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Science and Responsibility. About the Role of Values in Science

When 100 years ago Maria Grzegorzewska founded the State Institute of Special Pedagogy, now one of the best pedagogical universities in Poland, she knew that responsibility is of paramount importance in the human-world relationship. Her scientific and social work has led to a deep understanding of the essence and importance of educational care for a special needs child.

Grzegorzewska's academic achievement is a strong testimony to the relationship between science's responsibility for social life and its institutional and practical implications. The ethical challenge she leaves is taken up by students and scientists from the university that bears her name on a daily basis, and once a year it is done by the participants of the conference "Man and the world – dimensions of responsibility".

The presented issue of the Philosophical Movement (Ruch Filozoficzny) reflects the most important issues raised at the 13th interdisciplinary conference in the series "Man and the world – dimensions of responsibility", the leitmotif of which was "Science and responsibility. On the role of values in science".¹

In numerous presentations by scientists from around the world representing various disciplines, questions were asked about the ethical

¹ The 13th interdisciplinary conference in the series "Man and the world – dimensions of responsibility" was held on October 8, 2021.

dimension of scientific activity, related to the shaping of patterns, ideals, values, and principles that should be implemented by scientists. The topics addressed by the researchers can be divided into four broader areas covering specific issues:²

1. The role of values in shaping the standards of science³ – what should be the role of scientists in shaping the standards of teaching and methods of transferring knowledge; what is the real impact of the method of parameterization of scientific activity on the shape of scientific standards and the significance of errors in the methods of evaluating scientific activity;⁴ ethical standards in scientific activity and actual practices;⁵ asymmetrical relations between politics and scientific activity as well as science and social life.⁶

2. Values necessary in a scientific debate – scientific activity as a “fight of paradigms”;⁷ dangers related to the popularity of relativistic concepts of science, including postmodernism, certain trends in the philosophy of science, or the sociology of knowledge;⁸ unequal access to scientific achievements;⁹ living laboratories and innovation laboratories as examples of spaces for engaging various entities in research activities.¹⁰

3. The normative nature of the relationship between various fields of knowledge – some changes in contemporary educational systems contribute to the limitation and misunderstanding of the role of values, norms and principles in social life; it is accompanied by a reduction in the im-

2 In the following fragment describing the subject areas, there are references to already existing research, the collection of which is an important supplement.

3 Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik, *Odkrywanie aksjologicznego wymiaru nauki* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2008).

4 Terje Tüür-Fröhlich, *The Non-trivial Effects of Trivial Errors in Scientific Communication and Evaluation* (Glückstadt: Verlag Werner Hülsbusch, 2016).

5 Adrianna Surmiak, “Komisje etyczne dla badań społecznych w Polsce. Perspektywa socjologów i antropologów społeczno-kulturowych”, *Studia Socjologiczne* 4 (235) (2019): 157–182.

6 Michael Sandel, *Tyrania merytokracji* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2020).

7 Alan Sokal, Jean Bricemont, *Modne bzdury* (Poznań: Zysk i S-ka, 2004).

8 Francis Wheen, *Jak brednie podbiły świat* (Warszawa: Muza SA, 2005).

9 Peter Drahos, *A Philosophy of Intellectual Property* (Acton: ANU Press, 2016).

10 Allen Higgins, Stefan Klein, “Introduction to the Living Lab Approach”, in: *Accelerating Global Supply Chains with IT-innovation*, ed. Tan Yao-Hua (Berlin-Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2011).

portance assigned to the humanities and social sciences; criteria of organizational effectiveness and efficiency become more important than freedom, individual autonomy or critical thinking skills; relations between science and the methods of exercising power influence the level of trust in science;¹¹ they also often have a negative impact on democratic processes.¹²

4. Economization and financialization of science – the negative impact of capitalism¹³ on all non-market entities and structures¹⁴ also applies to science and research; often the limits of the autonomy of science are determined by the economic language, while science is subject to progressive bureaucratization and parameterization, and academics are often affected by processes lowering the standards of protection of workers' rights.¹⁵

The above-mentioned threads and the researchers' statements in this volume show the important role that ethical and critical reflection plays in considering scientific activity. The authors of the texts collected here present views from the perspectives of the disciplines they represent, which gives the whole an interdisciplinary dimension and reflects the nature of the conference "Man and the world – dimensions of responsibility". When selecting this issue of the Philosophical Movement, the editors set themselves two overarching goals. First and foremost, to show the international and multi-faceted view of the problems discussed during the conference. Secondly, what has been said by the researchers should be recorded as faithfully as possible by them. The goals set by the editors have been achieved, as evidenced by the following collection of valuable and very up-to-date statements.

¹¹ Cory Doctorow, *How to Destroy Surveillance Capitalism* (New York: Medium Editions, 2020).

¹² Martha C. Nussbaum, *Nie dla zysku. Dlaczego demokracja potrzebuje humanistów* (Warszawa: Fundacja Kultura Liberalna, 2016).

¹³ Marcin Napiórkowski, *Kod kapitalizmu. Jak Gwiezdne Wojny, Coca-Cola i Leo Messi kierują twoim życiem* (Warszawa: Krytyka Polityczna, 2019).

¹⁴ William I. Robinson, *Into the Tempest. Essays on the New Global Capitalism* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2019).

¹⁵ Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2019).

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