

**Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska, *Młdzież akademicka a kariera zawodowa* [Academic Youth and a Professional Career], Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", 2013, pp. 405**

Permanent and dynamic transformation of the globalized world carries along with it essential consequences for the social life and, as a result, for the man participating in it. Given the complexity and the multidimensional nature of the contemporary societies, an unambiguous description of the occurrences taking place in it is nearly impossible. All those changes don't seem to avoid affecting the labor market. Multicontextual transformation taking place in this dimension (flexible types of contracts, unemployment, permanent necessity of acquiring of higher skills, decentralization) has its influence on shaping a new career paradigm, in which the individual themselves is responsible for its course.

The matter under consideration remains not only in the field of interest of the political authorities, at both national and cross-border levels, but

also occupies an important place in the scientific discourse of many disciplines such as: Economics, Management, Sociology, Psychology, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Anthropology, Geography, or History. This narration becomes also a leitmotif in the work of Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska—the author of the book *Academic Youth and Professional Career*—who, in her publication, tries to explain concisely and exhaustively the phenomena related to the professional career of the subject, taking place in the contemporary labor market.

Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska is a full professor. She is the head of the Department of Educational Problems of Youth of the Faculty of Educational Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. She also takes over as Deputy Dean of Scientific Planning and Reporting, Post-Diploma Programs, and Promotion. In the field of scientific research of the author remain socioeducational problems of youth, global reality, and the individual's professional career. All the areas mentioned above reflect in her academic activity as an investigator, as it is demonstrated by her numerous science articles, monographs, and the books created under her editorship.

*Academic Youth and Professional Career* can be successfully treated as a valuable source of information about the contemporary career paths and the market processes which affect them. It is not only a result of a discerning theoretical analysis of the national and foreign scientific literature, but also of the empirical investigation of the author. Moreover, the book contains comprehensive descriptions of the theoretical orientation of the professional career. However, the most prominent perspective consists in the conclusion focusing on the career from the subject's point of view, in which they perceive themselves as a manager of their own development, making unassisted decisions concerning their professional future, planning its course and choosing methods of its realization. The publication under review is based on comprehensive collected studies on the complexity and the multi-dimensional nature of the career itself concerning many different problems in a valuable way. It has a logical and coherent structure grasping the issues mentioned above divided in two parts. The first part describes the theoretical analysis concerning the career, while the second introduces conclusions of the empirical investigation. Moreover, the discussed dissertation is divided in five chapters, each one of each introduces to the reader a different dimension of career.

Many cognitively interesting conclusions are presented in the exhaustive theoretical part in the field of concepts, definitions and theoretical assumptions concerning career. Consequently, according to the rule of the dissertation correctness, the first chapter contains investigation on definitions related to the concept of career. It describes not only the methods of its presentation, but also different suggestions on how to classify it. In the

second chapter the author analyzes the career from essential theoretical orientation perspectives such as functional-structural conception, symbolical interactionism, A. Giddens' structuration theory, or theories of historical interest such as description of characteristics and the factor or contemporary theories describing career as a development and autoconstruction dimension. The third chapter presents the individual dimension of career and conclusions concerning its meaning in each subject's biography. The chapter not only contains rich content and valuable collected data on the process of career planning and management, but also concerns sense ascribed to it subjectively by the individual. The last theoretical chapter oscillate around the youth issues and its transition from the education system to the labor market. It reflects also on the conditions of professional development of the young individuals and on the process of investment in career capital.

The second part, as a result of the empirical investigation on ideas and opinions of the undergraduates concerning the contemporary world—defined by the author as "Career without Limits", contains characteristics of autoidentification of the youth in the times of double transition from puberty to adulthood and from the educational field to the labor market. It shows how the dynamic transformation of the contemporary reality influences quality of the identity created by the subject and their belief of authorship reflected in the taken measures. Consequently, in that chapter the reader may find description of pro-development and proactive orientations adopted by the individual, which determine behavioral orientations in career. In accordance with the conclusions of the investigator recognizing those components permits to evaluate the individual's dimension of their influences on the world around them. It also turns out to be cognitively interesting to compare notions and interpretations concerning the career of the analyzed group of respondents. It gives the idea of their attitude towards their own professional future and of the opportunities which are present in the contemporary reality—important from the point of view of the creation of career.

In the investigation of Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska there are also threads which make possible recognition of the essential differences between women and men concerning their ideas of career and the phenomena related to it. The investigator not only points out diverse variables indicating different approach to the analyzed issues for each sex, but also does research on the reasons of its formation in cognitively interesting way. She notices divergence between their identity styles, adopted individualistic and collectivist approaches or life styles, adopted hierarchies of values and meanings ascribed to the cognitive curiosity. Furthermore, the author explains in a very rational manner how all of those factors affect the meanings ascribed to career by the respondents.

Women and man live in a heterogeneous, permanently changing world. The processes that take place on Earth influence how the concept of career is connoted and denoted and meanings that are ascribed to it. Reality is perceived in different ways by the representatives of both sexes. That situation is caused by socializing mechanisms and cultural experiences which affect the perception of the world. The book *Academic Youth and Professional Career* also concerns those types of factors and can be successfully recognized as a valuable source of information about the sex differences concerning the phenomenon of career, which, at the same time, encourages to think about the place of education in relation to culture as a space of its transmission and transformation (p. 373).

The axis of the investigator's narration is inscribed in the current discussion of the scientific field concerning career and the subject operating at the labor market. The content of the publication describes the situation of the individual participating in the space of the contemporary world—involved in many dependencies and on whom all the responsibility for the success is in the professional area. By dint of an interesting investigation performed by the author and different investigations led by other scientists (also those foreign—unknown to the Polish reader), quoted in the book, Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska makes possible for the reader to examine the reality in a relatively discerning manner, what shows a high cognitive value of the analyzed reading-matter and points out its comparative aspects.

The interdisciplinary character of the publication is an additional advantage of it. Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska often refers to the results of investigation in the fields of Pedagogy, Psychology and Sociology and, what is more, compares the data from those disciplines, which contain essential value from the point of view of her research. By dint of it, the reader is able to encounter a valuable text which forms source of the knowledge about career that has been aggregated until now and has been seen from the individual's point of view. Moreover, the narration led by the author may become a contribution to the discussion about the individual's consciousness concerning planning, monitoring and management of their career. Consequently, she points out that "the force of the influence on the current situation, or on the social environment, has its individualized character and depends on the individual's inclination to take active actions, which indirectly evokes those changes in the environment" (p. 378).

The multicontextual discourse led by Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska suits the publication to the needs of a broad spectrum of readers. It is a valuable reading matter for any practitioner who helps people looking for the proper career path, as well as for any theoretician who engages themselves in analyzing the career phenomenon. This book is, therefore, a valuable source of knowledge not only for the research environment,

which empirically and cognitively verifies the construct of career, but also for deeply reflective people who are interested in their own professional development. The work of Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska can be used successfully by the representatives of the social science and the humanities, including the undergraduates on the threshold of their transition from the education system to the labor market. The book under review will be surely a useful monograph for the people who plan to do research using a diagnostic survey, because the variety of methods used by the author and her ability to present and render data can be considered exemplary. That is the reason why it seems possible that this work will become an inspiration for creating other works of empirical character concerning issues of career.

Lucyna Myszka

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan (Poland)