

Outstanding Contributions to Archaeology

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The Poznań School of Archaeology

The Origin, Growth and Significance

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Poznań School of Methodology: Institutional History—Research Program—Main Achievements



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Abstract The chapter presents the main achievements of the Poznań School of Methodology against the background of the postwar history of Polish philosophy. In its first part, the history of Polish philosophy in the twentieth century is outlined. In the second part, the institutional history of the Poznań School is sketched, and its main sources of inspiration and determinants of the School's research program are identified. In the third part the main scientific achievements of Jerzy Kmita, Leszek Nowak and Jerzy Topolski—three major advocates of the School—are presented.

Keywords Idealization · Poznań School of Methodology · Jerzy Kmita · Leszek Nowak · Jerzy Topolski · Socio-regulative theory of culture

1 Poznań School of Methodology Against the Background of Postwar Polish Philosophy

The history of Polish analytic philosophy dates back to the end of the nineteenth century when Kazimierz Twardowski (1866–1938) became (in 1895) a professor at the University of Lviv. Twardowski began intense organizing, didactic, and popularizing work, the effects of which rippled through the other partitioned regions of Poland. In 1904, he established the Polish Philosophical Society in Lviv, and in 1911—“Ruch Filozoficzny” which he edited until 1936.

Before World War I, Twardowski mentored a number of students, who were later active in the fields of humanities and social science, from psychology and pedagogics to art history and literary studies. Among the philosophers, there were: Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz (1890–1963), Tadeusz Czeżowski (1889–1981), Tadeusz Kotarbiński

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(1886–1981), Jan Łukasiewicz (1878–1956), Władysław Witwicki (1878–1948), and Zygmunt Zawirski (1882–1948). In 1919, Twardowski's student, Jan Łukasiewicz, became the Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment in Ignacy Paderewski's government. In the 1920s, Twardowski initiated the organization of Polish philosophical conferences, and he created—in cooperation with his students—curricula for teaching philosophy in high schools and at universities. The analytic style of philosophizing had an impact not only on philosophy but also on other fields of science and culture. That development of Polish philosophy was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II, during which about six million Polish citizens lost their lives, including 615 scientists, and among them—32% of doctors and 38% of professors of pre-war universities and institutions.

After the 1945 Yalta Conference, Poland became a part of the Eastern Bloc. Because of that, many philosophers and other scholars decided to remain in the West, and some left Poland just after the war. They were, among other scientists: Józef Maria Bocheński (1902–1995), Henryk Hiż (1917–2006), Zbigniew Jordan (1911–1977), Czesław Lejewski (1911–2000), Jan Łukasiewicz, Henryk Mehlberg (1904–1979), Bolesław Sobociński (1906–1980), Alfred Tarski (1901–1983), and Florian Znaniecki (1882–1958).

We can distinguish six periods of the post-war history of Polish philosophy (other periodizations see: Stępień 1990, pp. 22–23 and Skoczyński and Woleński 2010, 526):

1. 1945–1948—conditional tolerance,
2. 1949–1956—Stalinization,
3. 1956–1968—limited pluralism,
4. 1968–1980—normalization,
5. 1980–1989—gradual emancipation,
6. since 1989—restitution of freedom.

The Conditional Tolerance Period (1945–1948) After 1945, four pre-war universities resumed operations: Poznań University, Warsaw University, Jagiellonian University, and the Catholic University of Lublin. Four new universities were established: in Lublin (in 1944), Toruń, Łódź, and Wrocław. Polish Philosophical Society was reactivated, and several pre-war magazines were published again: “Przegląd Filozoficzny”, “Kwartalnik Filozoficzny”, “Ruch Filozoficzny”, and “Studia Philosophica”. Books written just before the war or during the war were published then as well, including Roman Ingarden's *Spór o istnienie świata* (*Controversy over the Existence of the World*; 1947–1948), Władysław Tatarkiewicz's *O szczęściu* (*On Happiness*; 1947), and Maria Ossowska's *Podstawy nauki o moralności* (*The Foundations of the Science of Morality*; 1947).

At the beginning, philosophy practiced within the framework of phenomenology, Thomism, or neo-positivism was tolerated, partly because of the dearth of academics knowledgeable about Marxism, and partly because there were more important—from the authorities' point of view—social spheres to subjugate. The full ideological offensive in science began after the falsified 1947 elections, the elimination of legal

opposition, and the merger of the Polish Socialist Party with the Polish Workers' Party in December 1948.

The Stalinization Period (1949–1956) In April 1949 the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party organized a plenary session during which an “ideological offensive on the scientific front” was discussed. In the consequence, the policy on the personnel of universities and research institutes changed because elections for university authorities was replaced with the principle of nomination. The Polish Academy of Learning (*Polska Akademia Umiejętności*) was substituted, in October 1951, by the Polish Academy of Sciences.

As noted by Józef Tischner (1981, 18):

(...) dialectical materialism does not enter our culture by way of people's free choices; it is promulgated, and sometimes simply imposed with the use of political methods. Before the war, there was not one significant representative of Marxism in Poland. It is only after the war that Marxists are becoming abundant.

“Przegląd Filozoficzny” was closed in 1949, “Kwartalnik Filozoficzny”—in 1950, and “Ruch Filozoficzny”—in 1951. In 1951, “Myśl Filozoficzna” was established, as the only central philosophical journal, which only published Marxist texts. The aim of the magazine was:

the fight to permeate the whole Polish science with the Marxist-Leninist world view, creative development of Marxist philosophy in strict connection with practical needs, popularization of Marxist scientific thinking and action among the broadest masses, and the fight against the remnants of idealism as they hinder social development, against bourgeois philosophy, and against the destructive philosophy of imperialism (“From the editors,” *Myśl Filozoficzna*, 1951, no. 1–2, 11–12).

