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HUMANITAS — A PROJECT CONSIDERED AS A STARTING POINT FOR THINKING ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SO-CALLED HUMANISTIC MANAGEMENT

Abstract

The institutional aspect of the functioning of the university may not be separated from the broader context of science, already reworked and interpreted in the Humanities. The paper proofs that the humanistic management connecting the Humanities and the management is the proper scientific field to recognize and understand this problematics.

Keywords: Humanistic management, management, Humanities, science, university

Streszczenie

Projekt *Humanitas* jako punkt startu myślenia na temat uniwersytetu w kontekście tzw. zarządzania humanistycznego

Instytucjonalny aspekt funkcjonowania uniwersytetu nie może być oderwany od szerszego kontekstu nauki, przepracowanego i zinterpretowanego w obrębie humanistyki. Artykuł dowodzi, że zarządzanie humanistyczne, łączące zarządzanie z humanistyką, jest właściwym polem naukowej refleksji dla rozpoznania i zrozumienia tej problematyki.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie humanistyczne, zarządzanie, humanistyka, nauka, uniwersytet

Because we want to think about the University, and to think about it today it is primarily to think about Humanities and since because the impulse for this thinking coming from the initiative born in the Institute of Public Affairs at the Faculty of Management and Social Communication of the Jagiellonian University as a special conference dedicated to this problem, we should start from the observation of the conflict, the collision, which becomes necessary to clear. This conflict is neither random nor accidental. It turned out to be an important point of historical events and has been built into the project of the management

inscribed in the area of the humanities. This is one of the most interesting scientific projects primarily for this reason that it reworks mentioned conflict consciously, allowing to put reflection research very far, that is to say, putting questions about humanities, and, out of necessity, about the university. In this latter broader sense, I hope, it also covers a pragmatic management concept, a project develop by the author of this text. However, before we could recognize how it happens, we need to explain the reason why the idea of the collision appears here.

We will stay at the ground of the Humanities which are important for the two reasons: first because they are the specific base for the humanistic management which is the subject of the reflection and the second because the conflict mentioned above is especially vivid in the Humanities. That means the reflection mostly become speculative that is to say philosophical and its main field is the science seen from the higher perspective, in other words meta-perspective. This kind of the discourse is not easy but could be seen as inherent for the project of management we write about that is the humanistic management. This paper is also an attempt to elaborate proper kind of the discourse suitable and permissible for this new and weakly supported by scientific reflection field which – certainly because of its trans-disciplinary character – is also very promising. The last reason makes the humanistic management proper platform to rethink the problem of the university understood as a problem of science. So first we try to enlighten historical circumstances shaping the university seen as an humanistic project and then describe the present situation of the fundamental conflict coming from this foundation. Then we will try to interpret the construction of the idea of the management and the necessity to change it to the humanistic version suitable as the scientific tool to catch pointed problematics and propose the solution.

Historical contexts of the humanities

Modern university not for the first time passing the phase of the crisis calling questions about its sense and task. His present form, showing its erosion, is the result of a situation that occurred in Prussia in the late 18th century, as described by Elżbieta Kowalska: "the complete collapse of the University higher education, coupled with competition from the [...] vocational education has led to an alternative between further decommissioning of universities or their radical reform" [Kowalska, 2006: 176]. Reaction to this situation was a big project of Wilhelm von Humboldt, on the one hand, based on a combination of live science related to didactics, the other based on a kind, humanistic assumption of human training as an independent participant in the culture and the world. It was a conscious reference to the modern idea of *humanitas* supported the Greek concept of *paideia*, renewed in the so-called second revival of classical studies in Germany "and associated with such figures as Goethe or Schiller" [Borowski, 2002: 82]. Kowalska basing on Leitner highlights a special moment of "education through science"

a new selfless, idealistic participation in acquiring knowledge and thus also self-improvement [Kowalska, 2006: 182].

