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Abstract

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ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF WOMEN AND WOMEN IN SOCIOLOGY**

This text was inspired by the work of Alice Salomon, a German social scientist active in first decades of the 20th century. It discusses the auxiliary and later creative role of women in sociology globally, from the mid-20th century until now. It is focused on the input of women to social theory. In the last part, the article discusses the role of women in Polish social sciences, but particularly the lack of systematic research on this issue.

Key words: gender studies, women in sociology, women in social theory, women in Polish sociology

The inspiration of this article was a book on Alice Salomon (see Kołodziej-Durnaś 2010), a German social scientist, organizer of higher education in the field of social work and a social activist. The aim of this text is not to analyse her substantive contribution to social research but instead to feature the role of women in social sciences (in particular in sociology) and the sociology of women. Another but related topic is the extent to which distinguished female scholars have dealt and continue to deal in their research with fields which stereotypically do not belong to "women's worlds." I am interested here in "sociology in general," but in particular in social sciences practiced in Poland. In this short article, I can cover only a small part of this field.

Alice Salomon received her doctoral degree in economics in 1908 but her publications belong to today's "social work". This field is a separate social discipline now but sociology is one of its significant pillars (economics is another). Moreover, in the mainstream of sociology, in Poland and in other countries, scholars have always been interested in social problems and practical ways of solving them. In many universities, research and teaching in the field of social work began within departments of sociology. Salomon is not the only example of women in German academic social sciences at the start of the 20th century. Another can be Mathilde Vaerting, who worked, before World War II, in the field of sociology of political power (in particular – the state organization), political and cultural dimensions of gender differences as well as education. Her contributions were already in the 1920s translated into

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** In this article, I draw, to a limited extent, upon my Introduction (see Mucha 2010) to Agnieszka Kołodziej-Durnas' book. I appreciate the fact that the author and the publisher (Oficyna Naukowa in Warsaw) agreed to that. Naturally, in such a short article it is not possible to avoid subjectivism in the choice of examples.

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many languages. After the war, she co-founded a periodical devoted to sociology of the state (Connell 2009: 36; see also http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathilde_Vaerting, downloaded 5.12.2011). In every national tradition of sociology we can probably find examples of very prominent women.

One can look at the work of Salomon and other female social scientists, which will be addressed in this article, from the point of view of "public sociology" that came about at the beginning of the 21st century thanks to the famous essay by Michael Burawoy (2005), vividly debated throughout the sociological world. In my opinion, the contribution of Salomon would belong to three out of the four Burawoy's areas of sociology: practical, critical, and public. It would probably not belong to his academic sociology, but it is possible that my reading of the German scholar's work was not careful enough. The situation seems to be different in the case of other female social scientists presented in this article. Academic sociology was as much their field as were other Burawoy's areas. American sociologist link very strongly today's sociological practice not only with academic research (theoretical and empirical) but also with public commitment, internal sociological criticism, social criticism, and debates on visions of a better life. And Burawoy is not the only scholar for whom it is important that sociology is interested in the world of values and in the analysis of the kinds of social structures which contribute to reification of human beings and which do the opposite – contribute to their emancipation. In the following parts of this article, I will analyse the interests of women – social scientists – in "practical", stereotypically speaking "female" issues, but also in their interest in "broader" issues which are the stereotypical topics of research of male scholars. I will try to concentrate on different aspects of the interest of women in sociological theory and social theory (whatever the difference between these two concepts). I also bear in mind the fact that the "women's issues" were sometimes studied equally deeply by men, sociologists, philosophers, and that some of them have been very successful and influential in this field (in Polish literature, see, e.g., Domański 1992, Ślęczka 1999, Uliński 2001).

Women were present in the social (obviously, not only social) sciences from the very time of their emergence as a separate, legitimate, and institutionalized field of studies. Their role, however, was treated as auxiliary for long. Most probably, during the first decades it really was auxiliary, due to the structural position of women in European and American societies (I will not comment on other societies since institutionalized social sciences in the Western sense emerged there much later). Thanks mostly to the empirical and historical – feminist but not only – sociology of scientific knowledge, we are aware today of the fact that the authority structure in probably all research teams has made it difficult to appreciate the intellectual contribution of various support groups (Maria Skłodowska-Curie seems to be an obvious exception; however, despite the winning of the Nobel Prize twice, her fame and recognition in France and outside of her borders did not come easily; see, e.g., Des Jardins 2010). Women are good examples of this treatment without appreciation, but the same can be said about students, assistants, technicians, whatever their gender (see, e.g., Kleinman 2005). Even today, despite the fact that the proportion of women with a PhD degree and habilitation degree (where it survived) is very high and increasing, the key positions of power and authority in the academic field are fulfilled mostly by men. Where there is a need to introduce or keep