The journal contained articles which unmasked ‘bourgeois’ philosophic movements, with personal attacks against their representatives. Leszek Kołakowski (1927–2009) criticized neo-Thomism, while Roman Ingarden (1893–1970) and phenomenology were criticized by Tadeusz Kroński (1907–1958) who accused Ingarden of methodological idealism, lack of appreciation for Marxism as a breakthrough in philosophy, antihistoricism, of presenting philosophers' views as a search for truth rather than an expression of class interest, and of separating philosophy from science.

The Lvov–Warsaw School received plenty of attention. Adam Schaff (1913–2006) unmasked Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz's views, Bronisław Baczko (1924–2016)—Tadeusz Kotarbiński's, and Józef Chałasiński (1904–1979)—Twardowski's. Ajdukiewicz and Kotarbiński responded to that critique, and those texts were published in “Myśl Filozoficzna”. The Catholic philosophers and Ingarden did not reply, and, it was not clear, as noted by Jan Woleński, “if they did not want to, or if it was clear from the start that their answers would not be published” (Skoczyński, Woleński 2010, 537).

The publication of the third volume of Tatarkiewicz's *Historia filozofii* (*History of Philosophy*—1958) and of Ajdukiewicz's *Zagadnienia i kierunki filozofii* (*Problems and Theories of Philosophy*—1949) was halted. Non-Marxist

philosophers were denied administrative and didactic positions. That happened to Ingarden, Tatarkiewicz, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, Tadeusz Czeżowski, Izydora Dąmbska (1904–1983), Maria Ossowska (1896–1974), Stanisław Ossowski (1897–1963), and Henryk Elzenberg (1887–1967).

In 1978, Marxist philosopher Kazimierz Ochocki (1978, 198) evaluated that campaign as follows:

First, it was very loud, and carried out with the use of scathing – sometimes outright aggressive – terms. Second, the main sources were Stalin’s and Zhdanov’s texts, with no understanding of many issues under discussion. The critique was baseless, it consisted in assigning pre-defined labels. Fifth, philosophical, epistemological, and methodological views were equated with political views.

The Limited Pluralism Period (1956–1968) After 1956, philosophical studies and classes were restored in all courses of study, and professors could teach philosophy again. In 1957–1962, Kotarbiński became the president of the Polish Academy of Sciences. “Ruch Filozoficzny” was reactivated, and “Myśl Filozoficzna” was replaced with “Studia Filozoficzne” (1957–1990). In 1956, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences was formed.

At that time, Lublin Philosophical School developed fully, and the Lvov–Warsaw School and phenomenology regained their influence. In Marxism itself, the dogmatic style of the Stalin era was condemned, and alongside the official version, two new orientations were formed: scientific and humanistic. In Woleński’s (1993, 65) words:

Polish Marxist proposed a program of ‘open Marxism,’ by which they meant: open to problem and even to solution taken from ‘bourgeois’ philosophy. This movement split itself into two schools, namely ‘humanistic’ and ‘naturalistic.’ The former, influenced by existentialism in its various forms, concentrated its activities on philosophical anthropology; the latter, influenced by the Lvov–Warsaw school and by logical empiricism, was mainly involved in the philosophy of science.

Humanistic Marxism was best represented by the Warsaw School of Historians of Idea. It was founded by Kołakowski, the head of the Chair of the History of Modern Philosophy of the University of Warsaw, and by Bronisław Baczko, the head of the Chair of Modern Philosophy and Social Thought of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The seminars of the Polish Academy of Sciences, organized at regular intervals, were attended by, among other people, Andrzej Walicki (1930–2020), Jerzy Szacki (1929–2016), Krzysztof Pomian, Nina Assorodobaj-Kula (1908–1999), Henryk Hinz (1929–1992), Adam Sikora (1927–2011), Jan Garewicz (1921–2002), Ryszard Panasiuk, and Zbigniew Kuderowicz (1931–2015).

At that time, Marxist philosophy was under the influence of the analytical philosophical style. According to Nowak (1997, 29–30):

(...) in the spiritual culture dominated by the Lwów–Warsaw School, one of the initiators of 20th-century analytic philosophy. The Polish style of even the most official Marxist philosophy, shaped mainly by Adam Schaff’s writings, was decidedly different than that of the USSR and quite close to the clarity requirements imposed on philosophy by the Lwów–Warsaw School.

Skolimowski claimed that because of the influence of analytic philosophy, “after 1956, Poland witnessed incredibly interesting developments of Marxist philosophy” (Skolimowski 1969, 42).

The Normalization Period (1968–1980) In the 1960s, the representatives of the Warsaw School of Historians of Idea sympathized with revisionism which was critical of real socialism. As a result of the repressions after the pacification of the March 1968 protests of students and the youth, philosophers of Jewish descent, including Kołakowski and Zygmunt Baumann, had to emigrate.

