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AUTHENTICITY AS A TEST OF IDENTITY

ABSTRACT

The identity of subjects participating in social processes or the daily functioning of social structures is a result of many factors – such as their representativeness and social typicality, the social programming of their personalities and activities, but also their personal experiences and individual characteristics. Formal expressions and testimonies of identity associated with the sense of belonging to a group, ideological belonging, are unreliable. An objectified and effective test of the real identity of an individual as a member of society, citizen, employee, follower of certain views, is the model of authenticity in participation. The components of this model include the criteria of authenticity of existence, authenticity of bonds and social structures, authenticity of the status of participants, authenticity of their needs, authenticity of attitudes, actions and works. Authenticity in this meaning is not the same as simply being authentic, or factual, genuine, original or consistent in reference to the original, or as a testimony's conformity with the facts. It is a combination of such traits as autonomy, autotelic quality, consistency, functionality of the relationship between the whole and its elements, while, in relation to human consciousness and activity – sincerity, spontaneity, adequacy in relation to one's own needs and nature.

Keywords: authenticity, authentic, identity, subject/entity, ontology, participation

The notion of identity and the issues of identity are of key importance in the study of the social life's political sphere, particularly when we discuss it through the prism of driving forces, social aspirations, group and individual subjectivity.¹ It would be difficult to imagine a subjectivity of an individual without a specified identity of a particular individual or group, or without its self-awareness (self-knowledge) and self-determination² – but relatively adequate in relations to its objective social position and related interests. The case of a “false awareness” is a lack of consistency between self-determination and the shaping of aspirations, and the actual situation, status of a particular subject and the terms of the subject's self-realization.

As a real quality (and not a theoretical notion), identity is of dual practical importance for the participants of the social life. First, each of them must address their self-determination (who I am in my own eyes, what traits of my pedigree, belonging, own uniqueness, and the social role or even mission I attribute to myself).³ Second, it is a certain mutual perception (how we perceive the partners in an interaction – allies, rivals, enemies) that conditions the nature and direction of cooperation (collaboration, competition, conflict). And one of the crucial aspects of this mutual perception is whether we believe in the genuineness of the other party's self-presentation,⁴ in the adequacy of the image of the allies or opponents – to which the following two notions refer: credibility⁵ and authenticity.

1. THE NOTION OF IDENTITY – ITS CONTENT AND MEANING

To the researcher of political phenomena, the notion of identity (frequently – a particular model of identity) is a tool of and a key to legally valid findings in two contexts:

First, in the diagnosis of the state of affairs, situations, events, particular actions by particular doers. A particular definition and particular criteria of identity enable him to classify aspirations, efforts of individual political personas or social forces, and – hopefully accurate – classification of the subjects themselves (as progressive, conservative or backward; sovereign or vassal; left-wing, centrist, right-wing, etc.). The researcher must keep in sight the difference between identity analysed in terms of a subject's objective properties and identity considered in the subjective terms (self-identification, recognized motifs and intentions).

¹ P. Buczkowski, R. Cichocki (eds.), *Podmiotowość: możliwość, rzeczywistość, konieczność*, Poznań 1989.

² See K. Obuchowski, *Człowiek intencjonalny*, Warszawa 1993; P. Ścigaj, *Tożsamość narodowa. Zarys problematyki*, Kraków 2012.

³ The reflexive “the report on condition and dilemmas” can serve as an example: B. Krauz-Mozer, P. Borowiec, P. Ścigaj, *Kim jesteś, politologu? Historia i stan dyscypliny w Polsce*, Kraków 2011.

⁴ A. Szmajke, *Autoprezentacja: maski, pozy, miny*, Olsztyn 1986.

⁵ M. Karwat, *Akredytacja w życiu społecznym i politycznym*, Warszawa 2009, ch. 4.

Second, the notion of identity frequently constitutes a starting point for and a “star” of explanatory procedures. In particular, it is true in functional explanations (whose interest is served by the actions of a subject – his own, of others, mutual?), in psychological explanations (what are the motives, intentions, what emotions are expressed and the mental states in general), in humanistic interpretation (what are/were the aims of the subject and his related calculations).⁶

Even if slightly misleading to some, the very term IDENTITY is a common thread for three contexts of its use and perceived meanings, as follows:

Identity can be an objectified characteristic – in ontological categories.⁷

It can refer to the subjective sphere (identification related to the own affiliation and identification recognized by the subject – the image of own specificity, self-determination for the sake of oneself and community in communication or influencing processes).⁸

And, finally, it can be a notion in intersubjective categories, if we consider the purpose assigned to existence, relative distinctiveness, sequences of behaviours or actions of a subject in cultural codes, conventional and symbolic rules of a given community or civilizational-cultural circles.⁹

Certainly, a complete characteristics of an individual's identity requires a comparison of all three contexts.

In the ensuing discussion, the starting point will be the first, ontological understanding of identity, but involved in confrontation with images and subjective attitudes of the subjects of social life, as well as cultural or strictly ideological stereotypes.

In this ontological approach, we ask questions about who/what is a given subject (what it is like) from the perspective of the traits which are objective and verifiable, in spite of what the subject thinks of himself, how he would like to perceive himself, how he prefers to introduce himself to others, but also independently of labels suggested by cognitive or ideological schema of a given community.¹⁰

We concretize this objectivised notion of identity in two ways – first structurally and, to the same degree, statistically, and then processually, diachronically:

(1) by analogy to the classical mode of defining phenomena entangled in the relation *person-species, individual-group, part-whole*, that is, *per genus proximum et differentiam specificam* schema (how the traits of species, community, etc., define me, and what traits – derivative towards the traits of the whole to which I belong, as well as those transcending the framework of its components' typicality, define my uniqueness).

⁶ The systematics and characteristics of types is explained in the classic work published many years ago: J. Kmita (ed.), *Elementy marksistowskiej metodologii humanistyki*, Poznań 1973.

⁷ An example of this approach: A. Węgrzecki, *Zarys fenomenologii podmiotu*, Kraków 1996.

⁸ For more on this subject see: J. Szczepański, “Obraz samego siebie”, in *Sprawy ludzkie*, Warszawa 1980; M. Malicka, *Ja, to znaczy kto? Rzecz o osobowej tożsamości i wychowaniu*, Warszawa 1996.

⁹ See e.g. J. Błuszkowski, *Stereotypy a tożsamość narodowa*, Warszawa 2005; L.M. Nijakowski, *Domeny symboliczne. Konflikty narodowe i etniczne w wymiarze symbolicznym*, Warszawa 2006.

¹⁰ Example of such a key: S. Filipowicz, *Twarz i maska*, Kraków 1998.

- (2) which traits determine and testify to the continuity in the functioning, my own or of the whole that I represent, personify; what determines and confirms (or: verifies) the fact that I remain myself in the course of my own evolution or, paradoxically, that my regular own identity acquires a different nature in a different historical setting, in a different face of the whole (e.g. a social movement, political party, church); what is the correlation between inheriting and continuation in the role of a descendant, successor, heir, and innovation, revision.

This probably sounds “clearly enough” on the level of *metatheoretical* construction. However, in the description or explanation of the actions or the face and “nature” of a particular subject in particular circumstances, a baffling question arises – how to identify or verify an identity of a particular subject that is already “identified” or a presumed identity of the subject (who he is – in the sense: who he really is, while rejecting certain understatements, appearances and illusions, resisting mystifications and creations aimed at misleading us). For a political researcher, it is of a fundamental importance. Without overcoming this impediment, in interpreting actions, programmes or “faces” of subjects of politics, he is tempted to succumb to stereotypization, illusory “obviousness” resulting from the current canon of political correctness, own prejudices.

The traditional attempts to address the question about identity of a subject are of dual nature. The first one is a factographic, as well as “investigative” form of authentication. We consider here genealogical data, data pertaining to the connections, neighbours, company, etc. The second one is of a critical nature, including comparative or even exposing analysis and interpretation of the language used by an individual to describe his own identity, aspirations, principles, but also an analysis of the degree in which his words are consistent with his actions. It is reflected in the most far-reaching maxim-adage known to common awareness as well: *what defines us* (meaning: tells us who we are) *is our actions* (not the declared principles, intentions – sincere and righteous intentions, resolutions, declarations).