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the "gender balance" in academic milieus, the quota mechanisms seem to be necessary. In contemporary sociology, a good example is the European Sociological Association (ESA). Its statutes demand separate male and female candidates for the position of chairperson, and equal numbers of male and female candidates on the Executive Board. Interestingly, during the first sixteen years of the existence of the ESA, nobody questioned this formal quota rule (established during the Budapest Conference in 1995) until the General Assembly at the Geneva Conference in 2011. A number of members (coming from Eastern, Central and Southern Europe) demanded, in the name of democracy and equal rights of the two genders, to abolish in the statutes and in social practice, the gender quota. This motion was not successful, however, since the overwhelming majority of the members present at the Assembly as well as the institutional procedures concerning the changes of the statutes were against it.

We usually consider successes of science (including social sciences) as successes of men. One should pay attention not only to such contexts as the above mentioned authority system in itself and particularly in the academic milieus. It seems that the gender system of primary and secondary socialization is responsible for the fact that women in the social sciences have dealt first and foremost with "practical issues" (like the "social problems" and social work, poverty, family, but also, what is in my opinion very important, the "women's question"), close to "everyday life,"[1] as well as methods and techniques (I will return to this issue) of studying them. Theorizing, and in particular constructing "grand theories", has always been a field of men. In my opinion, there are only few exceptions to this culturally constructed "rule".

It is possible, however, to find some distinguished women in sociology, even in its classical period. Harriet Martineau [2], who was active in the mid 19th century, published very creative interpretations of Auguste Comte's theories, worked in the field of sociology of morality, studied modern American society *in statu nascendi*, authored a manual of sociological field research (see, e.g., Hill and Hoecker-Drysdale 2000; Ritzer 2000: Chapter 9; Wincławska 2004). Let me present three (out of many; and I will not take into account the feminist theoretical sociology) very prominent contemporary examples. One is Margaret Archer, the very well-known co-founder of critical realism in social theory, active participant of the debates around *agency* (see, e.g. Archer 2003). The second is Saskia Sassen, an outstanding scholar of globalization and global cities (see, e.g. Sassen 1998). The third is Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Prize winner in economics in 2009, and in sociology a prominent scholar of neo-institutionalism (see, e.g. Ostrom 1991). And "grand theories" are important here because it is nearly only them which will be discussed in textbooks and histories of science, even after decades.

One can also look at the contemporary involvement of women in sociological (and social) theorizing from a different, more down-to-earth point of view, i.e. at the rank-and-file theorists. At the 9th ESA Conference in Lisbon in 2009, nine meet-the-author sessions with the authors of very significant, mostly theoretical, books of the past few years were organized. There was no single woman among the featured authors. However, the Research Network

[1] However, in a recently published in Poland edited collection of contemporary essays on the „everyday life", only 7 out of 35 texts were authored by women (see Sztompka, Bogunia-Borowska 2008).

[2] In this article, I will quote individual texts written by distinguished women only if they are not referred to by textbooks and other sources devoted directly to them.

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"Social theory" sponsored 77 papers, and 36, or nearly a half, was given by women. Only one of these speakers theorized the traditional women's issues. At the next ESA Conference in Geneva in 2011, four meet-the-author sessions, out of nine, featured books co-authored or co-edited by women. Out of 69 papers at "theoretical sessions," 21 (or less than one third) were given by women. They hardly dealt with the stereotypical women's issues. Gender proportions were different at the session sponsored by the research network focused on gender. In Lisbon, out of 76 papers, nearly all were given by women. In Geneva, the situation was identical, with 57 papers given. While footnote 2, referring to contemporary sociology of "everyday life" could suggest that this field ceased to be a specialty of women, the above mentioned gender sessions reveal that the "female character" of this field is still there. However, "theoretical sessions" at the same conferences suggest that contemporary female sociologists are very much interested in theory and in "general" problems.

Traditional gender status differentiation in the social sciences is changing, however, for instance following (and implementing in social practice) in the mainstream social sciences some ideas of post-structuralism, like those questioning the special role of grand theories, grand narratives, and instead giving the voice and recognition to the formerly suppressed discourses.

