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Introduction to the theory of security

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INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORY OF SECURITY

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ABSTRACT

The article contains the base of theory of security based on of humanistic sociology. The main elements are: the definitions of basic concepts (security, danger, crisis), the determinants of personal security, strategies of creating security in the dimension personal, social and organizational. The proposed definition of security appears to considerably regroup and arrange knowledge in the field of security, stimulate in a new way the understanding of the notion of security, provides foundation for quantitative and qualitative research and in some measure allows for mathematisation of this field of knowledge.

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ASSUMED METHODOLOGY

The issues of security are present in all areas of study and human activity. So widespread an interest in them is brought about by the psychological process of decision making¹, essential part of which, in relation to risk taken, comprise the processes of anticipated actions effectiveness assessment. A degree of certainty of accomplishing one's own ambitions and dreams is nothing but a security level for days to come. Therefore, security is a state of confidence, lack of threat, peace².

Every human-being's endeavors are determined by environmental and social surroundings, in which they notice opportunities and threats affecting their

majority of dreams and ambitions are accomplished in cooperation with other people. Every type of cooperation predisposes certain arrangement which is indispensable in order to achieve a satisfactory effectiveness of action. Arrangement and the purpose it serves are the basic attributes of every organization, society and social groups included.

The above determinants suggest that at the center of the research on the security issues there stand free and responsible human-beings, who are the only ones of all beings to exert a direct influence on what they are, and to express their freedom by making independent choices³. To assume this methodology means a direction of thinking rather different from one postulated in the literature on the subject. The assumed approach is primarily focused on individual

¹ See, J. Koziński, *Psychologiczna teoria decyzji*, Warszawa: PWN, 1975, p. 57.

² See, *Uniwersalny Słownik Języka Polskiego*, PWN, ONLINE access: www.pwn.pl, as of 10 August 2009.

³The main idea of existentialism. See W. Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii*, Volume III, Warszawa: PWN, 1981 p. 352.

human-beings and their creation of an individual sense of security, the outcome of such a creation being the functioning principles of organizations, societies and social groups. They all provide a sense of greater confidence in meeting individual needs and ambitions. The approach is encompassed within the theory of methodology called humanistic sociology (Weber's sociology of understanding).

THE BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Proposed definition of security

On the basis of the assumed methodology so formulated, and assuming also that:

- the most important need of humans is creating the matter of their own existence in accordance to one's own beliefs;
- in the assessment of the level of security every human-being takes into account above all the influence of social, environmental and material surroundings on the capability of creating the matter of their own existence;
- human-beings does not perceive Reality as photo images, but they create imageries which are unique to a particular personality and are internal representations of an external environment;⁴

security may be defined as a *conviction (certainty) of a subject⁵ who is able to retain what is precious and valuable for them:*

⁴ See, J. Koziński, *Psychologiczna ...*, op. cit., p. 59.

⁵A subject is only a particular human-being who learns about reality and acts within it. The Subject is not a human-being perceived from a point of view of another human-being. This derives directly from the philosophical conceptions of Kant, Descartes and Heidegger. Such an understanding of subject is coherent with Plato's definition, which was simplified by Aristotle, who deprived it of an attribute: *bestows being on others*. Despite this simplification he stated that the subject is only the concretes that really exist. Everything that remains: composite substances, categories, species, accidents, dependencies, etc. exist solely in relation with subjects, thus they are objects. See,

- *concrete beings⁶ from the subject's surroundings, their system and their correlations (configuration of beings);*
- *attributes and essential accidents⁷; which are critical in the process of:*
- *meeting the basic needs of the subject – which secure the existence of the subject*
- *(and) forming, out of one's own free will, a way of existence – the essence⁸.*

In slightly simplified version, the definition may be formulated as follows: *security is subject's conviction, that it can still exist and shape freely its own existence.*⁹

Security Configuration

A system of internal and external values, which are precious for the subject because of its sense of certainty that further existence and development are possible¹⁰ may be named as security configuration. It is continually formed by the subject in the course of changes which take place both internally and in its surroundings. Hence, security may be perceived as a process of continual formation of security configuration, which is a combination of:

- appreciated internal values;

W. Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii*, Volume I, op. cit., pp. 110-118.