In both contexts, the “authentic” epithet (or, respectively, inauthentic) is present. However, being authentic as a factual state (as opposed to fiction, appearances) or as a conformity of a document’s content with the circumstances in which it was written, or as an authenticity of a work (as opposed to a copy, replica or travesty), differs from authenticity as a set of traits characterising a phenomenon as internally coherent, “in its place,” and in a form appropriate for its nature, essence.¹¹ The terms *authenticity* and *genuineness/being authentic* are not synonyms,¹² but rather sets of criteria of different frames of reference; however, it is true that their substance and use are complementary.

¹¹ M. Karwat, “Pojęcia ‘autentyczność’ i ‘autentyzm’ w interpretacji polityki”, *Studia Polityczne*, vol. 3 (1994), Warszawa.

¹² However, many authors adopt one term in a dual meaning. See e.g. C. Taylor, *Etyka autentyczności*, Kraków 1996.

2. CONNECTION BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND IDENTITY

The non-ad hoc, but complex (and allowing to embrace a longer time period) stage, tool of verification of an identity of a subject (individual, group, organization) in the role of a participant in public, political life, is the use of a complex (multi-aspect) criterion of his authentic participation. The purposefulness of such a procedure is realized at the level of intuitive reflection. It is expressed in popular expressions “be yourself,” “stay yourself,” or, respectively, in a question: are you being yourself, do you remain in harmony with yourself?¹³

The issue of authenticity (let me stress again: we are not to confuse it with a being authentic/genuine – as in genuineness of sources in a historical study,¹⁴ of evidence in an investigation, diaries, identification documents, etc.) has a certain (although not excessively rich) tradition in philosophical and ethical thought and reflection. This issue is strongly present in existentialism (Sartre or Jaspers), personalism,¹⁵ hermeneutics,¹⁶ communitarianism.¹⁷ However, it is usually an axionormative approach to authenticity, and, therefore, a postulative, exemplary, persuasive one. It obviously lacks descriptive-analytical approaches focused on non-intentional traits (criteria), presenting existential and functional conditions, the relation of “being authentic” with the possessing of certain traits. Fromm’s investigations seem to be closer to the requirements of analyticity (and not only of postulativeness). Later in this paper I will present a sample of such a “diagnostic” approach, relating the discussed criteria (indicators) of authenticity, for the sake of simplification, to individuals in their social and strictly political roles.

If the correlates of a particular entity’s authenticity (in this instance – of a social system, and, in its framework, of the participation in it) include such traits as naturalness, originality, spontaneity, frankness, relative independence and self-determination, harmony of its components, then its negations include such attributes as superficiality, imitative nature, being prone to manipulations, falsehood, incongruousness, dissonance in structure components or participants’ attitudes.

What is the nature of the relation between the identity of a political life participant and the authenticity of his participation?

¹³ Not only in reference books, but also in a systematic philosophical or psychological reflection. See e.g. M. Malicka, *Bycie sobą jako ideał*, Warszawa 2002; R. Rogoll, *Aby być sobą. Wprowadzenie do analizy transakcyjnej*, Warszawa 1989.

¹⁴ See J. Topolski, *Wprowadzenie do historii*, Poznań 1998.

¹⁵ For the axiological model of authentic participation see: K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, Lublin 2000.

¹⁶ See P. Ricoeur, *O sobie samym jako innym*, Warszawa 2003.

¹⁷ See C. Taylor, *Etyka autentyczności...*; Idem, *Źródła podmiotowości. Narodziny tożsamości nowoczesnej*, Warszawa 2001. A similar leitmotiv can be found in works by A. Etzioni or M. Walzer. See A. Gawłowska, *Biorąc wspólnotę poważnie? Komunitarystyczne krytyki liberalizmu*, Warszawa 2004.

On the one hand, the real identity of a particular individual can be obscured by ideological or propaganda mystifications, illusion of the individual in question, prejudices against him in his environment leading to a distorted perception, by misunderstanding or unreflective forgetting – in the interpretation of his position, functioning, specific decisions and actions – about Ossowski's triad of values (professed, declared, realized).¹⁸ However, it is worth stressing here – while consuming the sociology of knowledge perspective – that distorted images (self-images of the individual, or other individuals' images of him) are not merely a cognitive aberration at the time when his identity is objectively what it is, and remains what it is (as if independently of the self-image distortion). The distorted (that is, false or intentionally biased) images of the identity of a given individual have, to a certain degree, a performative nature, that is, they have a secondary impact on the real, objective identity of that individual. On the other hand, interpersonal interactions of the transactional type still affect the identity of the parties, even if the parties in question do not succumb to false identity.¹⁹ In this context we assume that nonauthenticity (a total lack or deficit of authenticity in functioning) neither expresses nor rejects the individual's identity. The criteria of authenticity (or nonauthenticity) become a verification tool for the very image of the individual, group or institution.

However, the identified authenticity of an individual's functioning substantiates the conformity of his self-identification (and identification with a particular community or idea) with his factual, objective identity.

Now we will strive to identify the participation authenticity criteria which play the role of not only and not merely indicators, but of tests, touchstones of identity.

3. PARTICIPATION AUTHENTICITY CRITERIA

Let us repeat the terminology reservation. When speaking about authentic or non-authentic participation, we do not mean the colloquial or formal criteria, according to which "non-authentic" means the same as non-existent (even though faked and faking an existence, whether its own or of something else) or false in its image and manner of existence; although these colloquial meanings involve elements of accurate characteristics.

Non-authentic participation is not a matter of literal fiction surrounded by smoke and mirrors, mystifications, legal fictions, institutional veneer, etc. However, its non-authenticity is connected with such mechanisms of the emergence, creation and functioning of such appearances, veneers, fabrications, which make it a real phenomenon, even though full of internal contradictions and a one whose image is inconsistent with its real essence.

We make an assumption here that authenticity of political participation depends on the fulfilment of such cumulative conditions as:

¹⁸ S. Ossowski, *Dzieła. Tom III – Z zagadnień psychologii społecznej*, Warszawa 1967.

¹⁹ See R. Rogoll, *Aby być sobą...*

- the authenticity of the existence of a given social system and the existence of its participants;
- the authenticity of social bonds, structures and institutions;
- the authenticity of the participants' status;
- the authenticity of the participants' needs;
- the authenticity of the participants' attitudes (beliefs, imaginations and aspirations);
- the authenticity of the participants' behaviours, actions and activities;
- the authenticity of work created as a manifestation and result of participation.

The order of the above criteria/conditions of authenticity is an expression of the assumption on the direction of determination. Each of the aspects determines the following one, however, not in the sense of prejudging or 'guaranteeing', but enabling.

Summing up: an authentic participant of politics is someone capable of maintaining his identity in his own beliefs, aspirations and achievements, involved, however, in the changing circumstances, situations, in the shifting pressures in the environment. On the one hand, the authenticity of his participation is expressed in a relative autonomy and sovereignty, on the other – in maintaining constancy in the changing incarnations and roles, consistency and distinctness in the surrounding of existential antinomies, conflict of roles and interests, ambiguity of possible choices or respected necessities.

4. AUTHENTICITY OF EXISTENCE

We describe authenticity (let me stress again: authenticity, not just being authentic/genuine) in two ways. On the one hand, by means of considering objective attributes of existence expressed in ontological categories. On the other hand, by means of considering consistency or inconsistency of an intentional order defining the presence of a specific subject in a specific social setting, community, society of an objective *raison d'être*, ability of independent existence and survival.

The analysis of existence authenticity is a two-stage process. First, we need to establish whether the social whole, in which a particular individual or group participates, demonstrates symptoms of authenticity in its existence. Here we confront the conceivably objectivised characteristics of a social being with the image of society, state.²⁰ Next, we check whether the existence of a participant in the framework of the whole bestowed with the authenticity of existence possesses such an attribute. Therefore, it seems justified to assume that the possibility of authenticity of existence of an individual in situations or structures deprived of authenticity is rather unlikely.