Appreciation of the active and creative role of women in academia, in particular in the social sciences which are important in this article, came relatively late, but one should not neglect examples which have been distinguished and highly valued for decades. In American academic cultural anthropology, from its very beginnings, it would be difficult to overestimate the contribution of such students of Franz Boas, like Ruth Benedict or Margaret Mead in the anthropological psychiatry – of Karen Horney. In British social anthropology, students of Bronisław Malinowski, like Audrey Richards and Lucy Mair; in symbolic anthropology (British as well as American) – Mary Douglas, contributed a lot. We can read about the findings of these scholars in textbooks in nearly all languages (including Polish); their books are translated into many languages (again, including Polish). Among Polish female anthropologists and ethnographers there are great figures like Maria Czaplicka and Cezaria Baudouine de Courtney-Ehrenkreutz-Jędrzejewiczowa, among Polish educators and historians – Helena Radlińska (I will return to them). The contribution of Rosa Luxemburg to political economics, and particularly to the early economic theory of globalization, became overshadowed during the last decades by her radical communist activism, both in Poland and in Germany. She disappeared from Polish literature in the field of social sciences and their history. We can find her, however, in histories of Marxism. In the fundamental history of this current of social thought, authored by Leszek Kołakowski, she appears many times, and a whole chapter of the second volume is devoted to solely her work (see Kołakowski 1989). Andrzej Walicki, another expert on Marxism, devotes to her a whole chapter in his influential book on this topic (see Walicki 1996). She is featured here as a revolutionary communist rather than a social theoretician. Interestingly, Luxemburg is absent in the book on Alice Salomon.

It seems to me that in institutional academic sociology *sensu stricto* there are no "obvious" historical (or – early) examples of great success of women as scholars and not as only "female scholars". The above mentioned Harriet Martineau became, according to George Ritzer, „discovered" as a theoretician only about one hundred years after she died. Marie

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Kolabinski, a student of political elites in France in the early 20th century, was highly respected by Vilfredo Pareto (see Kojder 1994: XX; Pareto 1994: 98, 277, 326), but as a matter of fact she is still known nearly only to some historians of sociology and political sciences, as well as to experts on Pareto and sociology of elites. Sociologists are well familiar with a contribution of Marianne Schnitger Weber to their discipline, but our common knowledge is limited, unfairly, to her expertise and interpretation of sociology of her husband, Max. Marianne's sociological work has a much farther scope, however. Ritzer is aware of that but he devotes to her only two pages of his large textbook and this only in a chapter on female sociologists and not in chapters on theory. We know about the contribution of American scholar and social activist (feminism included), Jane Addams, but rather in the context of her involvement in social work for the poor in Chicago of the first decades of the 20th century, and not of her sociology (feminist or not) as a scholarly discipline (the latter aspect is discussed at length by Ritzer, though, but again mostly in the chapter on female sociologists. What is important, he recognizes her, and other women, contribution to the first Chicago School in sociology (the Park school). In Poland, Krzysztof Czekaj devotes to her a lot of attention in his book on this school (2007: 49–56).

In more recent days, the research findings of Jessie Bernard, Dorothy S. Thomas, Helen M. Lynd, and Rose L. Coser are very much appreciated within sociology but like Marianne Weber they seem to be still in the shadows of their knowledgeable husbands. Jessie Bernard, a student of Pitirim A. Sorokin, a close collaborator and wife of Luther Lee Bernard, was a co-founder of the "American Sociological Review". She was an expert in the fields of American women, marriage and family (traditional sociological women's issues), but also social conflicts and international relations (see, e.g., Bernard 1987). Dorothy S. Thomas, wife of W.I. Thomas, was a recognized sociologist and demographer, student of migrations, economist; she was the first female President of the American Sociological Society. Her co-authored study of the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II became famous in American sociology and among the general audience and later it significantly influenced the rehabilitation process and the compensation court trials (see Thomas and Nashimoto 1946). Helen M. Lynd was interested in social philosophy (see Lynd 1958) as well as historical sociology. Along with her husband Robert S. Lynd, she co-authored two influential books on the cultural transformations of an American town, named in this project as "Middletown", during the times of the Depression. Rose L. Coser, wife of Lewis A. Coser, contributed to the sociology of the family, the sociology of medicine, as well as to the theory of role distance (see, e.g., Coser 1991). American and Polish sociologists know the work of Helena Znaniecki-Lopata, but most of the latter see her mainly as an expert, commentator, and propagator of the theories of her father, Florian. However, her structural and cultural analysis of American housewives (Znaniecki-Lopata 1971) should, in my opinion, guarantee her a prominent place in sociology. Mirra Komarovsky's book on unemployment and its gender and family dimensions (Komarovsky 1940) belongs to the classics of this topic. We all know the contribution of Hannah Arendt to the post-war social philosophy. Her numerous books influenced not only scholars but many public intellectuals. It happened not because she was a woman but because the books were original contributions to our understanding of contemporary times. They were translated into many languages, including Polish.