⁶Concrete being – an object is everything that a learning subject observes in their surroundings – these may be humans, material objects, social organisations such as: state, enterprise or family.

⁷Attributes and accidents of the subject are these features and accidents, which constitute the essence of its existence according to, and for it.

⁸Thus in a being which exists as concrete, a specific compound is reflected, that is, a dissimilarity of elements which form the being, that "it is or it exists", and "what it is". See: M. A. Krapiec, A. Maryniarczyk, *Byt*, in: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, wyd. Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu: ONLINE version: <http://ptta.pl/pef/> - as of 10 August 2009, pp. 3-4.

⁹ The same argument was presented in: J. Prońko, *Bezpieczeństwo państwa, zarys teorii problemu i zadań administracji publicznej*, Bielsko Biala: WSA, 2007, p. 18 and previous.

¹⁰Development shall be defined as a change/diversion in a direction expected by a subject. A change/diversion in a reverse direction is a regression – according to the subject.

- essential ambitions;
- elements of surroundings and relationships between them.

Holistic evaluation of these three features forms a personal sense of security and depends on knowledge, personality and worldview¹¹ in a particular individual.

Dynamic sense of security

Security, like almost all the concepts of language, it is not accurate. Ambiguity of this subject is connected with subjective assessment of occurring phenomena, around the given subject or in it. As long as he believes that these phenomena have little negative impact on his existence, until he feels safe. Those fears that he will consider as irrelevant, depends on his assessment of his skills. Because safety is a result of the perception of the body: the reality and himself, in the context of the future existence and development.

Human life is full of various kinds of concerns about the existence and the ability to create its content. Many of them belong to the category of the risks of daily life. Common, frequently occurring, accustomed to the entity and the other members of the community. Their presence, even though it causes a concerns, does not affect security.

Sometimes, however, there are serious concerns about rising consciousness of the subject, changes in the environment or a subjective impression of increased intensity of the risks of everyday life. These concerns are forcing the operator to take action to reduce the sense of threat by attempting to change the rules of the community and creation of new forms of protection. Often, however, these concerns are not strong enough to motivate the subject to radical activities and focusing only on them.

Sometimes the perceived escalation of threats, their proximity and the size of

potential losses in the security configuration, forcing the subject to intensification of activities until the full involvement of the subject in maintaining the current security configuration. It is identified with the phase of the crisis.

If, despite the company's full commitment to the security configuration will be destroyed as a result of a traumatic event or loss of the meaning of life, then a crisis reaches up him.

Each of these stages is associated with a different level of concern, the growing strength of negative emotions and increasing involvement in the rescue and reconstruction of the security configuration. Security can therefore graduate of its lack of security, through a range of *imperfect security* for complete safety. The last one is *unattainable* goal of human endeavors and effort, this is the idea.

Everybody start their journey through life starting from a state in which the needs, dreams, aspirations offer hope of further existence. And if there is a hope, some level of safety exists. Entity builds its security configuration based on their own experience, their knowledge, skills, learned in the process of raising standards and patterns of behavior. These elements underlie a permanent modification during flow of time and future events. The result is still a new approach to security configuration, thus correcting it, improving, modifying. Therefore, creating a sense of security is a process of constant creation around a subject and conditions for achieving the higher levels. This process continues throughout a person's life, causing changes around him.

In this context, the security is a process of continuous creation and individual changes of security configurations. However, an observer from the outside will see that it is the result of abrasion of the aspirations of many actors (players) from social life. It seems reasonable that it was the result of social consensus rather than fighting. However, there is not

¹¹Although these aspects/features seem relatively constant, they also evolve in the course of acquiring knowledge and experience.

always such a possibility. Although John Forbes Nash Jr (1928 -) pointed out that each a multi-stage and non-cooperative game has stable equilibrium which gives the optimal level of security for all players. Safety, seen from the perspective of an external and impartial observer is an undisturbed development of coexisting players.

