

New Developments in the Theory of the Historical Process

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New Developments in the Theory of the Historical Process

*Polish Contributions to Non-Marxian
Historical Materialism*

Edited by

Krzysztof Brzechczyn



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Preface

Krzysztof Brzechczyn

Professor Leszek Nowak (1943–2009) was a co-founder of the Poznań School of Methodology and an author of seven original scientific theories with a wide reach: the concept of an excellent lawmaker in the methodology of law, the idealizational theory of science in the philosophy of science, the adaptive reconstruction of Marxian historical materialism, a categorial interpretation of Marx and Engels's dialectics, non-Marxian historical materialism in the philosophy of history, non-Christian model of man in philosophical anthropology, and negativistic unitarian metaphysics. During his scientific career, Nowak wrote 28 books¹, edited 21 joint publications, and authored about 600 published scientific works (Brzechczyn 2007; 2011; on Nowak's scientific output see also: Klawiter, Łastowski 2007). In 1974–1999 Nowak was the head of the Department of Dialectics of Cognition. In 1975, he founded the “Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities” series, continued to this day, and “Poznańskie Studia z Filozofii Nauki” (Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of Science).

During the 1st National Convention of Delegates of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union “Solidarity” in September–October 1981 in Gdańsk, Nowak was an expert in the 11th Program Group named “The Union and the State Authorities and the Polish United Workers' Party.” After the imposition of martial law on December 13, 1981, he was detained (interned). After his release from prison on December 9, 1982, Nowak resumed work at the university and the underground publicistic work. In October 1984, the Minister of Science and Higher Education decided to suspend Nowak's academic teaching rights. In 1985, Nowak was expelled from the university. He returned to the university after 1989.

This introduction has three parts. In the first one, I will present professor Nowak's biography, in the second one – a short characteristic of his theory of the historical process, and in the third one – the concept of this volume.

1 Works published post mortem: Nowak (2011; 2018; 2019).

1 An Outline of Leszek Nowak's Biography

Leszek Nowak was born on January 7, 1943 in Więckowice near Brzesko and he grew up in Międzychód, where he graduated from high school. It was then that he became fascinated with leftist thinking. He read Marx's *Capital* while still in high school. In 1960, he began studying law at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. During his studies, he was an active member of the Students' Philosophical Group at the university, and he organized regular student sessions. During the second year of study, he joined the Polish United Workers' Party. Nowak graduated from the university in 1965. His Master's thesis "Powinność i obowiązywanie. Problem statusu terminów teoretycznych w naukach prawnych" (Duty and Validity. The Problem of the Status of Theoretical Terms in Legal Science) was written under the supervision of professor Zygmunt Ziemiński. Simultaneously, Nowak was a distance student of philosophy at the University of Warsaw. His Master's thesis "Model, prawda względna, postęp nauki" (Model, Relative Truth, Scientific Progress) written under the supervision of Janina Kotarbińska was defended in 1966.

Since September 1965, he was employed in the Department of Legal Applications of Logic of the Chair of the Theory of the State and Law. On May 30, 1967, he defended his doctoral dissertation titled *Problemy znaczenia i obowiązywania normy prawnej a funkcje semiotyczne języka* (The Problems of the Meaning and Validity of a Legal Norm and the Semiotic Functions of Language), written under the supervision of professor Zygmunt Ziemiński.

Nowak began to study Marx's philosophy in a more systematic manner. This study was accompanied by a political idea laid out by Nowak as follows:

socialism needs its good, nonconformist – critical – theory which would reveal its hidden mechanisms and, in that way, provide an intellectual basis for the party for more effective politics which would, as was my belief at the time, lead to the implementation of Marxian ideals. One paradigmatic example was Keynes's theory which, I thought, allowed the transformation of the likewise not so pretty pre-war capitalism into something at least bearable for the people. The idea was to build a Keynes-type theory of socialism. Being very critical of the political practice of the system, and especially of its ideology – I was already sure that it was gibberish – that theory was to be faithful to the Marxian message and addressed to the people who I believed implemented it – the party.

NOWAK 1988b, p. 37

The basis for that reform was to be the construction of a non-standard theory of socialism which would still remain within the framework of Marxian historiographical assumptions. On the basis of that idea, Nowak decided on the order of the reconstruction of Marx's thought: from methodology (the idealizational conception of science), through the reconstruction of ontological assumptions (the categorial interpretation of dialectics), to Marxian social philosophy (the adaptive interpretation of historical materialism).

