

VOLUME EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

We are glad to unveil the next issue of our journal that contains remarkable sociological analyses on change and transformation of religion in modern societies. The texts in some way represent an outcome of the international academic conference that took place on May 23, 2019 and was titled *The Metamorphosis of Religion and Spirituality (Metamorfozy religii i duchowości)*. The event was held at The Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (UKSW) and was organized by the UKSW Institute of Sociology as well as the Section of Sociology of Religion at the Polish Sociological Association (PTS) under the auspices of the International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA), that unites researchers of the socio-religious issues in this geographical area. In addition to the texts that are found in this volume, there is another book planned based on the conference papers. It will be published by the renowned Brill Publishing House in the late 2020 or early 2021.

Polish and international participants had their papers on specific topics in religious transformation in the modern societies. The papers topics determined specific subject field and it became a background for this collection of texts that at the same time reflected conference presentations. While collecting the manuscripts, editorial committee made a decision to direct selected texts to the “Academic Journal of Sociology” (Uniwersyteckie Czasopismo Socjologiczne, “UCS”) in order to promote in the Polish sociological milieu the papers by foreign authors who showcased the phenomena of religion and spirituality in their native environments. Additionally there is an opportunity for the authors to receive more recognition for their academic record and the texts published in our journal thanks to its indexation in various external databases.

Sociology of religion as a topic is once again extensively explored in our journal. It should be pointed out that socio-religious issues were presented in the 17th issue as well as in 21st and 22nd issues. The papers that were published there were not only derived from the aftermath of nationwide academic conferences in sociology of religion, but were also part of the *ad hoc* analyses or specific research projects. Important to say that “UCS” promotes both theoretical and empirical achievements of the Department of the Sociology of Religion previously as a part of the Catholic Theological Academy and currently of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University from 1960ties. The Department of the Sociology of Religion represents an essential unit at the Institute of Sociological Sciences at UKSW, both in terms of its strong and steadily growing publication record, and in terms of applied research skills, indispensable for the graduate and undergraduate students of sociology and other social sciences.

After the review procedure had been completed five original research papers are presented in the current 25th issue of “UCS”. Four papers directly refer to the socio-religious topics raised during the aforementioned conference. This set is supplemented by incredibly interesting study of the visualisation practices based on the original research. There are also three reviews of recently published books and papers, therefore the current issue in general consists of eight papers. Furthermore, all the original research articles were written and submitted in English.

Janusz Mariański a retired Professor from John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, in his text entitled *Individualization as a Socio-Cultural Process and Religiosity*, refers to the processes of individualization carried out in the conditions of social modernization of many spheres of life. The emphasized individualisation also applies to the level of religious and moral norms and values. According to the author, the process of

individualization leads to a specific “fragmentation” of the Church and to the evolution from church-based (founded) religiosity to pluralized, segmented, deregulated and individualized religiosity.

The authors of the second paper, Yuriy Pachkovskyy and Oleg Demkiv from Ivan Franko Lviv National University presented some issues concerning the religious sect of Jehova’s Witnesses in Ukraine in the context of the widely known sociological concept of social capital. It is also noteworthy that text is based on the original qualitative research (semi-structured narrative interviews). The authors accented on the regulations, integrity and social bonds that have specifically inclusive character. One might say that presented theoretical and empirical study accounts for an interesting research approach to neoprotestant communities in connection with their environment of absolutely different religious tradition, in this case, Orthodox faith in the circumstances of Ukraine.

Authors Nadezhda Pokrovskaya, Albina Beschasnaya and Stanislav Boiko proposed paper titled *Spirituality in the Cognitive Process and the Regulation of Digital Behaviour: Human Ethics and Machine Learning*. This manuscript in its fundamental theoretical dimension strives to show reciprocal influences of religion, spirituality and virtual sphere, for example, applications that use human cognitive abilities. Therefore the paper form a part of the academic discourse on the influence of machines on human life, especially in its transcendental dimension. The authors chose an interesting approach and focused on the belief-regulated behaviour that is apparent even in the contemporary cultural message based on the digitalized reality.