That specifically understood humanism, so named at the same time, becomes the subject of further changes in this age, which is associated with the rapid development of knowledge and its importance. The effort undertaken by the Wilhelm Dilthey to renew the basics of Humanities in the second half of the 19th century, was in turn a reaction, as Tadeusz Gadacz says, to the dominance of positivism and historicism, supported by the "principles of experimental and objective knowledge" [Gadacz, 2009: 125]. Arts and Humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*), Dilthey claimed, were to be based on "the inner experience", essentially different in terms of cognitive disposition than "the outer experience". They examining the facts, but allow also gain insight into synthetic sense of these facts, analytically obtained by the natural sciences [Gadacz, 2009: 126]. Dilthey supported primarily on the hermeneutic proceeding and acting against scientism and positivism, trusted in the continuous exegetic and interpretive work, waived the "absolute truth." This approach, as Zbigniew Kuderowicz writes, "introduced to the Humanities the self-knowledge about its unique methodological constitution" [Kuderowicz, 1987: 103]. Both described events carry one important message that indicates in every case the source of inspiration in the word "humanism", founding Humanities; It is rather a *humanitas* (humanity) than *humanus* (human). This means, as Andrzej Borowski writes, the understanding of humanism "as a universal formula of the modern anthropological and philosophical project operating in the European and Polish culture" [Borowski, 2009: 125]. He sarcastically imparts elsewhere that "cannot in fact stay with the trivial and often repeated superstition that Humanism is derived from the adjective *humanus* (human), for allegedly «humanists were interested in what comes from human»" [Borowski, 2002: 84]. So understood humanism and Humanities sets the man in the broadest perspective of his presence in the world, and therefore in the light of the ability of the acquiring the knowledge about this world and understanding it.

Today situation of the university in the context of the humanities

The contemporary crisis of the university has generally two sources, similarly deep, because it exposes questions about the deepest reasons for Humanities: the first is revealed when the University has been entered in the economic context, which occurred as a historical state in the 1970s [Bono *et al.*, 2008: 1] and second, when we take under the consideration the inner reconstructions of the concept of *humanitas*, which loses its sharpness along with the corrosion of the notion of human. The first source remains constantly up to date, which was very strongly proclaimed by Ryszard Nycz in his lecture opened the academic year at the Jagiellonian University in 2015, the second has already got extensive literature and research conclusions. The University as an institution strongly included into the

economic processes revealed together with the appreciation of the knowledge as a resource and the production component. Derrida, speaking of the University in 1998, stresses that it is in a situation of threatening him to accepting the role of "branch of the multinational companies and conglomerates," and even it simply falls into that role [Derrida, 2001: 19] what makes further that "Humanities often becomes just a hostage of faculties of science and applied, involving capital investments, which already presupposes that it will be viable, which in essence is foreign to the academic world" [Derrida, 2001: 19].

Both of these statements does not apply only to a certain, narrowly understood institutional base of the University which includes it into the institutional game involving other institutions, in particular seen as organizations. Both of these enunciations speak rather about the reorganization within the essential cultural processes, establishing the applicable axiology and standards, encouraging, as a last resort, a model of existence and a project of man. Voices identifying within the framework of this project dominance of materialism, instrumentalism, cynicism was formulated a long time before within the Frankfurt School and renewed in the 1960s and 1970s in the texts of Herbert Marcuse, Alain Touraine or less Daniel Bell. The latter two were also the inauguration of such a construction as the post-industrial society, indicating the fundamental nature of civilization and transforming relations of production. Inevitably they located their source in the area of economic processes, as well as made it as the key field. The knowledge began to play a special kind of role in these processes, go under the process of instrumentalization, what has already been observed and articulated by scientists such as Marcuse, Theodor Adorno or Max Horkheimer in their observations from the 1930s and 1940s on the degeneration of the idea of reason which has been expressed as a "twilight" of the reason. They pointed out such a circumstances of this process, writes Andrzej Szahaj, as "such facts as the exuberance capitalist economy and alienation of authentic decay, social ties, on the ideologisation of culture and language, modern machine of the organization of the work and working time destroying all individuality" [Szahaj, 2008: 25]. There was also an enthusiastic line of interpretation, of course, read this instrumentality as appropriate management. Her representative was Peter Drucker, who in 1961 has already announced a text describing the so-called "the new meaning of knowledge" [Drucker, 1993: 22], make it a practical embodiment of experience and skills in action, resulting the technology [Drucker, 1993: 26]. The beginnings of this process he dated back to the year 1700, as the beginning of modern technological revolution [Drucker, 1993: 258].

The scientific situation and the contradictions of the management

The management was among the items of interest to the University certainly due to the placement of the latter in the orbit of interest of business, which is a trivial version of the problem of the dominant discourse on knowledge. Such a discourse, its location and functions should be understood precisely in the sense that gave Michel Foucault, so as an expression of political and social power, for

its implementation in accordance with its kind of pragmatics and objectives. In this way, the University becomes an institution of a State, unless the State can be understood as a power system stabilization. Now it is easy to understand why after the recent reforms universities lost a large part of its autonomy to the State which seeks State rights to the University in a variety of ways, but always using the rhetoric of its good when viewed in the perspective of current political objectives, and so today mainly economic.