In October 1970, Nowak moved to the Department of Logic and Methodology of Science in the newly formed Institute of Philosophy. In the first half of the 1970s, he was very active in the realms of scientific research, organization, and didactics. Almost every year, he published one or two books. In 1974, he became the head of the Poznań Dialectics Department, where his doctoral students could find employment. In October 1976, the Polish Council of State conferred the title of professor (*profesor nadzwyczajny*) of humanities on him. Aged 33, Nowak became the youngest professor in the Polish People's Republic.

He gradually ceased to identify himself with the socialist reality of the Polish People's Republic, and he became one of the most radical critics of the system. It seems that factors from three spheres: political and social, empirical, and theoretical contributed to the change of Nowak's perception of real existing socialism. According to professor Władysław Balicki, Nowak:

was strongly influenced by Polish 1970 protests and the subsequent events. When Edward Gierek came to power, he propagated the idea of petty-bourgeois money making. Nowak would prefer him to propose a program of fundamental social changes. Gierek's program disappointed him. The crisis of worldview was instantaneous. A month earlier, Nowak defended the socialist form of government, and now he declared he had had enough of it.

BALICKI 2003, p. 72

The empirical sources included the underground ('secondary') circulation of literature which reached the university circles. They revealed the history and the social mechanism of real socialism. Nowak himself points to the pivotal role of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*:

The avalanche of facts related in the book killed the natural propensity of my dogma-enslaved mind to ascribe secondary importance to facts which put the system in a bad light (and dismiss them as an 'exception', 'error,' or a 'deviation'). I still remember the thought which struck me after another hundred of pages: 'God, if that was the case there, it means that

every party member had to be immersed in that quagmire, which means that the system is a quagmire.' Solzhenitsyn turned my value structure upside down – the great size of the Gulag and all it entailed could not be incorporated into the vision of the party which – with deviations and inevitable costs – implements Marx's ideals.

NOWAK 1981, p. 4

According to Nowak, some of the most important sources of the ideological transformation were theoretical factors indicating the limited nature of Marx's theory (Nowak 1987). A systematic reconstruction of Marx's philosophy was to inspire Nowak to try and create a version of historical materialism which would explain the functioning of real socialism with all its deficiencies (pathologies) and failures. Nowak made those attempts since at least 1976, and as a result, he could point to the theoretical limitations of Marx himself and of Marxism. One of them was the paradox of historicism. In Nowak's words:

In the first half of the 1970s, we worked, in a rather big team, on the categorial interpretation of dialectics and the adaptive interpretation of historical materialism. When both conceptions were quite well developed, I noticed a contradiction between them. Roughly speaking, it consisted in the fact that according to categorial dialectics, the nature of all phenomena is variable, while Marxian historical materialism presupposes that they are everlasting and eternal because of the perpetual mutual relationship of productive forces and relations of production. Marxian historical materialism, then, presupposes a metaphysical concept of history. Given my orientation toward reconstruction, I was then quite shocked: Marxism must be wrong somewhere, and that 'somewhere' was in the foundations of the system – the dialectics or historical materialism.

NOWAK 1981, 5

Nowak tried to create a version of historical materialism which would explain the development of socialist societies. Andrzej Klawiter gave the following account of those attempts:

Nowak informed two people from his team about the project: Piotr Buczkowski and me. It was in the spring of 1977. He proposed that the three of us should start working on such a theory. Since May 1977, we met regularly, once a week, in his home at private seminars to discuss what form the theory of the socialist society should assume ... Buczkowski and I realized quite early that we were not starting from scratch and that

Nowak invited us to take part in a project he had been developing for some time.

KLAWITER 2013, p. 83

An outline of such a theory, in the form of a long typescript entitled *U podstaw teorii procesu historycznego* (On the foundations of the theory of the historical process; Nowak 1979), was completed in September 1979. It was distributed as a samizdat in the main higher education institutions. However, it was not easy to publish it as a book. Because of censorship, the official publishing houses would not publish even the most theoretical fragments of the work. Nowak's attempts at convincing Western publishing houses to publish the text failed because the conception was contrary to the main ideological trends. He described those efforts as follows:

that materialist but non-Marxian historiosophy was unacceptable within the framework of the main contemporary ideological trends ... For Marxists (who still held a strong position among intellectuals), I was a renegade, and for conservatists, nationalists, church people, or neoliberals who were just entering the scientific market, I was a Marxist.