In 1968, the University of Silesia was opened (in Katowice), and in 1970—the University of Gdańsk. Also, the administration of universities was reorganized. Independent chairs were closed, and institutes with departments were formed. Despite the efforts of the authorities to put universities in order, Marxist philosophy began to erode at that time. Some of its representatives entered a dialog with Catholic philosophy or incorporated theses of analytic philosophy. Importantly, there appeared research teams which studied Polish philosophical tradition, the popularization of which had earlier been banned for political reasons. In 1979, Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005) became Pope John Paul II. In his scientific career, Wojtyła combined Thomism and phenomenology. Philosophers started to engage in opposition activity. Stefan Amsterdamski (1929–2005), Bohdan Chwedeńczuk, and Krzysztof Pomian signed the Letter of 59 to protest against the introduction of friendship with the Soviet Union into the Constitution of the Polish People’s Republic.

The Emancipation Period (1980–1989) In the emancipation period, the official Marxist philosophy started to fade away, while non-Marxist movements gained influence. More and more philosophers, including Mirosław Dzielski (1941–1989), Nowak, Tischner (1931–2000), Klemens Szaniawski (1925–1990), Amsterdamski, and Barbara Skarga (1919–2009), engaged in the actions of Solidarity and the opposition.

Restitution of Freedom (Since 1989) After downfall of communism in 1989 all political barriers were removed. The new phenomenon was development of the higher education. New universities were founded, in Opole (1994), Białystok (1997), Olsztyn (1999), Rzeszów (2001), and Zielona Góra (2001) where philosophical studies were initiated. In this period theological faculties were included in structure of some universities. There were founded new philosophical journals and publishing houses specializing in editions of philosophical books. In this period old philosophical orientations were restored and also new trends appeared: postmodernism, cognitive science, eco-philosophy, bioethics, and gender studies.

2 Poznań School of Methodology

2.1 Institutional History

The term “Poznań School of Methodology” was introduced by Janusz Kuczyński, the editor of “*Studia Filozoficzne*” in 1972. At that time that is in the fourth and fifth periods of history of Polish postwar philosophy Poznań School of Methodology was the most influential. It has never been a homogenous milieu because in the 1970s, as will be shown, there emerged three research teams gathered around Kmita, Nowak, and Topolski. However, the beginnings of this scientific milieu backed to the 1960s of the previous century that is to the third period in history of postwar Polish philosophy. It gradually declined in the sixth period, with the death of its founding fathers and of some of the first generation of their students.

In 1945, Ajdukiewicz, Twardowski’s student and—privately—his son-in-law, was employed at Poznań University as the head of the Chair of the Theory and Methodology of Science (Gan-Krzywoszyńska and Leśniewski 2016). In 1948 Ajdukiewicz became the rector of the university, but in 1954, he moved to the University of Warsaw where he became the head of the Chair of Logic in the Institute of Philosophy. The scientific seminars at the university were attended by Kmita who traveled to Warsaw from Poznań to participate in them.

After his graduation from Polish language studies, Kmita was employed in the Chair of Logic of the Institute of Philosophy and History in 1957 (see: Grad 2011). In 1962, he defended his doctoral dissertation titled *Znaczenie jako wykładnik sposobu rozumienia wyrażań* (*Meaning as an identifier of the manner of understanding of phrases*). The first supervisor of that work was Adam Wiegner (1889–1967), but as he retired in 1960, Jerzy Giedymin (1925–1993)—Ajdukiewicz’s student and the head of the chair until 1967—became the new supervisor. In 1968, Kmita presented his habilitation thesis, *Problematyka terminów teoretycznych w odniesieniu do pojęć literaturoznawczych* (*Theoretical Terms and the Concepts of Literature Studies*), and he received the scientific degree of *doktor habilitowany*. Since January 1, 1969, Kmita became also the head of the Chair of Logic of the Institute of Philosophy and History, and then, after the Institute of Philosophy was formed in October 1969, the head of the Department of Logic and Methodology of Science. In 1977, he became the director of the newly founded Institute of Cultural Studies, and he held that position until his retirement in 2002.

In 1946–1950, Jerzy Topolski (1928–1998) studied history in Poznań University, where he attended Jan Rutkowski’s seminar (see: Domańska 2021, Domańska 2022). After Rutkowski’s death in 1951, Topolski received a doctor’s degree in historical sciences at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, on the basis of his work titled *Rozwój latyfundium arcybiskupstwa gnieźnieńskiego od XV do XVIII w.* (*The Development of the Latifundium of the Gniezno Archbishopry from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century*) and written under supervision of Stanisław Hoszowski. In 1951–1956, Topolski worked in the Institute for Scientific Staff Education. Since 1956, he was employed in the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences,

and since 1959, he also worked in the Institute of History of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. At the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, he cooperated with Andrzej Malewski. In 1962, they published *Studia z metodologii historii* (*Studies on the Methodology of History*). In 1965, Topolski founded and edited “*Studia Metodologiczne. Zeszyty Poświęcone Integracji Nauki*”. In 1981–1987, Topolski was the head of the Institute of History of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and then, until his retirement, he was the head of the Department of Methodology of History.

Leszek Nowak (1943–2009) started in 1960 study of law in Poznań University, while also doing distance studies in philosophy at the University of Warsaw (see biographical details: Brzechczyn 2022). In 1966 he defended his master thesis titled *Model, prawda względna, postęp nauki* (*Model, Relative Truth, Progress of Science*) written under supervision of Janina Kotarbińska. In the fall of 1965, he was employed in the Department of Legal Applications of Logic of the Chair of the Theory of the State and Law. In 1967, he defended his doctoral dissertation titled *Problemy znaczenia i obowiązywania normy prawnej a funkcje semiotyczne języka* (*The problems of the meaning and validity of a legal norm and the semiotic functions of language*), under the supervision of professor Zygmunt Ziemiński. In October 1, 1970, Nowak moved to the new Institute of Philosophy, and he began working in the Department of Logic and Methodology of Science. In December 1970, Nowak presented his habilitation thesis *U podstaw metodologicznych “Kapitału” Karola Marksa* (*On the Methodological Foundations of Carl Marx’s Capital*). In 1974, he became the head of the newly created Department of the Dialectics of Cognition, where his doctoral students could find employment.