In this ontological aspect, the following properties make up the authenticity of existence:²¹

²⁰ In this context, inspirations of the unmasking concepts are crucial; see G. Debord, *Spoleczeństwo spektaklu*, Gdańsk 1998; S. Filipowicz, *Demokracja. O władzy iluzji w królestwie rozumu*, Warszawa 2007.

²¹ We are adapting here the typology of "existential moments" in the ontological concepts of Ingarden and Lipiec. See R. Ingarden, *Spór o istnienie świata*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1987; J. Lipiec, *Ontologia świata realnego*, Warszawa 1979; Idem, *Podstawy ontologii społeczeństwa*, Warszawa 1972.

- **self-creation** – the system emerges on its own or, in any case, it would not emerge – even with the greatest external support – without the ability of *standing on its own two feet*.
- **self-reproduction** (the ability to replicate itself).
- **Independence, Relative self-sufficiency**. The system functions on its own, for its own sake, and it is capable of self-servicing.

Authenticity of existence is provided in the case of the symbiosis of these three properties.

As an example of such a mechanism, we can use the countries which emerged as a result of the “natural process” (integration and emergence), as opposed to state structures created by external decisions and maintained with the support of external forces (foreign military forces as a guarantor of the existence of such a state, ‘advisors’ who effectively manage the security forces, etc.), usually created in order to serve the needs of other states (as an example from our history – the Duchy of Warsaw, a state which was even deprived of its proper name – it was neither kingdom, nor Poland).

A derivative attribute of the authenticity of existence is the **coherence** of a given social system (state, church, civilization), while its negation is the ‘incompatibility’ of components which are not only heterogenous, but also, due to their mutual foreignness and opposition, they thwart unity (on a cultural or positive cooperation plane), internal balance and effectiveness of the whole in solving mutual problems. This is exemplified by various countries torn by ethnic, cultural and religious conflicts, superficially pieced together by political will and supervision of external forces.

In this ontological sense, real, although deprived of authenticity are, for example: ‘exported/imported’ revolutions; ‘transplants’ of democracy from a different cultural circle; ‘national’ armies under a foreign command and serving foreign interests; puppet dictatorships; quasi-states with the factual status of dominions or semi-colonies; vassalized political ‘ally’ parties; minor political parties and those congregating celebrities, existing without any reason, social base, followers, only established as a result of personal ambitions of their founders. Rather problematic is the authenticity of imitative trends in popular music (Polish of Czech country music, Bulgarian reggae, Hungarian blues, etc.), although this does not exclude their artistic values. Similarly problematic is the authenticity of performing classical music on the original instruments from the given period.²²

On the other hand, as regards the participants (citizens, subjects), the authenticity of the existence of the system is expressed in the fact that its functions, rules and requirements are implemented as activities that are real (and not through sham actions, covers) and autotelic (not as an excuse or a guise for other relevant purposes). In this context, the following examples of non-authenticity come to mind: a political party set up as an agency and a substitute banner for another, relevant party; a programme board

²² See N. Cook, *Muzyka. Bardzo krótkie wprowadzenie*, Warszawa 2000. The author discusses the paradox of nonauthenticity of playing music on historical instruments – in a completely different era, in the circumstances of a different *spirit of the times*.

or a team of advisers as a fig leaf, a façade to fake the alleged consultation of already made decisions; a research institute as a cover for producing narcotics, etc.

The authenticity of the existence of a given social whole's participant can only be determined in such a context. As the basis here, we will use two factors – a structural and a functional one.

In the structural aspect this is **coherence** of the very membership of a component in a particular whole, expressed in the agreement of performed tasks and social requirements with the terms of membership. In a nutshell, if, in his actions, a member of a group or a political party, a citizen, or a follower of a church is required something else (or something opposite) than what was a necessary condition of their joining the ranks, then it is difficult to speak about the authenticity of "participating".

The other symptom of authenticity of someone's existence as a participant is **functionality** of his traits (personal potential resulting from his personality, predispositions, competences, motivations) in the context of the requirements of the 'servicing' of the system, in the context of the operation mechanism of the whole. It is difficult to speak about the authenticity of existing in the framework of a community and the authenticity of participating in it in the event of the mutual maladjustment (participant to community, community to the participant's needs and inclinations).²³

Extreme examples of such a maladjustment include the clash of a dual order in the existence and functioning of occupational authorities in a conquered country and in the existence of that country's inhabitants. This was acutely captured by Kazimierz Wyka in his novel *Życie na niby* about the reality in the General Government (a German zone of occupation in the Polish territories during the Second World War). *A social and ideological situation similar to occupation is not often encountered. It is experienced by a member of a sect forced to survive in a religiously hostile environment, to adjust somehow, hide, in order for ones like him to save the genuine faith. It is experienced by a member of a political party forced to operate underground.*²⁴

Paradoxically, camouflage and simulation allow individuals to "remain themselves," act true to themselves. However, this is possible thanks to adequacy between the duality of conditions and orders of existence, and the duality of the attitudes of individuals. They all divide their existence into a virtual and a real one. *When fulfilling their basic vocational or professional duties, working within an officially existing community, they pretend to live; isolating themselves among their fellow citizen – they live real lives, because then they live in the circle of convictions which they have agreed to, now and for the future.*²⁵

Wyka stresses the fact that – in spite of the oppressive dominance of the occupational administration, certainly able to materialize many of its intentions – it undergoes a symmetric effect of a façade, virtual structures, fake image of reality.

²³ In this context it is worth learning about the typology and analysis of well-adjusted or maladjusted participation. See K. Obuchowski, *Adaptacja twórcza*, Warszawa 1985, pp. 380-388.

²⁴ K. Wyka, *Życie na niby. Pamiętnik po klęsce*, Kraków 1984, p. 9.

²⁵ Ibid.

Pretended life is not a property of a community subjected to aggression and violence, although its participants strongly perceive the fictional nature of the system imposed on them temporarily. To a certain extent, the Nazi conquerors participated in that life as well. Just the fact that they had to organize, for the conquered nation, foreign-language, fictional ministries and offices, that, for the sake of that ad-hoc system, they had to pretend that the kings and queens of that nation were not buried at Wawel – forced them to nurture this fiction. At the cost of the occupied nation, its history and future, the occupant lives a pretended life as well. A mutual exchange of fiction takes place. For the conquered, the fiction is the appearance of everyday life imposed by the conqueror, the real social existence. On the other hand, for the victorious part, the fiction is everything that supports the resistance against the social existence and organization imposed by them.²⁶

This antynomy – coupling of non-authenticity with the authenticity of existence – was explained accurately and bluntly by the author, by referring to the difference between the persistence and inertness of the everyday life forms in microstructures and intermediate structures, and the historical changeability and... superficiality of the 'rooting' of the structures imposed in the processes of great shifts, in the achievements of social engineering: ... *man is a social being also in the meaning that social circles, functions and tasks that surround him, depend on his approval, his consent, his beliefs. He qualifies or invalidates them, accepts them or rejects as ideological facts. Man, a social being, functions differently in the framework of the base, differently in the framework of collective organizations of social coexistence, and differently on an ideological plane.²⁷*

5. AUTHENTICITY OF SOCIAL TIES, PERMANENT STRUCTURES AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The authenticity of social ties, permanent structures and social institutions is in the fact that they emerge as a result of interactions between the participants, their will and initiative, in response to the mutual needs of a community, of a scope and nature which is universal for the community, as a product of their efforts. And even if they owe their emergence to the imitation and external inspiration, support or even pressure, they continue to function on their own, and their participants are actively interested in that fact. The established coordination and decision-making bodies, as well as types of social communication serve the needs and purposes of the community or group and their participants, and even if the same is true in relation to external needs, interests and purposes or to a wider and superior whole, they are not merely instruments, excuses or covers for those other functions.