NOWAK 2006, p. 170

Nowak also tried to make Polish publishing houses abroad interested in the book, but they unanimously refused to publish it. "Instytut Literacki did that in a record time – it sent the typescript back to me, to Frankfurt, in ten or eleven days. You can browse through a book in such a time in a publishing house but not read it" (Nowak 1985, 53). In September 1979, Nowak submitted the typescript to the Towarzystwo Kursów Naukowych (Scientific Course Association) with the same result. Polish independent publishing houses championed the same ideological movements as the Western ones (Nowak 2006, 170).

In the summer of 1980, Nowak signed the letter of 60 intellectuals from Poznań who supported the demands of people on a strike in Gdańsk, and on August 28, 1980, he left the Polish United Workers' Party. He became a member of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity" formed in autumn 1980 at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and as the political situation changed, he took up the position of the associate dean for students' affairs. He also became an ideological mentor for the new student movement. According to Jacek Bartkowiak:

the beginnings of self-government at the Poznań university were revolutionary. The atmosphere was pervaded by the spirit of radical syndicalism.

The movement grew under the ideological patronage of professor Leszek Nowak ... The initial project of self-government provided for two structures: the Academic Self-Government of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, which was to include all the students, academic staff, and administrative staff of the university, and students' self-government.

BARTKOWIAK 2014, pp. 23–24

Piotr Liszewski, a student of political science and journalism at the time, remembers professor Nowak's lectures as follows:

Professor Nowak's voice differed from other voices. It introduced order into the intellectual chaos. It was formally precise and clear, with a transparent, distinctive axiological substrate. It was not a conviction, view, or vision. It was a transmission of the cognitive proof, from the problem, through the method and source, to the statement of reasons, all presented in a very accurate and structured way. That evoked respect, even among later critics, and we had the impression of being our professor's intellectual companions, following the leader on the road toward the 'truth, good, and beauty.'

LISSEWSKI 2013, p. 95

The second area of Nowak's social activity were numerous lectures and publications, intended to popularize the theory and lead to the publication of a book: "The only solution for me were the spontaneously created local publishing houses of Solidarity, independent from the Warsaw and Cracow opposition. Still, in order to publish the book, I had to be known at the grassroots level of Solidarity, hence my lecturing and publishing activity in 1980–1981." (Nowak 2006, p. 170) Nowak's opinion pieces and articles were published in bulletins of Solidarity in Gdańsk, Kalisz, Katowice, Koszalin, Cracow, Łódź, Poznań, Słupsk, and Szczecin.

Gradually, his concept of a strategy for union work in the conditions of increasing social polarity in 1981, which was based on non-Marxian historical materialism, became noticed by the managers of Solidarity. During the 1st National Convention of Delegates of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity," Nowak was an expert in the 11th program group: "The union and the state authorities and the Polish United Workers' Party" led by Lech Kaczyński and Andrzej Małachowski. This program group prepared two alternative proposals: fundamentalists' and pragmatists'. Nowak was the main co-creator of the fundamentalists' project. Lech Kaczyński, who reported during the congress on October 8, 1981 results of program group's work noted that the alternative pragmatists' proposal was directed toward both the union

and the authorities of the Polish People's Republic and their allies. According to Kaczyński, fundamentalists believed that “words – even if they are from the program of Solidarity – mean nothing at all to our authorities and to the authorities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics” (Kaczyński 2013, p. 87; on Nowak's political ideas at that time, see: Brzechczyn 2012). For that reason, as related by Kaczyński:

the program should only be directed to the member masses. It should reflect their feelings and, in a way, put them in order. And what are those feelings? First of all, there is a deep resentment of our political system which incapacitates the society and which is seen by Poles as oppressive and causing all kinds of social evil. Such a system can be described in different ways. Among fundamentalists, professor Nowak's theory of so-called triple rule has become very popular, and they used that theory in their document.