In the second half of the 1970s, Nowak began working on his theory of socialism which was critical of the actualities of real socialism. The first part of the large type-script *U podstaw teorii procesu historycznego* (*The Foundations of the Historical Process*) was published in 1981 by the oppositional independent student association of the Agricultural University in Poznań. The whole was published in English as *Property and Power*, by the Reidel publishing house. On December 13, 1981 Nowak was interned because of his engagement in the Solidarity movement. He was released from the internment facility on December 9, 1982, and he resumed his work at the university as well as his underground publicist activity. In October 1984, the Minister of Science and Higher Education decided to suspend Nowak’s academic teaching rights. In 1985, Nowak was expelled from the university. In 1988, he went abroad to lecture.

After his return to the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, he was appointed a professor ordinary, and he did scientific, organizational, and editorial work. In 1991, his three-volume book titled *U podstaw teorii socjalizmu* (*The Foundations of the Theory of Socialism*, Nowak 1991b) was published, and it also contained his most accurate articles which had earlier been published in underground papers. Since the second half of the 1990s, as his health declined, he gradually stepped back from his duties at the university. In 1999, he resigned from his position of the head of the Institute of Epistemology, and he limited his didactic and scientific activity while focusing on the creation of a system of unitarian metaphysics.

2.2 *The Program Sources of Inspiration and Determinants of the Research of the Poznań School of Methodology*

The intellectual sources of inspiration for the Poznań School of Methodology include:

- **analytic philosophy of Lviv-Warsaw school** with its emphasis on methodological clarity, explication of notions, and posing of research questions;
- **Popperian hypothetism** with its emphasis on consciously formulating of scientific problems and looking for ways of its solutions;
- **Marxism**—Carl Marx's and Friedrich Engels's methodological and theoretical views were reconstructed and explicated in accordance with methods of analytic philosophy.¹

It is also possible to distinguish following determinants of the research program of the Poznań School of Methodology that made it unique. There are:

- **naturalism**—it is assumed that the same methodological principles are adhered to in the humanities and social science as in natural science;
- **hypothetism**—it is assumed that in natural science and the humanities, it is crucial to formulate hypothesis which influence the course of empirical studies;
- **essentialism**—it is assumed that there are main and secondary factors of the studied reality;
- **idealization**—scientific theories are formed on the basis of modeling of the studied reality, which consists of the elimination of secondary factors and of focusing on the main factors; and
- **rationalism**—human actions and their products are explained and interpreted based on the assumption of rationality which has an idealizational status.

3 *An Overview of the Main Achievements of the Founders of the Poznań School of Methodology*

3.1 *Jerzy Kmita*

Point of departure of Kmita's research was conviction about methodological unity of humanities, social and natural sciences. However, this unity of science was perceived in different way from positivism philosophy of science. According to Kmita, these main domains of sciences shared some basic methodological principles. Those are:

¹ According to Zamara (2010, 297), the basic sources of inspiration were: methodology of science (Ajdukiewicz), philosophy of science (Popper), and German anti-naturalist philosophy of humanities (Wilhelm Dilthey, Heinrich Rickert, Max Weber), see also Woleński (2011, 567).

1. intersubjective communicability of formulated statements,
2. intersubjective controllability of those statements,
3. empirical applicability of descriptive concepts (that is, non-logical and non-mathematical statements) (Kmita and Nowak 1968, 4–5).

These assumptions were present in Kmita's most important theories which were:

- concept of humanistic interpretation,
- historical epistemology,
- social-regulatory theory of culture.

Humanistic interpretation. The starting point for humanistic interpretation was an explication of the principle of rationality. According to Kmita (1971, 28):

(Z₁) If X (in the time t) is to undertake one of actions C₁, ..., C_n, which, to his knowledge (in time t) exclude one another and (jointly) complement one another, and inevitably lead, respectively, to results S₁, ..., S_m, and results S₁, ..., S_m are ordered via a relation of preference characteristic for X (in time t), then X (in time t) will undertake action C_i leading to preferred result S_j.

From the assumption of rationality (Z₁) and two premises:

Z₂: S_j is the result preferred the most by X_t; and

Z₃: it is a result of knowledge X_t that action C_i inevitably leads to result S_j,

there results the *eksplanandum*:

X will undertake, in time t, action C_i.

The assumption of rationality was the basis for the concept of humanistic interpretation as Kmita distinguished a subclass of rational actions which was directed at interpretation and gave the examples of saying “Good morning” to someone or tipping one's hat. The aim of those actions will be achieved when someone interprets their meaning correctly. Actions like hammering a nail into a wall in order to hang a picture do not belong to that subclass. The aim of such an action will be *achieved* regardless of whether someone understands the reason for hanging the picture.

Actions directed at interpretation refer to the concepts of the rules of cultural interpretation and of cultural group. The rules of cultural interpretation are a set of hermeneutic principles—which are usually not fully codified and of which the individual is usually not fully conscious—which make it possible to capture the meaning of actions directed at interpretation. A collective of people who are mutually aware of their knowledge of cultural interpretation is called a cultural group.

