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Krystyna Szafraniec

(12/3/1955 – 3/9/2022)

On 3 September 2022, Professor Krystyna Szafraniec tragically passed away. She was a researcher who made her mark on the history of our discipline in many fields. Her unexpected and sudden death interrupted further research, publishing and organisational plans.

Krystyna Szafraniec began (with the best result in the entrance examinations) her pedagogical studies extended by the sociology programme at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń in 1973 [she took her first professional steps in the Institute of Pedagogy at the Nicolaus Copernicus University (UMK)- she worked there from 1977 to 1983]. It was during her studies that, at the invitation of the UMK Interdepartmental Student Research Circle, she took part in a 'research camp', which was the first empirical expedition as part of a long-term team-based longitudinal study of the same cohort of adolescents born in 1957, conducted by the Scientific and Research Station of the PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences) Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development. This multi-year study (which later became known as the Toruń Longitudinal Study of Generations) addressed the issue of the relationship between education and changes in the life cycle of adolescents in the context of social change. It was originally assumed that this study would last until the selected adolescents started working, that is, until around 1985. Krystyna Szafraniec put a lot of creative effort into this study.



Krystyna Szafraniec

In 1984, she took up a job at the Station of the PAN Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development (IRWiR), where, together with Ryszard Borowicz, she continued to carry out longitudinal studies in the late 1980s and later lead them herself. When she took over the management of this study in 1997, she supplemented it with a study of adolescents corresponding with age to the children of the first cohort (not all of them had children, not all of them had children „just in time”), and making the study a double longitudinal study.

During her period of work at the PAN IRWiR Station (1980s and early 1990s), she was a very active participant in the so-called ‚Thursday’ seminar ‚Absent Discourses’ at the PAN IRWiR Station co-directed by Zbigniew Kwieciński and Lech Witkowski. They attempted to understand the essence of the Polish phenomenon of socialism and its collapse and their relation to the development of moral, social and civic consciousness, and to propose an alternative to the existing system of public education (they hosted, among others, Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania, Leszek Nowak, Jadwiga Staniszkis, Danuta Markowska, Andrzej Maciej Kaniowski, as well as foreign philosophers such as Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren and Richard Rorty from the USA, or Ricardo Massa from Italy).

In 1986 Krystyna Szafraniec defended her doctoral thesis entitled, „The process of personality adaptation to rapid social changes” (supervisor Prof. Zbigniew Kwieciński; reviewers: Prof. Bogdan Suchodolski and Prof. Władysław Adamski), in which she reconstructed the anomie theory of E. Durheim and R. Merton and, applied it to the study of the participants’ experience of change in 1981-1982. The results of her research were judged by many to be extremely revealing and even sensational. She later published them in two books: „Anomia- Identity Solstice” (UMK, 1986), and „Man in the Face of Social Change” (PWN, 1990)- the book as the best sociological book of the year was awarded the Stanisław Ossowski Prize by the PTSM Main Board in 1991.

She brought new questions and problems to the Toruń team study, adding, among other things, the perspective of questions about generational mechanisms of social change and stability. She regarded the study of generations as, an interesting method of tracking social change, particularly useful where change occurs in a discontinuous, non-linear way, when it cannot be logically and simply derived from the passage of time or the course of events (Szafraniec

2022, p. 9). She placed generations as an agent of social change (and not just a mirror of it) at the centre of her latest book, published in spring 2022: *Generations and Polish Change. 45 years along the time* (PWN, Warsaw 2022). She directed her great research energy towards young people. She regarded youth as an extraordinary time; full of difficulties, tensions and fears, and at the same time emblematic of development- not only of individuals, but also of societies. In young people she saw great potential for a mental change of communities, for a qualitative reformulation of the value system. She saw a direct correlation between how adolescents think, what is important to them, what they want and what they fear, and who we will be as a society in a few years' time.

Her early scholarly experience resulted in several features that characterise her research: an attachment to questions about the relationship between the characteristics of the system and the development of individuals (and, vice versa, the influence of individuals on the persistence or change of the system), moving at the interface between sub-disciplines (sociology of youth, sociology of education, sociology of the countryside) and disciplines (social psychology). Practising a sociology that refers to empirical research and poses questions that it feels are worth answering, and tackles problems whose solution has practical meaning and significance, as well as realising the conviction that science must serve something and have a deep practical meaning.

The period of association with the PAN IRWiR research station itself ended in the mid-1990s with her habilitation thesis: *Rural youth as an effect of borderland socialisation. Between localism and totalism* [habilitation colloquium before the Scientific Council of IFiS PAN; reviewers: Prof. Hanna Świda-Ziemia (IS UW), Prof. Władysław Adamski (IFiS PAN), Prof. Waław Piotrowski (IS UŁ)]. However, she remained affiliated with the PAN IRWiR for many years. Since 1996, she was associated with the UMK Institute of Sociology, since 2012 as a full professor. For a short period of time (2005–2007), she worked at the International Institute for the Study of Culture and Education at the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław.

Author of 10 monographs, editor of several collective works and author of dozens of articles published in prestigious Polish and foreign journals. Author of expert reports on youth and education (prepared, among others, for the Senate of the Republic of Poland, ISP, FDPA, „Know-How” Fund).