Danger

In psychology and psychiatry danger is defined as:

- difficult situation that occurs when there is a concern about the loss of highly prized values (life, career, income, object of love);¹²
- deterioration of the current situation of a man involving the rapid decomposition of the relationship between the values he shared and possibilities of preserving them wherein the source of this decomposition are the changes, that occurred in the man or in his environment.¹³

Quoted definitions corresponds with proposed definition of safety. Important features of danger are:

- subjectivity of assessment;
- the possibility of forfeiture of values recognized by the entity as valuable;
- state of emotional discomfort - in conjunction with the existing or potential situation.

Following the ideas of Socrates, who was looking for common things in definitions, in contrast to the Stoics, that what is diversified, can be formulated the following definition: *a danger is a situation, in which a subject loses belief (certainty) for the ability to maintain what is valuable for him:*

- *specific entities from the subject's environment, their system or mutual relations (configuration of existence);*
- *attributes and perquisites;*
- *necessary in the process;*
- *meeting the basic needs of the entity-ensuring the existence;*
- *(and) forming, according to will, mode of existence - being.*

Simplifying the definition above we can formulate, that dangers are those phenomena, which in the assessment of the subject can deprive him existence, actual contents of existence or comprise a barrier in his development. These phenomena may affect the entity, directly or indirectly, by change (or liquidation) precise existences from the environment of the subject, their system and mutual relations, interpreted by a subject as important for his existence and freedom of shaping its contents.

Risk assessment is based on the relevant facts. Because most people do not collect such descriptions and do not have sufficient knowledge to interpret them, therefore, they are based on the opinions provided by the media and representatives of the government. If people everywhere are bombarded with stories about accidents and their tragic consequences, or information about the crime, even if they have not experienced the effects of such events, they consider it as a significant threat¹⁴.

These considerations and the proposed definition of risk suggests the possibility of "objective" assessment of the risks. It is based on a social agreement - consensus - or arbitrary determination by the government. attributes and important people's perquisites and beings from their environment, which decides about sense of security.¹⁵ Such

¹²See, *Encyklopedyczny słownik psychiatrii*, edit. L. Krzyżanowski, S. Pużyński, Warsaw: Państw. Zakład Wydawnictw Lekarskich 1986, p. 535

¹³ See, Z. Ratajczyk, *Oblicza ludzkiej zaradności*, [in:] *Człowiek w sytuacji zagrożenia: kryzysy, katastrofy, kataklizmy*, red. K. Popiołek, Poznań: Stowarzyszenie Psychologia i Architektura, 2001, p. 16.

¹⁴ In assessing the likelihood of events most often we use the Bayes theorem.

¹⁵ In Polish law to clarify the importance for the safety of people beings is defined as the critical infrastructure See.

clarification valuable for people of a certain "species" - statistically - the recognition of safety. It does not refer directly to the cognitive subject, but determines what functions in the safety area, community has to fulfill. In other words, what values and entities, and their specific configurations have to be protected, what pathologies should we fight with, how to prepare people against threats and how to bring up people.

Crisis

Similarly, the concept of danger, so the crisis and crisis situation are defined in many ways. In psychology and psychiatry, the concept of crisis is defined as follows:

- *crises result from the obstacles on the way to important goals, which people feel that they are not able to overcome with the usual choices and behaviors.*¹⁶
- *crisis is a transitional state of internal imbalances, caused by critical event or life events, requiring significant changes.*¹⁷

Analyzing the statements quoted above, you can see a basic feature of this phenomenon. The reality of the crisis consists of two essential elements: an event or situation and reaction for it. The essence of the crisis is not lying in the event, or situation, but in subjective reaction, which is expressed in specific perception of an event or situation and the emotional reaction. Both of these elements - perception and reaction, together constitute the basis in crisis behavior. That is why the basic characteristic of the crisis is idiosyncrasy - what for an individual will be a difficult situation to moderate, not an easy issue, but not unsolvable, for the other it can be absolute disaster. Crisis is simply a

person's subjective feeling and therefore it can not be compared with another, perhaps objectively looking, a similar situation. Every man sees the world through the prism of their own experiences, feelings and knowledge. There are no two people who would also have the same experience, knowledge and the same emotional structure.¹⁸