LECH KACZYŃSKI (1981) 2013, p. 87

An indirect result of Nowak's publicistic and social activity was his detainment during the night between December 12 and 13, 1981. During his stays in internment centers in Gębarzewo (December 13, 1981–February 1982), Ostrów Wielkopolski (February–July 1982), Gębarzewo again (July–August 1982), and Kwidzyn (September–December 9, 1982), Nowak gave lectures to co-prisoners and did scientific work. At first, he was troubled the most by the lack of books. Wojciech Wołyński remembers that: “Just after the transportation from Gębarzewo to Ostrów, he moved his table to the tiny window of the cell and turned it into a creative workshop. He did the same in the two subsequent prisons” (Wołyński 2002, p. 405). Nowak took part in the detainees' protest actions. Despite certain doubts, he also participated in the March hunger strike in Ostrów Wielkopolski. During his stay in Kwidzyn, he finished writing a brochure entitled “O konieczności socjalizmu i konieczności jego zaniku” (On the Necessity of Socialism and of its Disappearance; Nowak 1982), which was published in 100 copies by other co-internees by means of the ink and pin method. Nowak was released from prison on December 9, 1982. He was released only after other internees who were to be released on that day declared that they will not go unless Nowak is released as well.

He returned to the university where he continued his work as the head of the Poznań Department of Dialectics of Cognition and the vice dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. He returned to lecturing and publicistic activity (under his own name). In 1983, the Reidel publishing house published Nowak's book, *Property and Power. Towards a non-Marxian Historical Materialism*

(Nowak 1983b). In 1983–1988, there were 14 underground editions of Nowak's August 1983 brochure *Anty-Rakowski, czyli co wygwizdali wicepremierowi robotnicy* (Anti-Rakowski, or, what workers booed at the deputy prime minister; Nowak 1983a). Nowak's publicistic activity drew the attention of the apparatus of repression. On February 10, 1984 the voivodeship Office of the Public Prosecutor in Poznań initiated an investigation in the case of the "distribution of works and publications signed with the name of Leszek Nowak, the content of which contains texts and false information which denigrate the form of government of the Polish People's Republic, the main governing bodies of the Polish People's Republic, and the Polish United Workers' Party, and which instigate social unrest."² In March 1984, while Nowak and his family were in Frankfurt where he was a visiting professor, his house was searched and 43 texts (manuscripts of articles, typescripts, and single copies of illegal publications) were confiscated. Nowak was not arrested because an amnesty law was passed on July 21, 1984. As a result, the investigation was discontinued on September 17, 1984.

A month later, on October 19, 1984, the Minister of Science and Higher Education, Benon Miśkiewicz, suspended Nowak's right to perform the duties of an academic teacher. That decision spurred protests of the academic circles in Poznań and the whole country. Nevertheless, Nowak was dismissed from the university on February 14, 1985. For the next three years, he was refused a passport 12 times. In 1988, he went to the l'Universita degli Studi in Catania at the invitation of professor Francesco Coniglione. Subsequently, he was a fellow at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (Wassenaar), the Berlin Institute for Advanced Study (1989–1990 academic year), and the Australian National University in Canberra.

The reinstatement of Leszek Nowak became a postulate of the student strikes in May 1988 at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and one of the issues raised by the academic circles in the 1988–1989 academic year. On April 10, 1989, the Senate of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań passed a resolution concerning the reinstatement of Nowak. In May 1989, the Minister of Science reinstated Nowak to his former position, as of April 1, 1989.

After his return to Poznań, Nowak received the position of a full professor (*profesor zwyczajny*). In 1991, he was a candidate to the Sejm from the list of the Labor Union (he was not elected). He wrote about social issues to "Głos Wielkopolski," "Gazeta Poznańska," "Bez Dogmatu," and "Przegląd Tygodniowy."

2 The Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance, Po 04/3531, The decision on the initiation of an investigation, February 10, 1984.

In his columns, he discussed critically the role of the Catholic church in Poland after 1989 and the quality of Polish political elites. Disappointed with the course of the transformation, he left Solidarity in 1994. In the second half of the 1990s, as his health deteriorated, he gradually limited his university duties. In 1999, he resigned from the position of the head of the Epistemology Department, and he focused on the creation of a system of unitarian metaphysics, which he presented in his three-volume work *Byt i myśl* (Being and thought, Nowak 1998, 2004, 2007). The fourth volume remained unfinished as Nowak died on October 20, 2009 (it was edited by his wife and published posthumously in 2019).