Historical Epistemology Kmita (1976, 1980, 1988) formulated so-called theoretical history of science. According to him, the most important factors for development of science are external ones. In Kmita's reconstruction of Marxian historical materialism, development of different kinds of sciences resulted from the response for needs of different realms of social practice. The most fundamental social praxis is productive one that functionally determines the development of natural sciences. Humanities are directly depended on the legal-political practice (the superstructure in Marx's terminology) and indirectly on economical social practice (the base).

A new set of scientific views/theories become widespread because it responds better on the demand of a given realm of social practice in a given time. However, a new theory does not appear in an intellectual vacuum. This demand of a given realm of social practice operates on a set of hitherto existing scientific theories (“thought material”) which may be selected, transformed and improved. In this way functional determination should be supplemented by genetic determination. According to Kmita development of science and “all forms of social consciousness is determined not in purely functional, but in functionally-genetic way” (Such 1996, 160). Scientific practice was seen by Kmita as a realm of social practice subjectively regulated by a specific set of beliefs—methodological consciousness of scientists. It consisted of two kinds of beliefs: normative and instructive. The first one points out the kind of values (e.g. truth, utility) should be achieved, the second one tells how to achieve chosen values.

The Social-Regulatory Theory of Culture This theoretical approach to the history of science was developed into the social-regulatory theory of culture (Kmita 1982, 1985; Kmita and Kostyrko 1983; Banaszak and Kmita 1991). Culture was perceived a system of social consciousness consisted of normative and directive judgements. The first kind of judgements determines values that should be realized whereas second kind of judgments points out how these values should be realized. This system of beliefs (a) belongs to the given community *S* distinguished in a functional manner, (b) is generally respected in that community, and (c) intentionally regulates functional actions with respect to the global structural context of these actions performed by this community (Kmita 1996, 582).

The starting point in Kmita’s theory was the distinction between acceptance and respecting beliefs. He writes:

The acceptance of belief *p* by a given individual consists in – we assume – that person consciously deeming it to be true, so the person is, in any way, aware of that belief. On the other hand, we speak of a person respecting belief *p* when the individual acts, undertakes the action as if that person accepted it, but we have not determined if that person indeed accepts the belief (Banaszak and Kmita 1991, 39).

Every type of social practices is subjectively regulated by an appropriate set of beliefs which determines what is worth doing and in what manner. Therefore, normative beliefs determine particular values which are the positive goals of an action, while directive beliefs point to actions which should (in particular circumstances) be undertaken in order to realize the assumed values (goals).

Social consciousness is not a sum of the consciousnesses of particular individuals but a set of beliefs consisting of directive and normative beliefs functional with respect to a type of social practice which is generally respected in a given collective. Social consciousness acts as a subjective regulator of social practice of a given type. The consciousness of particular individuals may consist of beliefs which are either functional or dysfunctional with respect to the social practice of a given type.

Kmita distinguished two types of normative beliefs: beliefs reachable in practice and beliefs unreachable in practice. For example, saving a certain amount of money or going on holidays are values reachable in practice. Values unreachable in practice cannot be realized because of the lack of sufficient means (at a given time and in a given place) or because they are unrealizable in the actual world. Values were also divided into final and instrumental. The latter are a means for realizing the former; the former are an end in themselves.

Those divisions formed the basis for distinguishing two spheres of culture: instrumental and symbolic. Kmita illustrates that with two examples:

1. a farmer plants seeds into the soil,
2. and a clergyman puts a metal ring onto the head of a standing person.

In order to achieve expected results determined by the sphere of instrumental culture, it is not necessary to observe normative and directive beliefs which would subjectively regulate them. In case of the coronation ceremony, the general adherence to the subjective beliefs which regulate the relevant set of actions is necessary.

The first kind of actions comprise a ‘material’ practice of the given society, which consists of the processes of production, exchange, and consumption. Kmita defines the production process as a transformation of a physical material (raw material) into objects which have usable features, that is, features which make those objects consumable without entailing the necessity of adhering to normative-directive beliefs regulating the production process.

As regards the condition of the effectiveness of the actions comprising a symbolic-cultural practice, normative-directive beliefs must be adhered to. Symbolic culture encompasses the sub-area of communication, that is: customs, language, and art, as well as the sub-area of non-communication, that is: science and political and legal consciousness, and the sub-area of worldviews.

The worldview sub-area determines a group of ‘final’ positive values (commonly called the meaning of life) and a group of ‘final’ negative values, and it characterizes the manner of the implementation of those final values with the help of practical (everyday life) values constitutes a holistic vision of the world (Kmita and Kostyrko 1983, 63–64).

Those sub-areas of symbolic culture have a socially integrating-distinguishing function, which means that they subjectively integrate particular individuals into certain collectives. Moreover, the communication sub-area maintains the information-communication contact inside the group through language. Social practice is mainly practical-cognitive, but it also has the additional didactic-cultural function which engages particular individuals in the cultural life.

Kmita also distinguished the world-view function of particular types of symbolic-cultural practice based on providing justification for beliefs belonging to other forms of social consciousness which regulate other social practices. There are three historical forms of a world views: magic, religion, and lay metaphysical philosophy.

3.2 *Leszek Nowak*

Leszek Nowak, the youngest father-founder of Poznań School authored six theories of the great scope (see: Brzechczyn 2017, 2022; Borbone 2021). However, in this chapter I presented only three connected with the topic of the volume. There are idealizational theory of science, the adaptive reconstruction of historical materialism and non-Marxian historical materialism.