In the fourth paper Yaroslav Yuvsechko referred to the transposition between different symbolic orders – sacral and secular. The text was titled *Modern Quasi-Religious Beliefs: on the Border Between Sacred and Secular*, and the main accent was put on the religious imitation by new communities of the cult character. The question of quasi-religion as an analytical category promoted by Paul Tillich has been widely discussed. The differences between quasi and pseudo-religiosity were also emphasized, as practices widespread today, which are a certain imitation of religiosity in relation to the secularized environment. In the paper the new practices were also emphasized as these initiatives were aimed to form legitimate religious beliefs. Author refers to the cases of the Apple users community or the community created around the Amway organisation as examples of quasi-religiosity.

Agnieszka Rychłowska-Niesporek is the author of the fifth text under the title *Seeking a Life Partner with the Use of Internet Technology*, which is, on the other hand, an example of the original research on the relationships and affection in the networked world. The topic is somewhat different from the previous papers focused on the socio-religious motives, however it is closely related to the digitalisation theme, in this case of the relationships and intimate sphere. The author refers to the opinion of single men and women on partners search using the dating sites. The researcher took a good practical use of the research methods triangulation imperative and refers in her paper both to the quantitative and qualitative methods.

The topics mentioned above are supplemented by three previously announced reviews of the latest published sociological works. Agnieszka Zduniak wrote a reviews of the recent piece of work by Janusz Mariański under the title *Human Dignity – Appreciated Virtue or Empty Phrase? Sociopedagogical Study (Godność ludzka – wartość doceniona czy puste słowo? Studium socjopedagogiczne)*. The reviewer referred in detail to the structure and goals of the reviewed work, and emphasized general questions about the contemporary role and the essence of human dignity.

The second review concerns the newest publication by Remigiusz Szauer titled *Between the Need for Sensations and the Persistence of Attitudes. Religiousness and Morality of High School and University Students in the Koszalin-Kołobrzeg Diocese. A Sociological Study (Między potrzebą doznań a trwałością postaw. Religijność i moralność uczniów szkół średnich i studentów uczelni wyższych w diecezji koszalińsko-kołobrzeszkiej. Studium socjologiczne. Studium socjologiczne)*, authored by one of the authors of this editorial. It lists the advantages of analysing the religion, religiosity and spirituality of young people as real indicators of metamorphosis and change in relation to the sacred reality.

The last but not the least is the review by Magda Ostrowska concerning the book edited by Beata Tobiasz-Adamczyk, Monika Brzyska and Tomasz Grodzicki under the title *Neglect and Self-neglect of the Elderly Medical and Social Determinants (Zaniedbanie i samozaniedbanie osób starszych. Medyczne i społeczne uwarunkowania)*. The author of the review acknowledges the development of the concept of the *healthy ageing* in the general

context of ageing of societies that was presented in the reviewed book. Moreover, neglect and self-neglect are analysed in the book from the perspective of the forms of violence experienced by older people with the accent on exclusion and marginalization, depriving them of caring assistance.

To sum up, the academic studies included in this issue of "UCS" reflect the adopted thematic assumption and how this assumption is grasped in the current analyses. These analyses have been conducted primarily by foreign researchers who represent interdisciplinary analytical approaches of both sociology and religious studies. They underline the peculiar dynamics of religious metamorphosis in the societies that until now have been considered rather stable in regard to faith. The current issue is written entirely in English and represents a great opportunity for the Polish researchers in sociology of religion and religion studies to acquaint with the research from abroad full of interesting, original approaches and results. This issue also represents an expression of the journal development strategy that has been recently adopted and complied with. It concerns involving more content of the international character aside the Polish local issues. Therefore our readers have an excellent chance to learn about state-of-the-art research and knowledge in the academic institutions that are quite different from the Polish ones.

Stawomir H. Zaręba and Marcin Choczyński