A community, group or institution enters the life of an environment as a whole, its members participating in it as its components and representatives, neither dissipating in the environment, nor totally opposing to it. However, in the case of individuals, the

²⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

phenomenon of *multi-membership*²⁸ and the associated role conflict often resulting in anomy, constitute a distortion of such a representativeness and 'transmission' of social needs and tasks.

In its internal life, a group (sect, political party) or a community (regional ethnographic community, artistic or academic circles) is guided by its own demand, its own criteria of identity and rules, which are sufficient to provide consolidation and efficiency of action, to shape and nurture the sense of community, mutual solidarity and loyalty. What bonds such a whole is based on the sense of separateness, however, not only the negative one (who we are and what differs us from others), but also in the positive one (what properties are common to us, make us feel close to one another, create the sense of familiarity). Hence the consensual will to maintain unity and the attitude of relatively mutual identification. An internal bond of a group subject is characterised by an objective mutual indispensability of links and elements (that is, the fact that they are mutually necessary), mutual supplementing of functions, coordination and mutual support of tasks and activities. It is a unification which creates a whole that functions in a relatively harmonious and efficient manner, while presenting a relatively uniform face, recognizable to both the members and the surrounding.

The identity of a particular whole (group, institution, social movement) is unique, coupled with a certain configuration of elements in a defined place and time. That configuration (rather than the social or personal composition, whether permanent or not) determines a particular nature of the whole. The grouping of the same or identical elements in other circumstances of place, time, function and purpose does not enable the recreation of the same whole. For example, the gathering of former communists in a new organization and a new era (even in a one congregating former communists only) does not make it a communist organization, not even a 'neo-communist' one. Similarly, the gathering of all members of the old 'Solidarity' in the same structure (even if only them, and all of them), will not recreate that first 'Solidarity'. Moreover, changes in the personal composition do not change the nature of the whole, determined by its structure and functions.

Finally, the authenticity of social structures (movements, bodies, public institutions) is manifested in the fact that they are not a mechanical – and consequently anachronistic – imitation of historical or external models, an attempt to continue or reconstruct 'experienced shapes' (even the most perfect ones), but they emerge as a response to new, current demand and conditions. And when these structures exist long enough, they are able to adapt to the changed conditions, while maintaining their function and functionality, but at the price of changing organisation rules, ideological dogmas, petrified and falsified traditions, symbolic emblems – rather than the other way round. From this perspective, a political party that is 'unwaveringly true to itself', although completely useless and redundant or whose evolution and current function are denying its roots, is in contradiction to authenticity, even if it remains an authentic party (and not one that exists on paper only).

²⁸ See W. Makarczyk, *Wspólnota uczuć i działań*, Warszawa 1993, ch. 5.

6. AUTHENTICITY OF PARTICIPANT STATUS

The authenticity of the participant status is described through the prism of four criteria:

- own situation and social role of the participant,
- his manner of functioning in social roles,
- his representativeness to those, on behalf of whom he speaks,
- the functions performed objectively in relation to a particular social whole (who benefits from my actions, in spite of what I think about it, and how I present it).

As evident, we are obviously not guided by the colloquially understood criterion of authenticity, that is, the mere fact that someone is a real participant, and that this is reflected in formally or customarily defied rights and responsibilities and verifiable evidences of “being in something,” in a particular place, time, in a particular role.

Potentially, everyone can be a participant: someone involved in a relationship or an intricate web of social relations, and someone involved in a certain institutional structure, constituting (in their workplace) a link in a chain, a “cog in a machine,” and someone carried by an avalanche of events²⁹ or a wave of social moods, and someone participating as a result of his own will, ambition and choices. This is the situational and processual dimension of participation.

In the structural approach, closer to both common awareness and legal approaches (through the prism of the Constitution, laws, bylaws, rules) the word *participant* is associated, certainly, with a citizen of a state, a formal member of a political party of a cooperative, a baptized member of a church, an employee of a company, or an active supporter of a soccer club. Undoubtedly, a crucial difference between a passive member (a recipient of actions and benefits) and an active participant, particularly one that is involved in ideological and emotional scope, occurs, but the common feature of both is the affiliation, the dependence of one's personal circumstances from the condition of the particular community.

All these categories of participants (active and passive, voluntary and involuntary, intentional and random, entangled) participate in an equally authentic manner in the sense (from the perspective of the notion of *authenticity* as a negation of fiction, appearances) that their coupling with the whole is an objective fact. However, we can only use the term ‘an authentic participant’ (from the perspective of the notion of *authenticity*) in reference to someone who – in a nutshell, metaphorically speaking – “is in his place”. And it would be difficult to attribute this to a pacifist in trenches, a swindler in the post of a minister of finance or economy (“fox in the henhouse”), etc.

Own Situation and Role of Participant. The authenticity of participation is determined in the starting point by the previously mentioned authenticity of existence of a given entity. The nodal point is the origin of the participant (the circumstances of

²⁹ See W. Łukaszewski, “Umiejscowienie w biegu wydarzeń, umiejscowienie w czasie”, in Idem, *Szanse rozwoju osobowości*, Warszawa 1984.

becoming a participant, whether this was the first ‘incarnation’, whether or not as their own choice, whether the ‘accession’ is a correlate of a heritage). The participation of a “person from nowhere” or a person “without a past” is deprived of authenticity, as pointedly depicted in the novel *The Career of Nicodemus Dyzma*.

An authentic participant is someone of a defined identity (that is, of an individual, consistent and unique character, individual needs and existence conditions), existing relatively independently and potentially capable of a relative independent thinking and acting. If a part of a whole, then he is aware of his own affiliation and social constraints, capable of and ready to make choices (including choosing a lesser evil, making decisions under pressure, in subordinated actions – such as deciding to be obedient, zealous, or to resist) and to assume and bear responsibility, admit his own deeds and be responsible for them. But this does not only depend on one’s own maturity, self-awareness, etc., but also on whether the social role assigned to him allows him such a personal approach, or imposes upon him the status of an inert and thoughtless, or at least repressed “cog in a machine”.

He is someone who is personally interested in participation, in collective or team action and its results, who benefits from that (even if not necessarily in the literary meaning), finally, someone who is a real (co)author. The criterion of a real authorship excludes such “partakers” of social events and changes from the set of authentic participants, as figureheads, as well as mythomaniacs, buffoons, etc., acting upon the principle “horse is being shod, frog extends a leg”.³⁰

The Manner of Participant’s Functioning. The confrontation of two characteristics is a test of the participation’s authenticity. On the one hand – the manner in which an individual satisfies his needs in the framework of a certain structure, how he adapts, for his own sake, to the requirements of the group or institution functioning. On the other hand – the manner in which the individual plays the assumed social roles, how he completes his tasks and executes his responsibilities, that is, how he adjusts his interests, ambitions, skills and to his social role. The balance of either compliance or non-compliance of these two sides of adaptation determines whether the participation is authentic or not.

It is linked to *naturality* in opposition to *artificiality* and *pretence*. An evidently in-authentic participant is someone executing social tasks against his own interests, ambitions and skills, as well as someone feigning their execution for the sake of “peace of mind” or for the sake of his own benefit and vanity. Therefore, we would include conformists, opportunists, careerist, but also posers, mythomaniacs and buffoons in the category of non-authentic participants.

Representativeness. Since participation is a relation between a member of a group, community, organisation, and the social structure, then the authenticity of the participant’s status needs to be established upon the comparison of the whole and the component, verifying their “degree of relationship”.

³⁰ See M. Karwat, *Miernoty i figuranci. Formalistyczna degeneracja władzy*, Toruń 1993; Idem, *Figuranc-two jako paradoks uczestnictwa. Eseje przewrotne*, Warszawa 2004.

An authentic participant is representative for a particular community, group, organization; representative for his origins or secondary affiliation (voluntary joining a group that is not his native one, and the ability, nevertheless demonstrated by him, to personify or express its vital needs, interests, values, principles, as well as a practical usefulness).

In general, the social representativeness of activists, politicians, ideologists is identified with the social typicality of certain traits (e.g. statistically measured). This, however, is both inaccurate and unreliable. One can be typical for his community, although not representative of it, and vice versa (e.g. Gottlieb-Bogumił Samuel Linde or Julian Tuwim – both were quite atypical Poles, both as their extractions and professions are concerned).