Emergency is always accompanied by an internal imbalance, which is associated with extreme anxiety, constitutes a major motivating factor for taking action, to restore the state of equilibrium. For this reason, the crises are often mistakenly equated with stress, which is a dynamic relationship between the individual adaptive capabilities and the requirements of the situation. Stress in some psychological theories (Cannon's homeostatic theory, the concept of Selye's) is treated as a reaction caused by the body's mental attitude to human stressors. The main task of this reaction is the liberation of the internal potential of the body: the physical and intellectual in order to adaptation to the situation. Moderate stress increases the strength to cope with difficult situations. However, too strong or too long contributes to mental health problems and increases the likelihood of serious physical illness in the future.

The crisis, as many authors emphasize appears only in situations of a strong threat to the existence of a specific person, and the feasibility of realizing its important objectives. Referring to definition of safety, should be noted that the emergency occurs, when individual configuration of safety will be destroyed up until that point that it would require extensive reconstruction. Security Configuration is what gives a person the relative certainty of realizing important objectives in life. The damage causes loss of meaning in life and forces to recovery. Without confidence of realization important objectives in life in satisfactory way, there is no

Act of crisis management 26th April 2007. However, attributes and perquisites, which the Polish state has undertaken to protect, was contained in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland on 2 April 1997

¹⁶ See, G. Caplan, *Principles of preventive psychiatry*, New York: Basic Books, 1964.

¹⁷ See, *Wybrane zagadnienia interwencji kryzysowej*, red. W. Badura - Madej, Warszawa: Wyd. INTERART, 1996.

¹⁸ See, J. Prońko, *Bezpieczeństwo*, ..., op. cit., p. 83.

possibility of normal functioning and fulfilling its social functions. From here, crisis is a phenomena more complicated than stress, but at the same time, every emergency is accompanied with an acute stress.

As it was mentioned before, emergency situation occurs in the event of the destruction of the security configuration, that has to be rebuild as quickly as possible based on other values, and the internal environment. While the threat of a potential opportunity of breaching of security configuration, even in a large extent, so far the crisis is the result of the destruction of this configuration by traumatic events in the life of the entity or the awareness that its shape is wrong, failing to meet the hope. It was created to meet the other aspirations, which at this stage of life and from his perspective turned out to be worthless. The current stage requires different aspirations and different security configurations, which provides assurance not only of the existence, but also development.¹⁹ The crisis in the social sphere is a psychological crisis in power, remaining in close connection with its exercise. Although the effects of such events can be devastating for the whole community, but the emergency, as a subjective loss of control over developing situation, can not be referred to the whole of society, but only to those in power or aspiring to it.

The cause of the phenomena eliciting social discontent – resulting in loss of confidence to administrators, can be disastrous for society events (disasters) or barriers of social development. The first requires the efficient and effective operation of authorities and rescue services, second relates to changes in the system of governance, social relations, economic, and therefore the reconstruction of functioning of the system of society. Therefore, the authorities are not capable to this, because it destroys the idea of the

exercising of power. They will strive to maintain the current system, struggling with the public, or a part of the various methods from the political to physical.²⁰

In the context of the discussion on the essence of the emergency there is a very important aspect – the emergency is not only the destruction, formed by the state: the internal and external, giving a sense of security (security configuration), but also the gradual demolition, over which an entity can not control. For the differentiation of the process of gradual loss of losing, the latter situation is called critical. It is therefore a prior emergency examined from the perspective of those in power in the community, social group or the organization. From this perspective, it is easier to see symptoms of imminent emergency, and the gradual process of destruction of the state of giving a sense of security. Retention of this process and then building a new state of giving a sense of security, is a huge challenge for authorities. Therefore, in the sphere of social life, we have to deal more often with the crisis situation than the crisis.²¹

MAJOR RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

On the basis of the presented definition of security we may draw conclusions in relation to its essence and strategy of formation in the three following dimensions: individual, social and organizational. The conclusions presented below refer to the following areas:

- determinants of the sense of personal security;
- the areas and strategies of its formation in personal scope;
 - methodology of assessing the intensity of threats (level of security) – dimensions: individual, social and organizational;

¹⁹ See, J. Prońko, *Bezpieczeństwo, ...*, op. cit., p. 86.