The Idealizational Theory of Science The main idea of that concept is the assumption that a scientific theory is neither a generalization of facts nor a hypothetical-deductive system (Nowak 1980; Nowak and Nowakowa 2000). According to Nowak, a theory resembles a caricature more than a photograph because the construction of a scientific theory begins from a decisive deformation of reality, in the first, most idealized model. The idealizational law has the form of a conditional sentence. The antecedent contains counterfactual assumptions on the basis of which the influence of factors considered by the researcher to be secondary are omitted. The consequent describes how the studied phenomenon depends on its main factor. Thus, the obtained idealizational statement is only valid based on those idealizing assumptions—all of them.

Idealization is but one side of a scientific process. The other side is the concretization procedure, in the course of which the idealizing assumptions which have been made are canceled and the initial idealizational law is modified. It is shown how the studied phenomenon depends on secondary factors. Idealizational statements which are closer and closer to empirical data are obtained. Concretization takes place in a predefined order. First, those idealizing assumptions are canceled which pertain to the secondary factors with the greatest influence on the studied phenomenon. Then, secondary factors which exert a smaller influence are taken into account. Finally, all idealizing assumptions are canceled and a factual statement is obtained.

In research practice, though, final concretization is never carried out. Usually, after a series of concretizations has been made, the influence of the remaining, less important secondary factors are determined by way of an approximation, however, on condition that the level of the admissible divergences between the empirical data and the result obtained from the theoretical formula is not greater than the one generally accepted in the particular field of knowledge.

The functioning of a phenomenon is explained by showing the dependencies between that phenomenon and its main factor. Next, taking into account secondary factors, more and more realistic concretizations are derived from the idealizational law obtained in that way. The explained sentence is the results of the factual statement formulated on the basis of the procedure of concretization and of the initial conditions.

The Adaptive Interpretation of Historical Materialism One of the main applications of the idealizational theory of science was historical materialism. When Marxism is interpreted, it is commonly understood as saying that there are cause

and effect relationships between global productive forces and relations of production, a social base and a legal and political superstructure, social and economic conditions and particular states of social consciousness. That has been giving rise to well-known interpretive difficulties as it has not been clear how productive forces are to cause the appearance of particular relations of production, a social base—of a legal and political superstructure, and social and economic conditions—of particular states of social consciousness.

One solution to that problem was the adaptive understanding of those dependencies proposed by Leszek Nowak (1982). According to him from set of states of affairs α that state of affairs A becomes widespread, which, in conditions B will lead to a result characterized by k to the greatest degree. This property k is called the criterion of adaptation.

Nowak illustrated his interpretive suggestion with the example given below. Let us assume that a person has invented a new device (conditions B) which improves work efficiency and, consequently, makes it possible to increase the surplus product (criterion of adaptation k). As they compare various systems of the organization of production (traditional, invented by specialists, etc.), owners select such a system (state of things A) as they believe to be capable of ensuring the greatest surplus product. However, if the expected increase does not take place, the owners—thinking that they have made the wrong choice—will continue looking for an optimal—for the given level of productive forces—system of the organization of production. If any of the owners delays the reorganization of production, that owner's profits from the surplus product will shrink and, in the end, he or she will go bankrupt. After a sufficiently long time, by trial and error, and the elimination of those who have not learned fast enough, an optimal system of the organization of production, with respect to the newly introduced tool, will become common in the observed economic sector.

There are similar adaptive dependencies between the level of productive forces and the system of the organization of production, between the superstructure and the economic base, and between social consciousness and social being. In this case, the interests of the owners' classes, guaranteed by the legal and political system, function as a selector of individual ideas. On a mass scale, such ideas become common as, in given social and economic conditions, ensure the durability of a political system.

During the adaptive-idealizational reconstruction of historical materialism, Nowak noticed the contradiction between the philosophical assumptions and the social theory of Marxism. That contradiction, called the paradox of historicism. Namely, the Marxist dialectics presupposes the changeability of the main factors of studied phenomena (Nowak 1977, 89–90), while the Marxist historical materialism presupposes that productive forces and the relations of production are the main determining factors in social life, in all societies and in all historical periods. This presupposition gives rise to the question of whether the repertoire of main factors is or is not subject to change in historical process. If the answer is positive, then another question arises about the nature of those non-economic but still material factors.

Within the framework of Adaptive Interpretation of Historical Materialism researchers have been trying to deal with the aforementioned paradox of historicism by creating an idealizational-adaptive interpretation of Engels's historical materialism. For the proponents of that approach—which has been developed primarily by Jolanta Burbelka (1982)—the main factor in primitive societies is the reproduction of life and not economic production. They claim that the production of goods only becomes the main factor in the epoch of class societies.

Distinguishing between two types of materialism: Engels's and Marx's entailed the problem of generalizing them and of constructing such a third form of materialism as would be applicable to systems of real socialism. Piotr Buczkowski, Andrzej Klawiter, and Leszek Nowak (1982) tried to construct a third version of materialism. The authors assumed that the structures of the political and cultural spheres were analogous to that of the economic sphere. In the political sphere, we could distinguish the means of coercion and a system of the organization of power which constituted a political base; the political base and the system of political institutions combined to produce social and political conditions, and there was also political consciousness. The cultural momentum of a society was reconstructed in a similar way, by distinguishing the means of knowledge production and a system of the organization of knowledge production making up the cognitive base of a society. The cognitive base with the system of the organization of knowledge created cognitive and social conditions having an impact on meta-cognitive consciousness. The distinguished components of the political and spiritual momentums were considered to be linked by means of adaptive dependencies.