The representativeness is rather determined by other factors:³¹

- (1) authenticity of affiliation and authenticity of bonds (compatibility of personal interests and aspirations with the interests of the community, sense of belonging – reciprocated, however, by other participants, identification or rational calculation of mutual interests);
- (2) the ability to express, in one's own needs, aspirations and activities, the essential characteristics of the group or institution to which one belongs and which one uses in his social roles; then the behaviour and actions of the individual reflect or symbolize the distinguishing features, the conditions of existence, of the maintaining of distinctness, of the continuity of existence and sovereignty of the social whole; through the prism of these individual aspirations and achievements, we learn about the needs, the way of thinking, and the aspirations of the collective, as well as its functions (and its impact and importance) in a wider social system, its potential and opportunities;
- (3) a directly or indirectly granted (in a symbolic, default or verbatim manner) authorisation or commitment to pursue specific objectives, principles and interests of the group, that is, the authorisation of leadership (so-called social mandate, legitimacy of a mission or a lasting role);
- (4) as a consequence: authoritativeness of opinion, decisions and activities of the individual (team) to the entire community or institution.

These are both the premises and criteria of credibility in its objectified meaning, and not based on impressions, stereotypes, prejudices, suggestiveness of ritual behaviour or image creations.

Functionality. An authentic participant is someone whose actions serve well himself and, at the same time, are functional to the social whole, to which he belongs, which he serves in his roles. However, we cannot rule out the situations of individual sacrifices for the common good, when serving ideas, interests of the community, are not serving the safety, well-being or dignity of the individual. At the same time, the functions (long-term and lasting functions, and not necessarily all tangible results) of his behaviours and actions are consistent, in general, with the intentions. Therefore, an

³¹ Here I refer to the criteria mentioned in: M. Karwat, *Człowiek polityczny. Próba interpretacji marksistowskiej*, Warszawa 1989.

inauthentic participant is, of course, a figurehead, a puppet – as an entity presented in a prominent role covering up someone else's influence; anyone who is a conscious or unconscious (manipulated) tool of someone else's politics; but also a delusional saviour or someone accidentally entangled in events, affairs, and actions that he does not understand, that do not concern him, over which he has no material influence, either by his own aspirations or by his own actions.

7. AUTHENTICITY OF PARTICIPANT NEEDS

What is the authenticity of the needs of the individuals who are participants in a community, employees of a company, officers of an institution?

In order to answer this question, we will refer to the objectivist concept of needs – as an objective dependence of existence, safety, survival and 'well-being' of an individual or group/community on the possibility of obtaining and using certain goods, as well as on the specific nature of their relationship with the natural and social environment. Therefore, a need is a necessity – for the sake of existence, survival and self-realization of the entity (the fulfilment of its own constructive abilities, the use of opportunities for development) – of access to goods (material as well as psychological, symbolic) that allow or facilitate them.³²

Authenticity or non-authenticity of needs is perceptible precisely on the basis of such an objectivist view of them, in terms of relationships, rather than in terms of a "lack of something," sense of insufficiency, dissatisfaction or strong desire – which is often considered the essence of needs in "psychologizing" approaches. The disadvantage of the consideration of human needs in terms of feelings, desires (especially the obsessive ones) is that it does not explicitly take into account, at the starting point, the difference between what one needs (even when unaware of it) and what he desires; between a need and an addiction, habit or craving. This is clearly demonstrated by the difference between the body's requirement for liquids (that is, water, juices, etc., as opposed to technical alcohol from a tank) and alcohol addiction. Erich Fromm emphasized such an objectified view of needs and, consequently, interests in his commentary on Spinoza's views, clearly inspired by the Marxist concept of a human "species-being":

*The concept of self-interest is objectivity, since "interest" is not understood here as a subjective feeling of someone's interest, but in terms of the objectively understood nature of man. Man has only one real interest – the full development of his potential capabilities as a human being. Just as it is necessary to know a person and their real needs in order to love them, one needs to know one's own being in order to understand one's interests and how to pursue them.*³³

Therefore, we can speak of the authenticity of needs when what an individual (or group, respectively) considers necessary in his personal and social functioning, what he

³² See T. Kocowski, *Potrzeby człowieka. Koncepcja systemowa*, Wrocław 1982.

³³ E. Fromm, *Niech się stanie człowiek. Z psychologii etyki*, Warszawa–Wrocław 1996, p. 112.

considers as a necessity in his own actions, as something valuable to himself, is adequate and commensurate with his real conditions of existence, survival, social adaptation.

Hence, when verifying the authenticity of the needs of an individual as a participant in social life, we must take into account the difference between attitudes to goods, benefits, comforts corresponding to his actual status (if he accepts it and agrees with it) and, for example, the attitude of a snob, the aspiring to belong to a group to which not only he does not belong, but also is not able to belong. And if an individual has strong aspirations to change his own status (social advancement, real equality, etc.), then we verify whether this entails such forms and locations of his activity, the search for such goods and the acquisition of such skills that can serve this purpose. On the other hand, we exclude, from the scope of authentic needs, various artificial self-imposed restrictions (such as: I pretend that I do not need = do not want what I want desperately) or, for example, a reduction in aspirations adequate to the potential of the individual for the sake of adaptation, a peace of mind.

In any case, of key importance is the difference between the attitude focused on obtaining goods, benefits, social opportunities corresponding to one's abilities, skills, and the search of, aspiring to roles and goods incompatible with our nature, character, temperament, inclinations – which is addressed by Erich Fromm in his comments on the “having mode as opposed to the “being mode”.³⁴

Let us consider this upon the example of a consumer. His authentic needs, arising from what is necessary to us or which could make our life easier, more pleasant, provide comfort, perhaps even luxury (although relative to what we can afford and to our actual ability to use the goods in question) differ from other “needs” instilled in him by the pressure of advertising, promotion, marketing, regular stimulation with bargains and temptations.

This is served by intrusive promotional campaigns, loyalty point programs, etc. We buy something out of a “need,” although, in fact, not because we need it, but because we want to prove something to ourselves, our friends, people we do not like, and those with whom we compete, etc. – for example to fake our affluence, our being one of the pioneers of progress, to pose for a connoisseur or gourmet. We purchase new equipment not because the “old” one has broken down or does not meet the current needs of the household, entertainment or professional work, but because the deadline for the use of loyalty points, discounts, instalment offers or tying offers is near. This is a serious affliction of the modern consumer society.

In the scope of the most everyday life, we need to consider the following: “having” children, because we “need” to have children, because our mom and mother-in-law are pushing for it, and by no means because it is our own desire, something we are ready for, because we have noticed that without offspring we feel emptiness at home, and no sense in life. The second and third child not because we are delighted with the first one and because the caring instinct engulfs us, but because “it is cheaper” when it comes to clothes, shoes, strollers. And even better, if the state pays for this feat.

³⁴ Idem, *Mieć czy być. Duchowe podstawy nowego społeczeństwa*, Warszawa 1989; Idem, *O sztuce istnienia*, Warszawa–Wrocław 1997.

In the political domain, the same refers, for example, to the need to be present, “to be where something important is happening” – not because of a genuine interest in the particular issue or even an interest in a solution to the problem, but because of the perceived need to confirm and maintain one’s own status. Being on the list, being a member of an executive committee, etc., are values and “needs” in themselves.

The same is true about individuals expressing collective needs, community interests. Example – in decisions made by governments: “The need for armaments” (Actually: the imperative of armaments) caused not by a genuine military threat or even by the opportunity to stimulate economic growth in one’s own country (since armaments are growing on the basis of purchasing foreign equipment, rather than domestic), but by the pressure of ideological obsessions, the intention to distract the citizens’ attention from unresolved problems and to artificially consolidate the society. Similarly, gigantic investments (far exceeding the resources, with an underestimated cost of completion and subsequent operation – if completed at all; without or contrary to the analysis of the actual needs) expressing the desire of the government to “substantiate” the status of a powerful state, “leave behind something lasting,” etc.