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These were, naturally, only examples, but I believe that we can hardly find many more in our collective representation of the lasting heritage of Western social sciences. Therefore, one can ask again: are women not (for whatever reason) interested in studying "general" social issues? Are the issues presented in the above paragraph not important? As I have already mentioned, on the level of down-to-earth "theoretical production", the real gender proportions are different than the textbooks of social sciences suggest. Today's female sociologists are more and more involved in general social issues, without losing interest in problems of family, poverty, unemployment, and women's issues. Where there is a chance, under conditions of relatively unconstrained submission (like in research networks at large conferences), women are more and more present in the field of sociological theory.

Actually, only recently historians and sociologists of sociology (both women and men, but rather women than men) began research on the presence of women in the social sciences, from the period when these disciplines emerged on. This is strongly connected with feminist movements and with critical feminist sociology (see, e.g., Turner 2003: 249–265). I am not a specialist in this field, but I would like to mention the contribution of Alice Rossi (see, e.g., 1973); the scholarly efforts of Mary Jo Deegan (editor of the series "Women and Sociological Theory") who dug out the theoretical sociological contributions of many female scholars, and who focused during the last decades nearly only on the role of women in sociology, mostly American (see, e.g., Deegan 1988, 1991); contribution of Lynne McDonald (see, e.g., 1994) who discovered many women among scholars who had founded the social sciences.

It seems to be interesting to move now to Polish research on the role of women in society and the role of women in the social sciences, as well as to the ways the Poles are informed about these roles. The "sociology of women" has been present in Poland for long time (I am not, however, interested in the old assimilationist paradigm which stressed the socialist "upward mobility" of women in communist Poland but still underlined their specific social gender roles) and today nearly nobody is astonished to hear about micro- and macrosociological analysis of real and/or assumed specificity of women's roles, about "new feminisms" or even about "female antifeminism". Since 1989, there are in Poland a few academic research centres which focus on women's studies. We could identify a number of currents of this research activity, like gender inequalities (including in the job market), gender socialization, participation of women in public (in particular political) life, etc. (more on this topic – see Mucha 2003).

How could Polish students of social sciences learn about the contribution of women to their disciplines? History (global and Polish; recent included) of a particular discipline is an important part of the curriculum in the higher education system in Poland. Therefore, for instance, students of education learn about Helena Radlińska. Students of socio-cultural anthropology, sociology, and psychology learn about the mentioned earlier American anthropologists (but not necessarily about my British and Polish examples; however, many books of Mary Douglas were recently translated). Students of philosophy read Hannah Arendt. Textbook information on women in social sciences is very selective, though.

Where can Polish sociologists, college students, and scholars, find more relevant and adequate information on the contributions of women? If they search, they will find it, not only in archives. Let me give some examples. Barbara Misztal published, about thirty years ago,

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in a frontline periodical "Studia Socjologiczne," a very important article on the feminist perspective in American sociology (Misztal 1983), with her clear reservation that she was personally interested in the sociology of knowledge and not in any sociology of women. Twenty years later, Maria Wincławska devoted an article, published in the same journal (Wincławska 2004), to Harriet Martineau, a British sociologist, whose contribution is increasingly influential in the 21st century. Krzysztof Czekaj, in his book on the Chicago School, stressed, as I have already mentioned, the sociological, substantive contribution of Jane Addams, as well as the methodological work of Vivien Mary Palmer. Following Mary Jo Deegan, he puts forward his opinion that without female scholars, the Chicago School would not achieve its very high and deserved prestige (Czekaj 2007: 171–185).

