a rule either broader issues of social differentiation of urban and rural population or they were describing selected middle class categories.

Finally, it could be said that our knowledge about the middle class really existing in Poland is at least unsatisfactory if not fictitious in fact. Hence an urgent need for a comprehensive examination of these problems so that, among others, ignorance about the social reality could not be utilized by doctrinaires and manipulators as tools of a harmful policy.