2 On Leszek Nowak's Theory of the Historical Process

It is possible to distinguish three overlapping phases of Nowak's intellectual development: reconstructive, generalizing, and unifying (for a detailed reconstruction Nowak's theory of historical process, see Brzechczyn 2017; 2020b). The first reconstructive period lasted from 1973 to 1979 (if we base it on the publication dates and not the moment when Nowak began writing the text). At that time, Nowak created the adaptive interpretation of historical materialism. During the second period, from 1979 to about 1988, Nowak tried to generalize the Marxian concept of class division and to derive certain theoretical and historiosophical consequences from it. The result was non-Marxian historical materialism (Nowak 1979; 1983b; 1988a; 1991abc; 1991d)³. The unifying stage (which began about the middle of the 1980s) started with laying down the anthropological foundations for non-Marxian historical materialism, which enabled Nowak to incorporate certain theses from liberalism and Christian social science into the new theory.⁴

Non-Marxian historical materialism assumed some earlier concepts: the idealizational theory of science, the adaptive interpretation of historical materialism, and the categorial reconstruction of dialectics. The main idea of the reconstruction of Marx's methodology was the conviction that a scientific theory is neither a generalization of facts nor a hypothetical-deductive system (Nowak 1980; Nowak, Nowakowa 2000). The construction of a scientific theory begins

3 *Property and Power* (Nowak 1983b) was reviewed by Sołtan (1984), Schneck (1984) and Berthold (1986), *Power and Civil Society* (Nowak 1991d) – Kubik (1994).

4 Nowak also reflected on the conditions for the construction of a unified social theory and tried to construct such a theory at a later time, in the 1990s, and in the first decade of the 21st century (see Nowak 1997; 1999; 2003; 2010; 2022a; 2022b).

from a decisive deformation of reality, in the first, most idealized model. An idealizational law has the form of a conditional. The antecedent contains counterfactual assumptions on the basis of which the influence of factors considered to be secondary for the studied phenomenon are omitted. The consequent of an idealizational law shows how the studied phenomenon depends on its primary factors or factor. An idealizational statement obtained in that way is valid on condition that certain idealizational assumptions are made. Next, that simple image of a phenomenon only dependent on the main factor is gradually corrected. Idealizational assumptions which, in the first model, exclude the influence of particular secondary factors are waved aside, while the corrective impact of those initially omitted factors is explained. In that way, a scientific theory is formed which consists of a hierarchy of models that reflect the complexity of the studied phenomena in more and more detail (on Poznań School of Methodology and Nowak's methodological approach, see: Swiderski 1984; Coniglione 2010; Borbone 2011a; 2011b; 2016; 2021 and Kowalewski Jahromi 2021).⁵

Nowak used the idealizing methodology in his reconstruction of Marx's dialectics and social theory. Within the framework of categorial ontology, the contradiction between Marxian dialectics and historical materialism was constructed. It was called the paradox of historicism and consisted in the observation that Marxian dialectics (at least its categorial reconstruction) propounded the variability of the main factors of studied phenomena, while Marxian historical materialism maintained that productive forces and relations of production were always significant determinants of social life, in all societies and historical periods. That paradox gives rise to the question if the repertoire of main factors is or is not subject to change in historical development. If we admit that the main factors change in the course of historical development, the question arises about the nature of those non-economic but still material factors. That question led to the generalized version of Marxian historical materialism in which the functioning of real socialist societies would also be explained.

Non-Marxian historical materialism was an attempt at resolving the contradictory nature of historical materialism. According to that theory, there are three independent class divisions in a society, in the realms of economy, culture, and politics. Those social divisions arise as a social minority appropriates: the means of production in the economy (which creates the division into

5 It seems that following opinion of Professor Gereon Wolters: "I would like to mention the Polish philosopher Leszek Nowak (1943–2009), who has launched the contemporary debate on idealization and has greatly contributed to it. He is nonetheless, rarely quoted, although a substantial part of his work is published in English: He just seems to have had the wrong address: University of Poznań (Wolters 2013, p. 10) is too pessimistic.

the owners and the direct producers), the means of coercion in politics (leading to the division into the rulers and the citizens), and the means of spiritual production in culture (which results in the division into the priests and the followers). Social divisions can cumulate, so apart from class societies (with three separate classes), there are supraclass societies, in which the same social class controls politics, the economy, and culture.

Real socialism turned out to be such a supraclass system, as the apparatus of the communist party controlled political, economic, and cultural life. According to that approach, the socialist system was the most oppressive social system in history because it involved a triple monopoly. The basic interest of the class of triple-lords was to maximize its political range of regulation. Therefore, the control over economy and culture was instrumentally subordinated to the maximization of power. For that reason, phenomena considered to be the 'absurdities' of planned economy were not caused by the 'unreasonableness' of the rulers, weakness of political culture, political errors, or distortions of the idea of socialism – they were structurally determined by the realization of the political interest of the triple rule.