Non-Marxian Historical Materialism For Nowak, attempts at applying the generalized form of the adaptive interpretation of historical materialism to the construction of a theory of socialism appeared to be unconvincing, which inspired him to construct non-Marxian historical materialism (Nowak 1983, 1991a). The theory overtakes the AIHM view of the isomorphic structures of three realms of social life: politics, culture, and economy, and it strengthens the antagonistic nature of historical materialism. Consequently, the concept of a social class is generalized. Nowak assumes that social classes exist not only in economy but also in politics and culture. In political life the rulers' class, which has at its disposal the means of coercion, increases the global sphere of influence and restricts citizens' autonomy. In economic life the owner' class, which has at its disposal the means of production, maximizes their additional product at the cost of producers' direct income. In culture, the monopoly of the means of spiritual production allows the priests caste to augment their spiritual authority and restrict believers' autonomy. The social antagonisms based on unequal access to material social means (means of coercion, production, and indoctrination) in each of the three realms of social life are, then, autonomous.

Class divisions can also cumulate, and, for example, one social class, in order to boost its social power, can overtake the means of coercion and of production or the means of coercion and of indoctrination, etc. Hence, apart from class societies (with three separate classes), there also occur supraclass societies in which one social class controls culture and politics (fascism) or culture, politics, and economy

(communism). Non-Marxist historical materialism contains an interpretation of 2500 years of the history of class societies of the European civilization, from the slave societies of ancient Greece and Rome to the contemporary Western European capitalist societies and East European socialist societies (see Brzechczyn 2007).

3.3 *Jerzy Topolski*

Jerzy Topolski, the eldest of the founding fathers of the Poznań School of Methodology, developed Nowak's and Kmita's concepts creatively within the framework of the methodology of historical research and theoretical history (collection of Topolski's papers in English, see: Brzechczyn 2009; Domańska 2022). Some of Topolski's most important achievements are:

- the dynamic concept of the historical source,
- the theory of historical narration,
- the concept of integral explanation.

The Theory of a Historical Source In Topolski's (1968, 324) words:

a historical source is any source of historical cognition (direct and indirect), that is, any information (within the meaning given to that term in the theory of information) about the social past, wherever they are, together with what transmits that information (the information channel).

Topolski distinguishes between a potential and effective source. A potential source is any source of a historian's knowledge about the past, while an effective source is the collection of information currently used by a historian.

In that concept, the credibility of a historical source is relative—dependent on the question. For one research question, the source can be quite credible, while for another question—not so credible. According to Topolski (1983, 257):

Thus, the key which triggers the mechanism of searching for source information (that is, searching for sources) is the research question posed for the source. Without asking such a question, the source will not 'tell' the historian anything, it will remain silent even if the historian can read it. By asking those questions, based on – obviously – the historian's other knowledge (and methodological consciousness), the historian undertakes the initial modeling of the reality research.

When he characterized the information structures of the source, Topolski was inspired by Jerzy Kmita's concept of sign, in which a sign is defined as an activity or an outcome of a human activity which is a result of intentional communication of a particular state of things. Apart from signs, there are symptoms, which can be divided into humanistic and natural. Humanistic symptoms are human activities or their outcomes not intended by their creator to be used for communication. For example, smoke coming out of a chimney is a symptom of the human presence in that house and of the preparation of a meal, but it is not intended to communicate anything (Kmita 1973, 23–33, 210–211).

Topolski (1983, 263) distinguished three layers of the information structure of a source. The surface layer of the information structure of source is a set of

(...) the information which can be extracted from the sources in the simplest way, that is, which is legible without the necessity of asking questions other than questions concerning directly the information in the information set.

The questions are of the simplest type: what, who, and when. The sign layer of the information structure of a historical source is revealed by asking what the information extractable with those questions signifies. We reach the symptom layer of the information structure when we ask what the information in the source is a symptom of.

Topolski also introduced an original division into addressed and unaddressed sources. He claims that addressed sources were created with the intent to communicate a state of things, while non-addressed sources were not. In this case, the criterion of division is the fact of the existence or non-existence of the information relationship of the type: information sender—information channel—recipient between the creator of the source and the historian (or another recipient). The division does not concern the material layer of sources (the carrier of information) but the information included in the sources (Topolski 1983, 260). The addressed sources can be divided into certain categories, depending on whether they are addressed to:

1. recipients of a source contemporary to the author—for example, letters, reports, announcements,
2. posterity in general—inscriptions on headstones, documents which confirm someone's rights,
3. a historian—diaries written with that intention (Topolski 1983, 260).

Because of the addressed source authors' intention to communicate something, the sources have an element of persuasiveness directed toward their recipient, and they already contain an interpretation of the information they impart. For that reason:

the historian who wants to extract information from such sources must interpret the sources, that is, carry out the interpretation already included in the source. Examining the credibility of the informant – that is, considering whether the informant is telling the truth in the given case does not suffice here (Topolski 1996, 341)

The active role of a historian in the search for source information was called—controversially—the ontological and epistemological creation of the past, that is, including the knowledge about the past in the individual and social consciousness. In Topolski's words (1977, 45):

Obviously, the past exists objectively as something that happened, but without its reconstruction it would not exist for people, and it would not be able to influence human actions through people's consciousness of their history. In such a case, there would only exist an influence of the past of which they would not be aware.

According to Topolski, searching for sources encompasses the discovery of new types of sources possibly containing the information looked for by the researcher, the constitution of sources by creating a set of question, and interpreting the source information extracted in that way.