Non-authenticity of needs is expressed not only in the false awareness of one’s own needs, in succumbing to the pressure of alleged “needs” suggested, instilled or even forcibly persuaded (by means of conforming educational pressure according to the canons of correctness, advertising, propaganda, emotional blackmail of the social environment). In a sense, the second degree of this deformity is non-authenticity in the methods of satisfying the needs attributed to oneself – not only the alleged, but also the genuine ones. This is reflected today in the pathological cornering of the individual as a consumer, employee, parent or housewife through the infrastructure of counselling, coaching, forced training programs, television instruction courses,³⁵ in connection with the programmatic and systematic infantilization of all professional and family roles.³⁶ Counsellors-celebrities (with the powers of “fashion dictators” and arbiters of taste) will tell you how to cook, decorate an apartment or a garden, and on what type of a pillow to sleep. This is the consumerist equivalent of brainwashing, so far only identified in the domain of political indoctrination and propaganda.

What differs this from the totalitarian mechanism is, at the most, that there is not necessarily a single integrated, indivisible model of a good citizen, a fashionista, a “trendy” consumer, but many different – competing or complementary models relativized to specific social environments (professional, generational, ethnic, religious and denominational) in which, however, they are strictly enforced, under penalty of more or less severe marginalization or exclusion.

All sorts of models of possible personalities are ready, waiting on the market: one can choose among a galore of them today, and tomorrow and the day after tomorrow there will be even more. These models contain all the necessary components, up to the smallest detail,

³⁵ I suggest that readers analyse the following TV programme: S. Czapnik, “Superniania – apoteoza neo-liberalnego kapitalizmu”, in Idem, *Mówią jak jest. Marksści objaśniają świat*, Opole 2019.

³⁶ More in: F. Furedi, *Gdzie się podzieli wszyscy intelektualści?*, Warszawa 2008.

and are accompanied by precise, detailed instructions on how to assemble the components into a whole: genuine “Do it yourself,” “Create yourself” sets.³⁷

In a nutshell: someone has already decided for you what you are supposed to be, what to wear, how to drive, what to think about, what opinions to hold, or at least provides you with a menu – and you choose from what is available, within the limits of what it is appropriate to choose at all.

Identity models also change, depending on the degree of popularity they enjoy in particular social circles, as well as on the respect enjoyed by the users of such models in these circles.... I acquire all the components, combine them carefully and eagerly follow all the instructions, thus becoming a member of a group that approves this model and treats it as its trademark, a visible sign of affiliation /While presenting and demonstrating these signs of affiliation becomes both a test and a condition of belonging – M.K./. *Apart from demonstrating these signs, nothing else connects me to the group: I dress as required, buy the right tapes and listen to the right bands, watch the right shows and movies on TV and comment on them eagerly, spend my evenings with the right group, in places that are commonly identified with it. “I join the tribe,” acquiring and exposing tribal attributes.³⁸*

And it is this conformist adaptability that has the hallmarks of non-authenticity. External authorities suggest (determine) not only the type of goods, but also the needs themselves. The consumer becomes... a consumer of needs sourced from the sample menu.

8. AUTHENTICITY OF PARTICIPANT ATTITUDES

The authenticity of participants' attitudes can be defined as follows.

An individual is a subject of activity in the sense that, in addition to socially entrusted or imposed tasks, he has his own purpose in life, his life agenda, his own principles which guide him in his evaluation of phenomena and in his actions.³⁹

He is someone, who “remains himself” in various (changing, and sometimes even mutually conflicting) social roles or tasks – connected with various stages of the society's development, unstable balance of forces, ideological and political situations. The essence of the authenticity of attitudes (and preservation of identity) is, therefore, not so much in the absence of conflicts of roles or dilemmas of identification, failure to revise views and “change banners,” but quite the opposite – the occurrence of such phenomena, reflected, however, in conflicts of conscience, in personal, although publicly expressed revaluations.

Non-authenticity is a trait of an “infallible” and being “always on the right course” participant in successive political changes (as in Pasikowski film: “and you are always in a committee”) or an overzealous neophyte. Authenticity, on the other hand, is a trait of

³⁷ Z. Bauman, *Sociologia*, Poznań 1996, pp. 211-212.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 212-213.

³⁹ J. Kuczyński, *Sens życia*, Warszawa 1981; Z. Cackowski, *Trud i sens ludzkiego życia*, Warszawa 1981.

someone who, having lost, ultimately acknowledges his defeat and perhaps even being wrong in his views or his previously maintained position, but this does not lead him to pretend that he never participated in what has been discredited or that he was someone else at the time, if today he would prefer to have been someone else at the time.

An individual's beliefs and aspirations are his own views and aspirations – either because he himself has developed them on the basis of his own experiences and independent thinking process, or because he consciously, and at free will, has assimilated the “ready-made” views – already developed by others – and shares the goals suggested and set for him by others, treating them as his own aspirations. He assimilated (internalized) them in the processes of understanding and acceptance, concluding that they also express well his own situation and needs, and that they serve him well. Such an individual holds certain views and pursues certain aspirations relatively selflessly – that is, not out of fear, not out of conformism, not for the expected benefit or reward; maintaining them (ostentatiously or in a restrained and intimate manner) even when it is discouraged by means of disapproval, pressure, harassment, coercion or repression. The external expression of these beliefs serves the purpose of their realization and intention to convince others, not the purpose to demonstrate the rightfulness or zeal, to obtain the approval of others, to improve one's self-image or to satisfy the narcissistic need to show off and receive applause.

*It would be a nice matter if we were forced to accept as the genuine self of an individual, whatever he tried to make us accept as such. If anyone persists in maintaining that he believes two and two make five, and there is no reason for supposing him to be insane, we may be certain that he does not believe it, however much he may shout it out, or even if he allows himself to be killed for maintaining it.*⁴⁰

Upon this principle, as it is generally known, we distinguish pietism and bigotry from piousness, or playing to the gallery from a genuine expression (even if exhibitionistic), etc.

The idea of such an entity about himself, about his partners (supporters, allies, rivals, opponents, enemies), about the social situation, about the enduring qualities and the current state of the social whole, in which – together with others – he participates, are relatively adequate to reality. His enduring beliefs, value system and ad hoc assessments are adequate to his own situation, needs and interests, serve him well, provide social adaptation, help solving his own problems and foster the accomplishment of new tasks, allow initiating and making effective changes.

Reactions to events and behaviour of others are adequate (resulting from an accurate identification of causes, effects or intentions), suitable to the obtained benefits or the risks and losses caused.

The personality of an individual (respectively: self-identification and mentality of a group or team) is consistent; self-knowledge, knowledge of the world, cognitive, emotional, volitional and pragmatic spheres, aspirations and skills are harmonized.

⁴⁰ J. Ortega y Gasset, *Bunt mas i inne pisma socjologiczne*, Warszawa 1982, p. 123. English quote at <<http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/revolt.pdf>>, p. 73.

Self-knowledge and knowledge of the subject is “complete” – in the sense that the individual finds in them a sufficient basis for independent existence, orientation in social situations, self-control in activities.

The ability of self-transcendence (the expansion of personal boundaries) is a critical test of the authenticity of human attitudes. In other words: the ability to see and overcome one's limitations, based on keeping a distance from the environment and oneself; the willingness and ability to perform cyclical or permanent positive “creative disintegration (reintegration)”⁴¹

The symptom of the authenticity of beliefs (as well as prejudices, moods, experiences, etc.) is not so much a cult-related, defensive and preserving attitude towards what the subject professes, but the ability to constantly confront one's own views or emotions with alternative views and values, as well as the ability to continuously self-verify, examine one's own rightness. Authentic beliefs and aspirations are those that the subject understands well and is able to justify them, but the details of which he can also revise himself in accordance with the overarching principles of reasoning, the hierarchy of values, the ultimate criteria of his own identity. The subject of authentic attitudes has a predisposition to affirm, preserve and confirm his identity and his being true to himself on critical basis. Self-reflection, self-criticism and re-evaluation of what one considers sacred can shake up his comfort zone, but it does not affect his cognitive, emotional and axiological balance.