The advantage of Nowak's theory was its dynamic approach to the development of socialism based on a conflict of interest between the triple lords and the people. The theses of the basic model of that theory could be presented in the following way.

- (i) The principal social division of socialism is the contradiction between the class of triple lords and the people's class; the mechanism of political competition enforces a typical ruler to enlarge his/her sphere of influence. As a result, the scope of political regulation enlarges and the scope of civil autonomy is gradually diminished.
- (ii) In the phase of political enslavement (called Stalinism), when all spheres of social life are controlled by the authorities, a new phenomenon appears. Because the sphere of social autonomy becomes much smaller (or disappears altogether), political competition has to lead to the overtaking of social areas controlled by other rulers. In those conditions, blind mechanism of political competition leads to the self-enslavement of rulers who eliminate the surplus of candidates for power and, in that way, stabilize the political system. In theory of power in non-Marxian historical materialism, the social function of the purges it is clearly distinguished from their ideological justification (e.g. that they are carried out to defeat agents or the enemies of the people, to forestall conspiracies, etc.; more on mechanism of political purges, see Siegel 1992; 1993; 1998).

- (iii) During the enslavement phase, there appears a trend toward a re-valorization of grassroots social relations. This leads to the outbreak of a revolution, which fails but gives rise to the phase of cyclical development of the system.
- (iv) The rulers repress the revolting citizens and, in order to prevent a new revolutionary wave, make concessions to the class of citizens – they withdraw from the regulation of selected spheres of social life. However, after a time, the mechanisms of competition for power once more cause an increase of the citizens' alienation. The greater power regulation triggers another citizens' revolution with a wider social base, which compels the rulers to make even greater allowances. A political society evolves according to the following pattern: citizens' revolution – declassation – concessions – increasing power regulation – another citizens' revolution with a broader social base – etc.
- (v) The increasing number of citizens participating in the cyclical political revolutions results in a revolution so massive that the rulers, instead of turning to oppression, must initially make concessions big enough to bring about social compromise.
- (vi) The mechanism of social development changes as well and assumes the following form: concessions – greater power regulation – revolution with a broader social base – greater concessions.

When we compare the critique of real socialism based on the assumptions of non-Marxian historical materialism with the critiques made on other ideological-theoretical grounds (of orthodox Marxism, revisionism, or liberalism), we can see that Nowak's critique was more radical and comprehensive from the start.⁶

In the orthodox Marxist critique represented by Karl August Wittfogel (1957) or Milovan Đilas (1957), the state apparatus is a collective owner (or capitalist, in Đilas terms) who uses state violence to maximize the surplus product and stimulate economic development. In Wittfogel's approach, the state participated in the production process in order irrigate the farmed land.

According to Đilas, the state control of the economy and the participation of the state in robust industrialization was caused by the necessity to modernize Eastern European states and to catch up with more civilized Western states. In the approaches mentioned above, the state apparatus is not constituted by a separate type of social interest (power regulation). In Nowak's approach, the

⁶ For a more systematic comparison with other conceptualizations of real socialism, see: Brzechczyn, 2008, 2019.

maximization of power regulation generates greater contradictions than the maximization of the surplus product or of spiritual authority. From his point of view, socialism was a system with the greatest social divisions in history because one triple class (the party apparatus) took over the disposal of three type of material means.

The revisionist critique of socialism was based on the category of alienation, present in young Marx's writings – the idea of people losing control over their products and becoming alienated. In socialism, state bureaucracy was the source of the alienation of individuals. The critique of socialism based on the idea of alienation was ahistorical, and it ignored the actual social divisions because both a party member and an average citizen could become alienated.

The liberal critique of socialism focused on its institutional aspects: the rule of one party and the lack of free elections, a multi-party system, and institutional control of the state. In the social structure of Western European countries, the institutions mentioned above truly controlled political rulers whose social power was counterbalanced by private property and independent social opinion. Nowak argued that, in socialist societies, the state is the ruler, collective owner, and priest. That is why the institutional channels of control over the triple rule are insufficient.

