

Teresa SOŁDRA-GWIŹDŹ **Socjologia wobec Śląska: jedność czy wielość?**

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Polish sociologist Teresa Sołdra-Gwiźdź assumes the role of the pioneer in her habilitation thesis. She is attempting to recap the existing state of research focused on the historical region of Silesia. The author approaches to her own work since the beginning with the knowledge that Silesian area is problematic from the viewpoint of historical development of national borders and therefore constitutes internally differentiated "world". Silesian heterogeneity is reflected subsequently in terms of scientific thinking also by using the various interpretive approaches, theoretical reflection and empirical research. The intention to describe the different sociological perspectives and interpretations of Silesia are at the origin of this monograph. (p. 7)

The author defines the research plan by the set of questions: Is there a Silesian sociology? How is this concept delimited by historical and spatial determinants understood in sociological research? What contents are attributed to research? What are the sources of sociological visions of Silesia and how in practice are theoretical and empirical sociology expressed in cognitive perspective? (p. 8)

The answers to the research questions are provided in nine chapters of her book by Sołdra-Gwiźdź. It creates a vivid picture of sociology dealing mainly with contemporary Polish region of Silesia and created especially in the area of contemporary Polish Silesia. The author stresses its cognitive perspective spatially defined by current and past boundaries of Poland. She dedicates particular attention to research from 1934 to 2010, i.e. the time from the first research focused on Silesia up to publication of the book.

The first theoretical chapter is distinguished by its spatial and temporal definition of the rest of the monograph. Due to the absence of a widely accepted theory on the topic in the field of sociology, Sołdra-Gwiźdź focuses on creating a social construction of social reality, respectively the sociology of science and sociology of knowledge. She points out that sociologists are not cut off from social reality in conditions of their knowledge. The social awareness, general knowledge and ideology affect sociologists in their construction of social reality. The image of Silesia in scientific thinking is deformed by myths and ideologies (p. 24) The author supports her claims with specific examples of colleagues and their use of cognitive perspective of the nation as a fundamental social formation applied by classics of Polish sociology as Znaniecki, Chałasiński and Obrębski in regional sociological studies. (p. 26) Increased attention to regional sociology in Poland has not been paid before than in 1990s of the 20th century. (p. 27) All aspects of regional sociology can be found in the

sociology of Silesia. (p. 32) Słodra-Gwiżdż believes that the Silesian society can be defined as a group bounded by a common history and experience. (p. 33-34)

The second chapter focuses on the protosociological and early sociological research on Silesia. The fundamental problem in this period is based on the institutional deficit and peripheral position of Silesia. The first scientific institution in Silesia performing the sociological research is the Institute of Silesia, founded in 1934. (p. 57) The author describes another significant research from the interwar period in separate sections.

The author dedicates the third chapter to the first attempt at a comprehensive view of the issue of Silesia. In 1934, priest Emil Szramek issued a book in which he identified Silesia as a sociological problem and he was trying to analyze it. (p. 67) His view is very engaged and very religious. He portrays "Silesian soul" as characteristics of the domestic population and discusses the role of Silesia. It deals with heterogeneity of the region and group antagonisms. The contemporary critics denounced strongly the emotional aspect of the work. Słodra-Gwiżdż points out that Szramek was wrong in many ways but especially appreciates opening of the theme of sociology of Silesia.

The fourth chapter focuses on the first truly empirical research conducted in Silesia. In 1935, Józef Chałasiński published the results of research mining settlement Murcki focused on sociological and psychological elements of antagonism between the groups. (p. 92) Socio-economic differences do not explain completely antagonism between groups. Chałasiński comes up with an explanation of antagonism based on irrational elements (symbols, rationalization of construction of the nation, myths and stereotypes). Chałasiński unlike Szramek does not glory the „Silesian soul" but he considers the practical philosophy of life of the resident. (p. 106)

The fifth chapter is devoted to methodological reflections over sociographic research of Paweł Rybicki in 1938. A comprehensive research programme of Silesia counted with the use of the perspective of cultural pluralism for understanding differences in Silesia. Rybicki emphasizes a geographic location of Silesia as a place of confrontation of cultures of the East and the West. (p. 120) In his conception, the antagonism and mutual adjustments are an integral part of a social reality in Silesia.

The sixth chapter focuses on the post-war research in Silesia which follow the research efforts of the interwar period. The Institute of Silesia renewed activity already in 1945. (p. 129) Sociologists are confronted with new issues due to the territorial border changes and significant internal migration. In this chapter, Słodra-Gwiżdż is devoted mainly to field-works of Stanisław Ossowski and his student Stefan Nowakowski. An engaged sociologist Ossowski believes in his research perspective that the national ideology is an important bond of the nation as a group of individuals. (p. 137) Nowakowski follows his teacher and examines the processes of adaptation and integration. (p. 146)

The seventh chapter describes the institutional development of the Silesian research institutions in the period after the unveiling of the personality cult of Stalin (1957) until the fall of the Iron Curtain (1989). (p. 155) Activities of the Silesian Scientific Institute in Katowice was restored in 1957 and in the same year the new Institute of Silesia originated in Opole. A continuous development of research center in Katowice is provided by a person of Paweł Rybicki. (p. 157) The workplace focuses mainly on the phenomena associated with industrialization, urbanization and modernization. Emerging workplace in Opole follows the

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research of Stanisław Ossowski and Stefan Nowakowski. In the end of 1950s, Józef Chałasiński led the sociological team here . (p. 158)

The eighth chapter describes the most recent period. A research centre in Katowice was repealed in 1992. The institute in Opole was reorganized. (p. 211) The sociological researches are carried out to a larger extent in the universities in Wrocław and Katowice. (p. 214) In the recent period, various researches are performed in Silesia. Some researches have a long tradition and experience (intergroup relations etc.). Other researches deal with new phenomena (the European labour market etc.).

The final ninth chapter presents the viewpoint of Teresa Sołdra-Gwiźdź on perspectives of knowledge and research paradigms of sociology of Silesia at present and at the near future. (p. 260) In accordance with current trends, the author favours the idea of public service. Research paradigm focuses on the issues of territory acquired after the World War II, cultural pluralism, border areas and industrialization, urbanization and modernization.

The monograph "Socjologia wobec Śląska: Jedność czy wielość?" by Teresa Sołdra-Gwiźdź gives a comprehensive view of sociology dealing with the Silesian region. Publication concentrates within the sociological knowledge about a specific territory. It contains information about important institutions, researchers and research. The structure of the book corresponds to the development of scientific interest of sociologists in Silesia. There is a considerable disparity between the theoretical and empirical interest of sociologists in the detriment of theory. In the interwar period, there are a few scholars who raise a topic and create research programmes. The institutionalization of science and sociology from the period after the end of World War II enables a greater number of social scientists to explore the region on a larger scale and to cooperate.

The professional public engaged in Silesia, especially, will appreciate the book. The first chapter of the book may be also appreciated by people interested in the sociology of science and knowledge. The author establishes very sensitively the topic of Silesian sociology about which she says that differs from other regional sociology due to "apologetic enslavement by Silesia." (p. 290)

Richard PRZECZEK