The Theory of Historical Narration The results of historical research are presented in the form of narration which contains both idiographic and theoretical layers. Topolski formulated the paradox of historical narration. Seemingly, narration is treated as a conjunction of its constituent sentences. As we know, a conjunction is true when all its constituents are true. However, in the case of a historical narrative:

1. the truthfulness of all constituent sentences does not warrant the truthfulness of the whole narrative,
2. a historical narrative may remain true even if some of its constituent sentences are false, and
3. a greater proportion of true constituent sentences in a narration in comparison to another narration does not guarantee a greater degree of the truthfulness of the first narration.

According to him, the truthfulness of narration depends on its theoretical layer which includes the basic relations and dependencies. Topolski assumes that a historical narration consists of historical sentences, sequences of historical sentences, and historical images. Historiographical sentences and sequences of historiographical sentences comprise articulated parts of a historical narrative, while a historiographical image is a non-articulated part of such a narrative which contain theoretical assumptions (Topolski 1987a).

Topolski distinguished the following layers of narration: surface (factographic), persuasive-communicative and theoretical-ideological. The theoretical-ideological layer determines the two other layers of a narrative:

The deep layer of a narrative is a dynamic mechanism which imparts that narrative its structure and determines the choice and the configuration of the item information which the historian has at his disposal (Topolski 1994, 37)

The surface layer of narration is maneuvered through the theoretical layer by means of three mechanisms:

- selection of source information and non-source information,
- hierarchization of source and non-source information, and
- comparison of the information selected and hierarchized in that way in narrative wholes (sequences and images).

The Concept of Integral Explanation According to Topolski, the historical process is a global result of conscious and intentional actions of people (individuals and groups). Those global results, however, only partially overlap with the people's intentions and goals. People set their goals of action based on particular motives and taking into account environmental and social conditions, which they can evaluate with varying degrees of accuracy. Thus, such subjective factors as knowledge, motivation, values, or preferences are linked to objective factors (environmental and social conditions of being) through people's knowledge and valuing system. The efficacy of people's actions depends on the adequateness of their knowledge about the conditions in which they operate, including the environmental and social laws as well as the popularized value systems which determine the goals. Therefore, inte-

gral explanation should encompass people's motivational structures as well as (by a reference the laws) the objective results of people's actions.

One example of such explanation was presented in book devoted the rise of capitalism in Europe (Topolski 1987b). According to him, in the fourteenth century, the income of the gentry in Western Europe decreased, as a result of various external factors (the plague, inflation, the increase in the numbers of the gentry, etc.). Consequently, there was growing disparity between the lifestyle dictated by the contemporary culture and the revenue which would allow for such a way of life. The gentry was forced to counteract its relative impoverishment. Topolski lists four basic methods of increasing the income of this social estate: appropriating more income at the cost of the peasants, overtaking a part of the income of the bourgeoisie, changing the division of income within the feudal class, and undertaking business activity (Topolski 1987b, 72). The attempts at a greater exploitation of the peasantry triggered a series of rebellions and uprisings in the whole Europe, from the second half of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century. It was not easy to limit the income of the bourgeoisie, either, as it was a strong class the finances of which could only be restricted through family relationships. Overtaking church assets, with the help of the state, was only a short-term solution. It turned out that the only valid long-term method of increasing the income was for the gentry to undertake business activity. The particular forms of this entrepreneurship depended on the local conditions. In England, it was raising sheep, in Bohemia—fish farming in ponds, and in Poland—grain production. In Western Europe, the power of bourgeoisie and the existing capitalist system directed the business activity of the gentry toward commodity money economy with the use of mercenary workforce, which was conducive to the appearance of capitalism. In Central Europe, the economic activity of the gentry contributed to functional serfdom.

4 Conclusions

Poznań School of Methodology was a scientific milieu that in the 1970s and 1980s of the twentieth century exerted a great impact on the development of various kinds of natural and social sciences and humanities, including archeology, in Poland. On the one hand, the word “Poznań” in the name of school suggests a limitation to one city. In fact, proponents of the school were employed in universities in Toruń, Lublin, Łódź, Szczecin or Gdańsk. On the other hand, the word “school” suggests a strict set of uniform views and an existence of a one Master. In fact, this milieu was created by three charismatic personalities of Kmita, Nowak and Topolski followed by teams of their pupils and collaborators. Very often, alternative explanations of a given phenomenon were offered in the school. It was the case of philosophy of science. E. gr. Nowak in his idealizational theory of science focuses on internal factors of development of scientific activity, whereas Kmita in his historical epistemology emphasized the influence of external factors. The common feature was a style of

research based on methodological self-consciousness and logical clarity inspired by analytical tradition of doing philosophy.

In the time of its heyday, the school gathered about several hundred people. They edited several journals, published hundreds of books and collections of papers. The most important journals were *Studia Metodologiczne* and *Poznańskie Studia z Filozofii Nauki*. Their works have been published in English in the *Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and Humanities* publication series which is still being published today by the Brill.

One can risk putting a thesis that factor contributing to the rise of the school was relative isolation of Polish science from the Western ones. Relative because Polish humanities and social sciences had some contacts with the most important achievements of their Western counterpart. However, these limitations imposed by the political system forced to critical and original reception of Western output. After 1989 the opening of Polish philosophy (and general Polish culture) on Western philosophy and humanities contributed to uncritical acceptance of concepts and theories coming from the better (scientifically) developed West. In order to get on in Polish science, it is enough to popularize what was invented in the first scientific world (Nowak 2012). This provincial attitude can hamper the further development of the school which was an important part of history of the humanities in Poland.

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