In Polish translations of foreign textbooks on classical and contemporary sociological theory, the role of women is increasingly underlined. A popular and quoted in this article textbook on classical social theories written by George Ritzer stresses the contributions of Martineau, Addams, and Weber, but also Charlotte Perkins Gilman who studied, at the turn of the 20th century, women's role in the American economy. He features Anna Julia Cooper and Ida Wells-Barnett (both were Afro-Americans) who studied, at the same period of time, the social situation of American Blacks, as well as Beatrice Potter Webb who studied, together with her husband Sidney, the social stratification (particularly poverty) of British society of the first decades of the 20th century. Jonathan H. Turner, in the new Polish edition (2004) of his well-known textbook on contemporary sociological theories, devotes (as I have already written) a whole chapter to feminist criticism of sociological theory developed since the 1970s. We are returning here to the issue raised many times in this article: women whose work is discussed in these textbooks deals mostly with "practical issues", like family, poverty, ageing, and gender relations. The real situation, as analysed above, changes, however. Interestingly, the changes are hardly reflected in textbooks. The scope and structure of Ritzer's manual would not make it easy to present contemporary thinkers, but Turner's book could have covered new trends. Unfortunately, we cannot find there many contemporary female theoreticians of sociology. For instance, Margaret Archer does not appear here. Turner does not analyse "grounded theory" at all so there is no place for Julet Corbin and other women who contributed very much to this theory. Anthony Elliott's textbook on contemporary social theory, published recently in Poland (2009/2011), discusses Archer as a critic of Anthony Giddens' theory of *agency*, but neglects her own version of *agency* approach. Women are present in this book but, like in Turner, only in a large chapter on feminist and postfeminist perspectives. Other areas of women's expertise are not addressed.

There are some important Polish and international publications on the history of Polish sociology or histories putting this sociology in an international context. Let me begin with three monumental works. The first is the four-volume "Biographic dictionary of Polish sociology", authored by Włodzimierz Wincławski (2001–2011). There are 1030 personal entries (887 biograms and a list of 137 additional persons) about Polish (in a broad sense of the term) sociologists (also, in a broad sense) who died until 2010. Among them, we can find 139 women (naturally mostly from the post-World War II period). Examples are known: Rosa Luxemburg, Maria Czaplicka, Cezaria Baudouin de Courtney-Ehrenkreutz-Jędrzejewiczowa, Helena Radlińska, and Helena Znaniecki-Lopata. The second monumental

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work is the collection edited by Jerzy Szacki (1995) and his team, devoted to one hundred years of Polish sociology. Szacki wrote a very long and important introduction and included in the collection selected texts written by Polish sociologists between 1883 and 1968. Among the 57 authors, there are two women: Maria Ossowska and Nina Assorodobraj-Kula. The third monumental publication is the Polish five-volume *Encyclopaedia of Sociology* (1998–2005). Among 43 personal entries, about a half cover Polish classics. There are two women featured in the Encyclopaedia: Antonina Kłoskowska and Maria Ossowska.

The English language collection on masters of Polish sociology and featuring eleven of them, does not mention any women (Sztompka 1984). A collection published twenty years later, devoted to classical Polish sociology and its contemporary reception, features also eleven (but slightly other than the previous volume) classics and only one woman among them – Ossowska (Mucha, Wincławski 2006). In the same year, in a special issue of the British "Journal of Classical Sociology," devoted to Polish sociology, among six featured classics we can find Ossowska again (*Special Issue*... 2006). The contribution of 106 women of various generations in the development of Polish sociology was recently discussed by Bogumiła Pietrulewicz (2010). She analyses five generations and the female sociologists born in the period of 1918–1929 is the last of them. This is only the beginning of Pietrulewicz's research project. Polish "modern women", writers, painters, scholars and scientists, and, physicians of the previous turn of centuries were presented by Grażyna Kubica in her book on "sisters" of Bronisław Malinowski (2006).

The continuation and even the intensification of research in the field of history of the sociology of women and the history of women in the social sciences seems to me necessary but a next stage of this kind of project is needed, in my opinion. In my view, female sociologists, when they deserve it as scholars, should be featured in textbooks and collections in the fields of "general sociology", sociological theory, and sociological subdisciplines, and not only is special chapters devoted to women's contributions. I gave some examples of women who deserve to belong to sociology as such and not only to the gender niche.

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UWAGI O SOCJOLOGII KOBIET I KOBIETACH W SOCJOLOGII

Tekst inspirowany jest twórczością Alice Salomon, niemieckiej badaczki społecznej z pierwszych dekad XX wieku. Omawia pomocniczą i twórczą rolę kobiet w socjologii światowej, od połowy XIX wieku do czasów współczesnych. Artykuł koncentruje się na udziale kobiet w tworzeniu teorii społecznej. W ostatniej części artykułu autor opisuje rolę kobiet w polskich naukach społecznych i fakt, iż brakuje w Polsce szerszej wiedzy na ten temat.

Słowa kluczowe: studia genderowe, socjolożki, teoretyczki socjologii, polskie socjolożki

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