Returning to management we must notice that in the face of the stated facts it is hard-to-find the notion more distanced from the ideals of Humanities, especially the one which resulted in a time of Enlightenment, and which named Jacques Derrida sees as a place where "the concept of man," which "seems to be both necessary and constantly problematic [...] can be discussed and transformed, unconditionally and without any prior assumptions" [Derrida, 2001: 13]. This distance does not shape, however, management, or at least not only in a trivial way of replacing the man as a main goal on the efficiency, productivity, profitability, etc. In other words, the management is senseless, but not because that introduces subordinating a single economic objective, just for the reason that in the essence is not creative. This weakness takes place in the case of unproductive activities, and so is immersed in a present reality and in principle is excluded from the participation in the underlying act of creation. Of course, this does not mean that management does not produce anything, in fact produces a new order, only that this production is by the definition extremely strong based on the existing reality. Without this existing reality the management does not make sense and is not in a position to demonstrate its creative skills. One can therefore say that the management comes in a moment **after** the creation of the reality, which it want to take care of.

Management, which comes in a little while **after**, sees this reality as requiring intervention. Reality (its excerpt) appears to him not so, what it should be. In particular, this reality may seem chaotic, requiring the introduction of an order. In an attempt to capture the essence of modernity, Zygmunt Bauman has found imposing an order as a best describing endeavors taken by modernity and did not hesitate to use in this context the notion of management:

> we can call it the modern existence, if it is produced and reproduced through design, manipulation, management, technical treatments. Existence is a modern, if it is managed by the sovereign agencies, rich in knowledge, skills and technology. Agencies are sovereign, if demand and effectively defend the rights of control and management of the entity: rights to specify the order and – by implication – to control the chaos, which survived cleanup treatments [Bauman, 1995: 19–20].

This is the essence of the spoken senseless: the imposition of order. The only question that remains is, what is the source of this order? Please, note the pronoun which has been used: "what." This choice of pronoun, rather than, in his place, another, such as "who," introduces us to the proper sense of the management here I'm talking about.

The conceptual platform for economic sciences provides the backrest for this management. This platform appears as a representative of the broader field of phenomena, which are characterized by good, because the material, in principle unquestionable ontological basis, which we have to do in the nature sciences. This does not mean that the economy has no problems with defining the ontic status of their beings, such for example as money that can exist in a variety of ways. This means that the economy cannot avoid experiential anchor without which it believed would have lost its fundamental meaning. Similar anchors is no longer required in the light of his own theory by social science. Allowing use of an interpretative paradigm completely moved the ontological problem. The Humanities of the essence being outside mentioned anchor, what means that it considering primarily words (but in this sense, what gave them Foucault in his book entitled *Les Mots et les Choses*) and the conditions for their use, without prejudging of the status of its subjects.

The question of ontology, considered from the perspective of the faculties, and therefore science as such, changes into the problem of epistemology. This is not a new phenomenon; appears as a substrate of Dilthey's program, which we mentioned earlier. Problem of the ontological and epistemological duality is quite natural, which does not mean simple in philosophy. Jan Woleński summarizes the inter-connectedness of the epistemology and ontology in the question "what should be the starting point in philosophy: examining what exists, or starting the knowledge?" [Woleński, 2007: 52–53]. The response contains two extreme positions: ontological ("without the existence of would not know") and epistemological ("you must first know the existence, to talk about"). According to Woleński there is no rational conclusion in this important alternative so he calls for the behavior which is precisely parallel approach, combining both perspectives and at the same time pronounces their mutual confusion.

At this point, it should at least be recalled that the problem of epistemological human competences appears in the 20th century as a fundamental problem of science and its prerogatives, given the question of conditions of scientific formulation of the assumptions about the world. It refreshes this way the Kantian investigation and paradoxically following the track marked out by this philosopher recognizing the man as the dominant part of the knowing – until the boundaries of meaning carried by a metaphysical human project. In its continuation the metaphysical foundations of Cartesian opposition between subject (*res extensa*) and thinking (*res cogitans*) become blurred, causing at the same time ontological and epistemological effects. The already mentioned Gadacz, summarizing so emerging postmodern stream, inspired in his opinion by Jean-Paul Sartre says that "it was an undercurrent of anti-metaphysical and anti-religious philosophy. It was not already a metaphysical philosophy participation in being, but her literary self-expression" and adds: "representatives of this new paradigm was structuralists, poststructuralists and postmodern philosophers, also partly pragmatists and the Frankfurt School, as well as feminist philosophers" [Gadacz, 2009: 30]. The rejection of metaphysics requires a research for other kind of ground and the language as a social phenomenon appeared as such, which leaded in the direction of such phenomenon as