As a researcher, she led two projects in recent years. In 2015-2020, this was a continuation of the longitudinal research already mentioned, titled *Life projects*,

social projects and intergenerational solidarity in late system transformation. Continuation of longitudinal research (NCN, OPUS)'. Prior to that, from 2014 to 2017, she led an international study carried out by partners from 9 countries entitled, 'Youth in post-communist space: new opportunities, new challenges, new problems (NCN, Harmonia)'. The study was particularly concerned with what role the young generation plays in the processes of systemic transformation in countries with experience of socialism (the not fully realised project of communism). It sought answers to questions about whether the processes of systemic transformation in the countries analysed can count on the supportive participation of the young generation, or whether it is more likely to be the source of problems. She published the results of this study with other team members in the book, 'Changing the guard. Young Generations and Transformations in Eastern Europe and Asia', Warsaw 2017: Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, and in the book, 'The Me-Generation in a Post-Collectivist space. Dilemmas in a Time of transition' (K. Szafraniec et al. Berlin 2018: Peter Lang).

As an author, she has repeatedly published articles in the pages of our journal:

- Szafraniec K., *Spatial mobility as a carrier of cultural capital: an analysis based on a longitudinal study of generations*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 27/2021, pp. 7–36.
- Szafraniec K., Wasielewski K., Szymborski P., *Between school and labour market. Rural areas and rural youth in Poland, Romania and Russia*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 23/2017, pp. 5–25.
- Szafraniec K., *Common Agricultural Policy and the Polish Countryside*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 20/2014, pp. 225–232.
- Szafraniec K., Mikiewicz P., *Rural Social Capital vs European and Global Changes (About "good" and "bad" social capital)*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 15/2009, pp. 111–126.
- Szafraniec K., *Peasants – Moderators of Social Change in Poland*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 9/2003, pp. 103–122.
- Szafraniec K., *Obituary. Dyzma Gałaj (1915–2000)*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 7/2001, pp. 149–150.
- Szafraniec K., *The countryside and the Young Rural Generation*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 6/2000, pp. 67–78.
- Szafraniec K., *Polish Peasants – between "Real Socialism" and "Real Capitalism"*, "Eastern European Countryside", vol. 4/1998, pp. 49–64.

Readers outside of Poland could read about the results of her research from the following publications, among others:

- Szafraniec K. et al., *The Me-Generation in a Post-Collectivist space. Dilemmas in a Time of transition*, Berlin 2018: Peter Lang.
- Polish and Russian Youth: Education and Work in Changing Society*, K. Szafraniec & D. Konstantinovskiy (ed.): Moscow 2014. ISBN 978-5-89697-229.
- Young Poles – work and entering the labour market*, [in:] K. Szafraniec, D. Konstantinovskiy (ed.), „Education and labour market: Poland and Russia”; Moscow: Russian Academy of Sciences, 2014.
- Time for youth: on the necessity of generational change in Poland*, [in:] R. Stoilova et al. (ed.), *Knowledge as a Value, Scientific Knowledge as a Vocation*, Jubilee Collection in Honour of Professor Pepka Boyadijeva, Sofia 2015, pp. 419–434.
- Szafraniec K., *Changing education in a changing society. Some remarks on the Polish case*, „Revista Pedagogie” No. 2/2014, pp. 7–22.
- Szafraniec K., Szymborski P., *Transition from Education to Employment: A Specific Character of Rural Youth of the Selected Post-communist Countries*, „Wiesi Rolnictwo” 4 (173)/2016, pp. 101–122.
- Шафраниец К., „Завивалинадесяно” младо то поколение в пост-комунистическите страни? Анализ на избрани случаи, „Социологически проблеми”/ „Sociological Problems” 49, 1–2, pp. 306–332, Sofia: Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Bulgarian Sociological Association.
- Szafraniec K., *The Contemporary Context of Youth Socialization. The Specificity of Post-communist countries*, „Polish Sociological Review” 2(198) 2017, pp. 167–188.
- Szafraniec K., *Entering the Adulthood. From Diagnoses of Youth to Social Policies towards Them: in search of specificity of transition countries*, „Vietnam Social Sciences”, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi, vol. 3 (171), 2017, pp. 1–20.
- Onosov A.A., Gasparishvili A.T., Szafraniec K., *Cultural model of the Russian identity: Axiology, semantics and communicative potential*, „RUDN Journal of Sociology” 2018. Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 494–507.

Involved in the life of sociological associations. Since 2000 a member of the Presidium of the Main Board of the Polish Sociological Association (PTS), in 2005-2008 the Vice-President of the PTS. Since 2007, a member of the PAN Committee of Sociology. Since 2018, a member of the programme board of the European Sociological Association's section *RN30: Youth and Generation*. An active member of the Sociology of Youth and Education Section of the Polish Sociological Association.

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Krystyna Szafraniec was an outstanding, inquisitive researcher, and a person whose presence had an intense impact on others. Her scientific achievements fascinated and inspired. Everybody who came into contact with her, even briefly, was impressed by her energy, courage, directness and sensitivity.

Krystyna demanded a lot from herself and others, she was direct in naming issues, including her own and our (her pupils') weaknesses. She was competent, rational, independent, courageous, easy to make decisions and to not give up in difficult situations, but at the same time emotional, caring, sensitive to the needs of others, able to make sacrifices and warm in relationships. We will miss Krystyna.