²⁰ See, J. Prońko, *Bezpieczeństwo, ...*, op. cit., p. 87.

²¹ See, J. Prońko, *Bezpieczeństwo, ...*, op. cit., p. 88-89.

- defining security in social and organizational dimension;
- the areas and strategies of security formation in social and organizational scopes.

Determinants of the sense of personal security

Sense of security is a composition of subjective assessments of both capabilities of human-beings and the phenomena that occur around, which results in forming an individual assumption on whether one is able to retain the values which are critical to existence and creating its essence. Hence, the sense of security is determined by:

- prior experience and knowledge;
- worldview – what must be understood as a relatively constant compilation of judgements, convictions and opinions about the surrounding world. It is formed by, among other factors, knowledge and experience, but far greater influence is exerted by religion and mentality in a society where a particular individual comes from, as well as strength of one's internal ethical values and sensitivity.²²
- transfer of information received by the subject. The majority of people have no chance of an in-depth analysis of all aspects of their own existence, and they assess the Reality on the basis of other people's information transfers, that is of the media. The assessment of information transfer credibility is closely related to recipient's trust towards the media and towards people who pass the information. Consequently, an individual sense of security may be shaped by the media transfer, that is by the suitable choice

²²The worldview together with knowledge and experience help humans determine what is important and valuable to them: which of the attributes and accidents, which concrete beings and their configuration are. The range of necessities of life and the essence of existence are also affected by the worldview.

of news and commentaries. By means of social engineering techniques there is a possibility to shape within a society or its part the level of sense of security which will be either lower or higher in comparison to actually existing situation.²³

The areas and strategies of security formation from the personal perspective

According to the proposed definition, the sense of security may be formed in two areas:

- internally – forming the sense of security by internal transformations in a subject;
- externally – forming the sense of security by initialising and conducting changes in the subject's surroundings.

Considering the internal area the following pure strategies of forming sense of security may be listed:

- giving up to the external judgements on the state of security and adopting them by subjects as their own;
- conscious shaping of internal beliefs and values affect individual and social sense of security;
- merging with the existing configuration of beings (conformity) – customising the internal beliefs and values to suit actually existing situation.

Considering the external area the following pure strategies of forming sense of security may be listed:

- shaping the essence of beings²⁴ in subject's surroundings ;
- forming new beings;
- fulfilment of required relationships and configurations of beings.

²³This claim stems directly from Glantz's modification of Davies' theory. See: Glantz M., Davies J-Curve Revisited, *Fragilecologies* 27 June 2003, ONLINE:http://www.fragilecologies.com/jun27_03.html .

²⁴The concept of beings from my point of view includes: organizations, society, social groups, institutions, technological systems, other individual human-beings and ecosystems.

The pure strategies are rarely applied to shape a sense of security. People most frequently make use of mixed strategies which include to various extent the pure strategies indicated above. Choosing a strategy for forming sense of security is most often dictated by circumstances in a given situation.

Methodology of assessing the force of threats (level of security)

In congruance with the formulated definition of security, threat is phenomena or events which, according to the subject's assessment, decrease the level of their sense of confidence regarding further existence, as well as freedom to shape the matter of their existence, by means of a potentially affecting security configuration. Thus the methodology of assessing the intensity of threat should include the following stages:

- defining a personal security configuration, including identification of attributes, important accidents, beings from their surroundings and the relationships between them, as well as their significance for the personal sense of security;
- assessing a scale of potential damage of security configuration, and, in fact, its effect on a personal sense of security;
- assessing the probability at which it may occur.

Briefly speaking, what should be assessed is: what elements crucial for a sense of security may be lost, what the size of such a loss will be, and what the probability of it there is. But first of all, what influence it will exert on further existence of a subject.