This is, as evident, both a synchronic and structural identity test (the key to which – in accordance with Ossowski's triad – is in a framework compatibility of the values recognised and professed on the basis of internalisation, the declared values, and the fulfilled values) and a dynamic and processual criterion (maintaining continuity and consistency in the course of various changes in circumstances and corresponding revaluations).

One example of non-authenticity of attitudes is, certainly, opportunism, but also... fanaticism, in which the fervour and aggressiveness in defending and promoting certain ideas, social patterns or principles are in inverse proportion to the ability to understand them, to justify them or to explain to others.

The authenticity of the subject's attitudes (including a permanent ideological orientation, the name, or “label” of which expresses the guiding idea, the common denominator for the sequence of opinions, assessments) is therefore not in the “correctness,” compatibility of verbal declarations or ritual demonstrations of “rightfulness,” “orthodoxy” with cultural and strictly ideological conventions practiced in a given environment, but in a kind of “inner truth,” whose correlate is self-reflection, fervour and sincerity, and in the event pragmatic reasons lead to concealing intentions and real beliefs, simulating what ensures safety or recognition – in “controlling” this discrepancy between a pose or a “social uniform” and what I really think, feel or intend.

⁴¹ See K. Dąbrowski, *Trud istnienia*, Warszawa 1986; Idem, *Dezintegracja pozytywna*, Warszawa 1979; J. Koźielecki, *Transgresja i kultura*, Warszawa 1997.

An excellent illustration of the importance of such a mechanism of self-awareness and self-control is Eugeniusz Grodziński's comment on Adolf Hitler's personality and self-creation of image, in the context of the question whether or not he was a "German patriot":

*As a patriot, we will define someone who, because of his affection for his people and his homeland, is willing to work gratuitously for their benefit and, if necessary, to make sacrifices. On the other hand, he who acts or makes sacrifice for his homeland, but at the same time, gain, for himself – or hopes to gain – moral benefits in the form of power, fame, popularity, public gratitude, etc., does not offer an undisputed proof of his patriotism. A man acting in such a manner can only be regarded a patriot if the analysis of his conduct indicates that he would have acted for the benefit of his homeland even if he had no personal benefits from it; in other words, if the patriotic motives of his actions are far from selfish.*⁴²

9. AUTHENTICITY OF BEHAVIOUR, ACTIVITY AND ACTIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

The authenticity of behaviour, activity and actions of participants is expressed in the following situation – permanent or recurring:

The behaviour of an individual is based on his authentic needs and beliefs, serves their frank and adequate expression. Its intention is to fulfil the tasks and values with which the individual identifies, and, at the same time, the pursuit of self-realization.⁴³ In his behaviour, the entity – both on his own initiative and in response to external expectations – does not have to pretend, camouflage, compensate, justify, exalt, etc.

An entity acts relatively sovereignly, that is, voluntarily performs or initiates certain activities for the sake of his own interests, beliefs, principles, values. And if in doing so he pursues other goals (someone else's or common and superior), it is because he understands them himself and accepts them precisely due to his own needs, principles, goals. He is aware of and relatively adequately understands the objectives of a particular action or undertaking, and the general purpose of the functioning of the institution, social movement and its own participation in them, his individual tasks in the whole, or his personal mission. Thus understood sovereignty is therefore complemented by rationality (understood praxeologically, as decision-making on the basis of the knowledge of the conditions of operation and achievement of objectives by means of specific means).

The entity accepts its role on the basis of its own affirmation of such collective, institutional or team objectives, identification with them, or performs the assigned tasks upon the principle of adaptation, for convenience, guided by its own ambitions, expectations, calculations, balance between risks and opportunities, benefits and losses, etc.

In this sense, authenticity is typical not only of the actions of an individual or collective determined by ideological involvement, but also of the actions that are selfish,

⁴² E. Grodziński, *Filozofia Adolfa Hitlera w 'Mein Kampf'*, Warszawa–Olsztyn 1992, p. 142.

⁴³ See W. Łukaszewski, "Problemy samorealizacji", part III, in Idem, *Szanse rozwoju osobowości*, Warszawa 1984.

although lacking any symptoms of hypocrisy (including self-deceiving), and dictated by the principle of “rational egotism” (or understanding our own interest in the fulfilment of a collective will, in obeying social rules).

An individual's activity or his programmed and specialized actions have an attribute of authenticity if they affect the interpretation of his own tasks and the manner in which he operates – both for his own use, and with social perception in mind. Such an individual provides meaning to its own efforts – whether acting alone or retaining autonomy and the right to innovation, to criticism in subordinate activities. His own needs (e.g. ambitious or utilitarian) are taken into account and met in such actions, and the possibility of “self-satisfaction” becomes a prerequisite of willingness to work for the community, including sacrifice and suffering detriments.

In opposition to this stands the lack of sovereignty in one way or another: false awareness of participants (a classic scheme: sheep vote for the wolf); succumbing – in thinking and in actions – to someone else's smoke and mirrors; taking up an activity (devoid of characteristics of activity, and transformed into passive participation in the project as a “cog in a machine”) as a result of coercion, violence or manipulation. And, in particular, another symptom of non-authenticity is such a programming of objectified and alienated activity (professional work, formal fulfilment of civic duties, etc.) that its objectives and results contradict the needs, aspirations and expectations of the participants or prevent their implementation.

Therefore, the quality of authenticity is bestowed upon human activity by the combination of two factors: on the one hand, the sovereignty in question, on the other – the harmony with oneself and acceptance of one's own self and one's own role. Fromm calls this combination of traits *spontaneity*. However, it should not be confused with vehemence as opposite of controllability, programmed and controlled course of events or social processes.

This is how Fromm defines the essence of spontaneous activity:

Spontaneous activity is not compulsive activity, to which the individual is driven by his isolation and powerlessness; it is not the activity of the automaton, which is the uncritical adoption of patterns suggested from the outside. Spontaneous activity is free activity of the self and implies, psychologically, what the Latin root of the word, sponte, means literally: of one's free will. By activity we do not mean “doing something,” but the quality of creative activity that can operate in one's emotional, intellectual, and sensuous experiences and in one's will as well. One premise for this spontaneity is the acceptance of the total personality and the elimination of the split between “reason” and “nature”; for only if man does not repress essential parts of his self, only if he has become transparent to himself, and only if the different spheres of life have reached a fundamental integration, is spontaneous activity possible.⁴⁴

Authenticity of an action or activity is, therefore, a prerequisite for subjectivity. It is difficult to attribute subjectivity for an individual or group capable of repetitive

⁴⁴ E. Fromm, *Ucieczka od wolności*, Warszawa 1996, p. 241. English quotation at <<https://cyc-net.org/quote2/quote-780.html>>.

actions having significant effects on the environment or on posterity, but expressing only their subordination and reliability in the fulfilment of someone else's will, and lacking autonomous self-motivation, own intentionality, own sense of meaning – without abusing that concept.⁴⁵

10. AUTHENTICITY OF SUBJECT'S WORKS

For the purpose of this paper, the concept of work is used not in a meaning which is colloquial or characteristic for certain fields (such as literature theory, aesthetics, art history), but in a praxeological meaning.⁴⁶

Therefore, we will use the term “subject's work” for any material product of physical effort (especially production) or abstract/intellectual work of practical results (examples: invention, patent, architectural design, etc.) or the product of conventional-symbolic activities (in the form of ideas, meaning given to certain types of events and human activities, carriers of meaning – props, gadgets, etc.). But also for any state of affairs (social situation, atmosphere in interpersonal relations) caused by a subject's actions. In this sense, the term “work” can be used for the breakdown of a marriage provoked by an intrigue, an outbreak of riots stimulated by someone's statement, a destruction of an authority or worship of a hero with the disclosure of his scandalous dealings, shameful deeds, etc.

With this in mind, we will first address the premises of the authenticity of works, which will then enable us to determine the criteria of their authenticity.