In the second half of the 1980s, Nowak constructed the anthropological foundations for non-Marxian historical materialism, which led to a revision of the theory of power and the whole of his historiography. The non-Christian model of man built by Nowak revealed the limitations of the rationalistic concept of human individuals, in which the philosophical justification was drawn from the Judeo-Christian religion. According to the non-Christian model of man, there are three areas of social interactions. In the normal area of social interaction the rule of mutuality prevails. Individual *A* responds with hostility to hostility from individual *B*, and responds with kindness to his/her kindness. In this area, the Christian ethical principle of love of one's neighbor is applied. However, in the presented model of social interactions there are thresholds of hostility and kindness.

When individual *A* faces growing hostility from *B*, his/her tendency to answer with reflexive hostility decreases. In conditions of extreme hostility from *B*, individual *A* becomes 'pathologically' kind towards his/her partner of social interaction, or, in other words, accepts his/her preferences. In these social conditions, individual *A* is enslaved by individual *B* and this state of social interactions is called 'the area of enslavement'. In these social conditions, the ethics of the love of one's neighbor should be substituted with the ethics of revolution.

A parallel situation takes place at the opposite end of the area of social interactions. Individual *A* also responds with kindness to kindness received from *B*. However, when individual *A* faces growing kindness, his/her tendency to respond with similar kindness decreases. In the conditions of extreme kindness received from *B*, individual *A* does not behave in accordance with his/her own preferences, but according to the counter-preferences of individual *B*. We describe this as individual *A* being satanized by individual *B* and this state of social interaction is named an area of satanization, where the ethical principle of love of one's neighbor should be substituted with the conservative ethics of social strictness.⁷

The anthropological assumptions incorporated into the theory of power make it possible to paraphrase certain right-wing and left-wing intuitions about, among other things, the nature of revolution and power itself. On the one hand, a revolution is a mass protest against political enslavement, leading to renewed interpersonal solidarity (as noticed in left-wing philosophy and ignored in right-wing thinking). On the other hand, it releases mechanisms that satanize the citizens. Since the grassroots committees and revolutionary boards are too weak to prevent the increasing anarchization of public life, post-revolutionary dictatorship is implemented to maintain social order. That dictatorship is formed as ex-revolutionists reach for more and more power, in stark contrast to the ideals they used to profess (which was noticed by right-wing thinkers and ignored by the left-wing ones). According to Nowak:

the point is that both are true. But traditional paradigms of conservative and radical thinking are so limited that they are unable to notice this two-fold empirical truth.

Yet, both certain "conservative truth" and certain "radical truths" occur. However, they are empirical records, which are neither theoretically explained nor pronounced together. The outlined concept, on the other hand, does allow for both. Both turn out to be a consequence of more primary mechanism, resulting in the last resort from the non-Christian model of man.

NOWAK 1991d, pp. 58–59

7 For some discussions on Nowak's anthropological model and its some application and extensions, see: Garcia de la Sienra 1989; Egiert 1993, Paprzycki 1993; Paprzycka, Paprzycki 1993, Ciesielski 2012; 2013; Brzechczyn 2020a, pp. 219–231.

3 The Concept of This Volume

The idea for this volume was born during my meetings and talks with Professor Leszek Nowak which took place in the first decade of the XXI century. During one of these conversations, prof. Nowak encouraged me to collect hitherto prepared papers from non-Marxian historical materialism and edit them in a special volume of 'Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities.' As I recall, Prof. Nowak loosely suggested a title or subtitle for this volume: 'Polish Contributions to the Theory of the Historical Process.' In this way, the content of the present volume and its title reflect Prof. Nowak's inspiration.

The first part of the volume contains a selection of Nowak's works on non-Marxian historical materialism, which are published here in English for the first time. This part begins with a text written together with Piotr Buczkowski and Andrzej Klawiter, *Religion as a Class Structure: A Contribution to Non-Marxian Historical Materialism*. It is an attempt at conceptualizing social divisions in the cultural sphere of social life. In this chapter, the structure of worldview is conceptualized and basic notions (i.e. spiritual domination vs. spiritual autonomy, spiritual alienation and the mechanisms of spiritual class struggle) of the static assumptions of confessional society are introduced into the conceptual apparatus of non-Marxian historical materialism. In the last part of this paper, the development of the idealizational confessional society is presented.