The key and most difficult element of this method is an accurate defining a personal security configuration. A very elaborate configuration causes almost all phenomena and occurrences to evoke anxiety and fear of future. On the other hand, too poor configuration leads to excessive sense of

security, which does not reflect real circumstances.

The methodology proposed is in accordance with the methodology of risk assessment. The difference between them lies in dimensionality. At assessing the intensity of threats one should take into account all the dimensions of security configuration, at assessing the risk, however, only one dimension of this configuration is usually considered.

Defining security in the social and organisation aspect

For specific individuals the most immediate environment, in which they develop their lives, comprises organisations, societies and social groups. Each human-being pursues the highest point of confidence (security) in fulfilling their ambitions and making their dreams come true. On the one hand, they make efforts to shape social environment, in which they live, and on the other hand, the essence of their existence is subject to remodeling by the fact that they belong to this environment. Accordingly, an organization (society) may be perceived as a battleground where its members fight for and pursue a personal sense of security. The result of such a confrontation are objectives and rules to which the organization (society) adheres, and organizational security configuration. The method of defining it depends on objectives of entities exercising power (the key stakeholders) and it may be formed in three contexts:

- individual security of those holding power (the key stakeholders);
- superiority of organization security over the security of its members;
- superiority of member security over the superiority of the very organization.

In the first two cases, organizational security configuration (society) is imposed by those exercising power (the key stakeholders), who decide what is important for the organization

in terms of both internal rules and principles, as well as the elements of the surroundings.

The third case applies when those exercising power take into account the opinions of the other members of the organization in order to ensure broad social support for their own actions. Then the security configuration of the organization constitutes the collective of the personal (or group) security configurations of its members and shall be described as social security configuration. It is possible to discern it because of the fact that individual security configurations stem from personality, worldview and ambitions pursued, which are themselves shaped by upbringing, acquired knowledge and life experience – they represent the essential concepts of social culture.²⁵

Areas and strategies of forming security in the social and organizational aspects

Security of organizations (states, societies, social groups and enterprises) is defined and formed by the individuals who manage them in the following aspects:

- internal, by means of:
 - shaping the attitudes of people the organisation consists of;
 - developing adequate rules and principles for organisation to operate and to accommodate for the need of all the people to make progress and growth;
 - building an adequate internal structure which ensures the potential which is capable of facing external and internal threats;
- external – shaping a friendly surroundings for the organization.

The strategies of forming security in social and organizational dimensions are the same as in the case of forming the personal sense of security. The crucial element will be however the way of defining the organizational

(social) security configuration, as it is on this notion that the internal and external policies of an organization depend, as well as the personal sense of security of the individuals related with a particular organization (community).

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED DEFINITION OF SECURITY

The definitions of security, threat and crisis formulated in the study presented here are characterized by complementarity and precision, which indicate the method of quantitative and qualitative research on the issues of security.

In the opinion of the author, the study presented here systematizes and combines knowledge of the fields and disciplines like: military studies, technical sciences, management sciences, political sciences, economics, sociology and social psychology, in order to point to the principal trends of forming security of an organization and the directions and methods of prospective research. The most important of them appear to be the following:

- developing methodology of determining individual security configuration;
- developing methodology of determining the social scope of values appreciated in terms of member security of organizations, communities, social groups, that is, social security configuration;
- developing methodology of monitoring the feelings of members in organizations, communities, social groups, in the security context;²⁶
- working out of multi-index methodology of assessing risk not only for technical endeavors, but also the social ones;

²⁵ See, *Podstawy organizacji i zarządzania*, red. M. Romanowska, pp. 120-123.

²⁶ Developing methodology of estimating the social security configuration and monitoring its evolution would allow for more rational view of the expenses on improvements in security.

- working out the principles of devising organization and community development policies, allowing for moving towards building the Nash equilibrium.

The proposed definition of security appears to considerably regroup and arrange knowledge in the field of security, stimulate in a new way the understanding of the notion of security, provides foundation for quantitative and qualitative research and in some measure allows for mathematisation of this field of knowledge.

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