The necessary (although insufficient) condition for the authenticity of a work of a specific subject – and not of another subject – is, above all, that it must be his work (that is, the result of the actions taken by him). What we are talking about is authorship.⁴⁷

It is straightforward in the case where the entity concerned is the sole author (e.g. creator), independent and self-sufficient in the act itself, and relatively autonomous in his longer-term functioning. Such characteristics are attributed, for example, to an artist who, although dependent on the patron, sponsor or demand in the extent of creating and disseminating his work, is autonomous in the sense that he does not owe his talent, competence or invention to these principals or buyers, and, due to his individuality, he is someone irreplaceable in the process of creating an original, unique work.

However, the issue of authorship can be complicated and problematic in the case of participation (as a collaboration) – whether in an equivalent division of labour, on a partnership basis, or on the basis of acting as a contractor of someone's will (especially

⁴⁵ See K. Obuchowski, *Człowiek intencjonalny...*

⁴⁶ See T. Kotarbiński, *Traktat o dobrej robocie*, Warszawa 1975; C. Znamierowski, *Oceny i normy*, Warszawa 1957.

⁴⁷ See the analysis of the mechanism and the typology of authorship in: C. Znamierowski, *Wina i odpowiedzialność*, Warszawa 1957.

in a subordination relation) or a subcontractor in a team venture. Because then it is necessary, first of all, to determine to what extent the subject was “irreplaceable” – whether in the scope of formulating the goal itself, in the choice of measures, or in the final form of the work of a complex action.

The other condition (but still insufficient) for the authenticity of a subject’s work is that the action as such (the result of which is a particular “work”) is authentic in itself in an ontic meaning. That is: to be a fact, an act, and not a substitute of action, work, hoax; for its formal nature was consistent with its actual nature or meaning (the difference between an action pursuing a given objective and a supplementary or apparent action). However, it may be that the work is authentic in the sense that it is indeed the actual result of the action of the subject, and it is a work performed rather than an apparent one (faking the alleged fact of the act itself or of an apparent act in the sense of pretending to pursue the set goal) – and yet it is devoid of authenticity.

The tradition of knowledge in the field of aesthetics, art history and science, but also in the scope of copyrights, as well as criminal law (criteria for the authorship of criminal acts) reveals a lot. Thus, the work of a particular subject has the features or even the attributes of authenticity, provided it is **original** (unlike secondary works, including imitations, as well as, for example, in literary, scientific works or compositions – the processing of motifs and materials from someone else’s works, past, but also from one’s own works). Which does not mean, however, that various references in artistic or scientific statements (paraphrases, travesty, persiflage, but also polemics, parodies) cannot contain elements of originality. This own contribution (verified e.g. in reviews) may consist in a novel interpretation, correction of inadequate interpretations, supplementation of evaluated projects or structures, justification of alternatives to a particular work or trend (artistic, scientific, technical).⁴⁸

If a work whose obvious and direct author (and, in particular, formally exclusive – e.g. in the role of its writer, composer, inventor holding a patent) is a particular individual, in its very content, form and inspiration is an “echo” (even if creatively processed) of a certain design, scheme or realization of an impersonally addressed legal or, for example, aesthetic norm, rather than an expression of an absolutely unique individual invention, a realization of an unprecedented idea, etc., then a different factor determines its authenticity. Namely: the fact that the creation of such a work (not only a work in an artistic, literary, scientific sense) is the expression and realization of an authentically own needs, efforts and beliefs of a person.

By departing from individualized activities, works of artists, writers, intellectuals, scholars, we can notice similar relationships in the sphere of activities devoid of such expressive personalization, individualization. A work with the attribute of authenticity is a subject’s own initiative in an action programmed in terms of purpose, but gaining a unique character as a result of the precisely individual idea or decision not determined by others (e.g. superiors, commanders). This is the case, for example, in bespoke design work, in service activities, in education processes (where the curricula

⁴⁸ See J. Pieter, *Krytyka dzieł twórczych*, Katowice 1947.

and methodological frameworks of teaching do not invalidate the importance of the individual predispositions of a teacher, instructor). Similarly: the attribute of authenticity is bestowed upon the execution, by the individual (in the role of a soldier, officer, official), of an order in which even someone else determines both the purpose and the result, and even the manner of acting, however in full conviction of its validity and with the merit that if the doer lacked competence and determination in his task, then the execution of the task would not come true.

In opposition to such a model dependence stand, certainly, the “works” resulting from extortion (and with a total indifference or a total internal opposition of the direct author), those resulting from conformism (actions or omissions for the sake of peace of mind, in the name of compliance with requirements, expectations, and not due to one’s own thoughts, acceptances), and to a greater extent – works performed without reflection, on the basis of automatism. And, of course – which is already made aware of even at the level of common awareness – custom-made works “for daily bread” (various forms of moonlighting, performances with repertoire “to the gallery,” panegyric works – especially trivially selfish, etc.).

One should be careful, however, not to be misguided by the type or form of work alone. For example: a denunciation (a very peculiar work) as such can be both devoid of authenticity (when based on a template, written under pressure, within the framework of a controlled “indignation”), and marked by authenticity (for example, reports of strictly personal motivation – e.g. motivated by envy, a desire for revenge, or, on the contrary, an authentic sense of civic duty; reports of a questionable literary quality, but – precisely because of this – expressing and compensating for unfulfilled literary or journalistic ambitions of their authors).

11. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The presented comprehensive scheme of authenticity of the participation of individuals and groups in large social processes, complex political or economic projects, in the daily functioning of institutional structures – has a double application.

On the one hand, this is a theoretical model in the convention of the “ideal type” – an idealistic characteristics of objective conditions, the meeting of which empowers the qualification of what the entity intends, manifests, does in practice in terms of authenticity. The systematics of such conditional relationships serves both to diagnose social, political behaviour which, at the same time, have an evocative (but also deceptive) conventional and symbolic, ritual, ideological, and explanatory setting – in the mode of structural, functional, psychological explaining, in hermeneutic procedures of humanistic interpretation.

On the other hand, the same set of characteristics can be treated as an ideal, an ethical and pedagogical model.

However, when adopting such a pattern as a reference system, wishful thinking or reactions to human imperfection, triviality of human behaviour, to the intricacies of

human behaviour, which resemble the complaining of a disappointed and dismayed educator, must be avoided. Human existence and activity, political engagement or political entanglement in particular, is devoid of the comfort of complete cohesion, consistency, clarity. Such traits remain merely the unfulfilled desire of biographers cultivating their genre in the hagiographic, heroic convention.

The participation of individuals in processes and in social structures is based, on the contrary, on the natural and lasting tension between the aforementioned dimensions of authenticity. Authenticity of the existence of an entity itself does not guarantee the authenticity of his functioning in the social entanglement or for his own use, although it creates such an opportunity. The authenticity of social bonds or certain structures does not determine the authenticity of human motivations and intentions “inscribed” into these bonds and structures.

In the “ideologically impeccable” party there will be a place for a careerist. The authenticity of the participant’s status may not go hand in hand with the authenticity of his beliefs and attitudes. As already known from the history of art or literature, authenticity can be a feature of works of authors whose manifestations or affiliations are... “smelling” of duplicity (e.g. opportunism or loyalism and overzealous fear). On the level of truth and constructive inspiration, authenticity can be a trait of works seemingly disgraced by the circumstances of their creation or by the unmasking of the true face of their authors.

Therefore, one should not confuse appealing, in a sense, axionormative postulates and ideals of authenticity (especially of flawless, complete authenticity) – of the type “be yourself and remain yourself” or a slightly subtler “live and act in harmony with yourself” – with an inquisitive analysis of the antinomies of human identity, paradoxes caused by “multi-participation”. Simultaneous or alternate participation in different communities and reference systems always exposes individuals and social groups to the danger of inconsistencies and conflicts of roles, internal conflicts of interest in one’s own social status, incompatibility between personal, professional, business, religious or party identity.

If these nuances are forgotten, researchers are exposed to ideological and propaganda clichés, inherently reducing labels, common stereotypes of social groups, social roles, common interpretation of the character of individuals.

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