In the two subsequent texts, *Marxism versus Liberalism: A Certain Paradox* and *Hegel and Liberalism: On the Issue of the Nature of Historiosophy*, Nowak analyzes the structure of the substantial philosophy of history. In the first text, he compares liberalism and Marxism from theoretical and ideological perspectives. In the second one, he presents the interrelationships of the normative and descriptive motifs in the philosophy of history inspired by Hegelianism.

The article titled *The Truth Unbearable for All* is an attempt at capturing the historiosophical specificity of Stalinism in the history of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The mechanisms of the development of the Soviet society in the 1930s – which liberated political power from the influence of property and religion – were completely different from the ones in Western Europe. In two articles, *The Problem of the So-Called Social Transformation* and *Hegel's Chuckle, That Is, Marxism and Liberalism in Polish Politics* Nowak interprets – in the light of his theory – the historiosophical assumptions of the socio-political thought of main political parties responsible for the course of the political transformation initiated in Poland after 1989.

In the article titled *On-The-Verge Effect in a Historical Process: An Attempt at an Interpretation with the Assumption of non-Marxian Historical Materialism*

Nowak presents a concretization of the model of the capitalist society trying to accommodate civilizational mechanisms of historical developments. In the two subsequent texts (*The End of History or its Repetitions?* and *On the Prediction of the Totalitarization of Capitalism: An Attempt at an Evaluation after Twenty Years*), he wonders about the status of the still unfulfilled prediction about the totalitarization of the capitalist society.

In the second part of the volume titled *On Totalitarization of Capitalism, Democratization of Real Socialism and Development of non-European Societies*, the developments of non-Marxian historical materialism are presented. Tomasz Zarębski (*The Problem of Totalitarization of the Capitalist Society*) and Mieszko Ciesielski (*The Problem of the Accumulation of Class Divisions in Contemporary Capitalism: An Attempt at a Theoretical Analysis*) analyze theoretical assumptions of the model of the capitalist society which make it possible to explain why the progressive accumulation of political and economic power, predicted by Nowak, might not materialize.

Three subsequent texts: Tomasz Banaszak's *How Democracy Evolves into Autocracy*, Marcin Połatyński's *On Coalition and Party Splintering: A Contribution to Theory of Power in non-Marxian Historical Materialism*, and Lidia Godek's, *On Two Types of Democratization: Poland and Czechoslovakia. An Attempt at an Interpretation* broaden the theory of political society in non-Marxian historical materialism. Those developments enrich the analyses of institutional dimensions of political power.

The two last texts are examples of the application of non-Marxian historical materialism to the history of non-European societies. Eliza Karczyńska interprets the social structures of the Ottoman society (*The Social Structure of the Ottoman Society: An Attempt at a Theoretical Analysis*), and Dawid Rogacz, in his article titled *The Dynamics of Power in Postwar China: An Attempt at a Theoretical Analysis* – the Chinese society.

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Notes on Contributors

Tomasz Banaszak

is a lecturer of political sciences in University of Zielona Góra, Poland. Main areas of interests concern political philosophy and history of political thought.

Krzysztof Brzechczyn

is Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland and the head of Epistemology and Cognitive Science Research Unit. He has recently authored *The Historical Distinctiveness of Central Europe: A Study in the Philosophy of History* (2020). brzech@amu.edu.pl.

Mieszko Ciesielski

is an assistant professor at the Institute of European Culture in Gniezno, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. mieszko@amu.edu.pl.

Lidia Godek

is an assistant professor at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. Her research focuses on philosophy of the social sciences and an aesthetic philosophy of politics.

Eliza Karczyńska

graduated philosophy from the Institute of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland.

Leszek Nowak (1943–2009)

was a philosopher, the founder and editor-in-chief Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities and co-founder of Poznań School of Methodology. He created three theories of the great scope: idealizational theory of science, non-Marxian historical materialism and unitary metaphysics. In English he published among other: *The Structure of Idealization: Towards a Systematic Interpretation of the Marxian Idea of Science* (1980), *Property and Power: Towards a non-Marxian Historical Materialism* (1983), *Power and Civil Society: Power and Civil Society. Toward a Dynamic Theory of Real Socialism* (1991), *The Richness of Idealization* (with I. Nowakowa 2000).

Marcin Połatyński (1975–2007)

graduated political science from the Institute of Political Science and Journalism, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland.

Dawid Rogacz

is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland; dawid.rogacz@vp.pl.

Tomasz Zarębski

graduated philosophy from the Institute of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. He lectures at Gniezno College Milenium.