the discourse or narration, refreshing on the occasion the rhetorical scaffoldings of knowledge and thinking. The latest incident was not the only one which appeared during the philosophical deep crisis of legitimacy of science in the 20th century, but was perhaps the most famous one. The collapse of the simple opposition of science and the world, which has been yet defined the mutual obligations, lead to two major consequences, which was prophetically described by Marek Siemek: first, it showed "a fundamental ontological problem of both the scientific knowledge as well as shared by her forms of objectivity" and the second it extracted "to light the whole set of socio-cultural dimensions of the functioning and the development of science in society and history" [Siemek, 1978: 23].

Epistemological issues updates inevitably the issue of understanding human subject, making man the obvious center of its reflection. Management, which by definition includes a range of social issues (the organization is a social creation), falls into confusion, and even a contradiction: on the one hand, is determined by the materialistic ontological orthodoxy and, on the other hand, involves human person and tries to develop the epistemic context of it, but the last one must inevitably destroy such orthodoxy if this person should appear in a fullness of its subjectivity (non-metaphysical already of course). This subjectivity would become inevitably the kernel of the whole situation, affecting at the same time the basic economical pragmatics, the aim of which is to make a profit. On the one hand, therefore, the context of the epistemic issues opens the abyss of reflection arising from twentieth-century trends in this area. On the other hand, the issue of subjectivity also leads to its contemporary, critical interpretation of itself, to posthumanism for example, as a transformation of subjectivity into the social construct, updating and exhibiting new features of this socialization.

At this point, it's hard not to recall at least very briefly a great work on the issues of human subjectivity, getting in the second half of the 20th century, dramatic movements. Among their spiritual fathers one can lists many philosophers; e.g. Marx, Nietzsche, Freud and many others, recognizing at the same time Martin Heidegger as a thinker directly invalidating Western assumptions of the metaphysical concept of man. His debate with Ernst Cassirer in Davos in 1929 and the later text from 1947 entitled *A letter about humanism* have become symbolic foundations and inspirations of the reconstruction of the modern project of *humanitas*. During its development, absorbing unexpected technological experiences and the new understandings of the social, critical context of human existence, it produces the concept of subject which is completely incoherent and contrary to the Cartesian and Kantian ideas, that requires an entirely new approach in the field of reconstructed and deconstructed Humanities. Rossi Braidotti comments this process briefly: "Posthuman times call for posthuman Humanities studies" [Braidotti, 2013: 157].

The role of the humanistic management as a new science

However, in a situation when we are considering the management as the pragmatics of success or efficiency objectives, which in practice means the effectiveness, productivity, performance, it is becoming clear that man must be within the

management treated instrumentally, that is a common feature of many ways try-
ing to incorporate him into management processes. The inauguration of the re-
flection on them has been called a scientific management, which is still a constant
model and emblem in this matter. But a sign of inability to maintain this confu-
sion, is breaking up ontological and epistemological cohesion of the management,
which appears, for example, as its multi-paradigmatic character. Management
could in this situation try to keep its economic orthodoxy or permits the deep hu-
manistic approach [von Kimakowitz *et al.*, 2011: 4]. The second step, however,
carries a very long-range consequences. A distinct sign of exhaustion of econom-
ic management project is rebellion, which is the subject of the book by Monika
Kostera *Occupy Management* [Kostera, 2014] but that step appears as only par-
tial because *de facto* only borrows concepts and moves them from other areas of
thought, but it doesn't create its own meta-analytical description, which would
only imply a level of self-awareness competent humanistic approach. However
this book remains perhaps the furthest far-reaching statement in the so called hu-
manist management, developing within the orthodox management.

Full step would be to reconstruct the concept of management and relieve it en-
tirely from the instrumentality, with which it treats a man within the framework of
its current, traditional settlement. But it would mean a total break with the context
of the economic pragmatics and a step into Humanities as appropriate set of think-
ing skills and epistemic tools; competence and human cognitive tools of the man,
defining also inevitably in return himself living in today's world. This means the
necessity to manage its blurred and constantly contested location, on which a va-
riety of reflection develops, for example, posthumanism. It also reveals the most
important humanistic problem: the circularity of anthropological philosophical
project of *humanitas* as the process of thinking on the interdependence between
the world which is the subject of research and the man who tries to recognize it
keeping the totality of entanglements and complications emerging on both sides
of this deal, and at the same time the incompleteness of any other partial solutions.

The placement of management as a science within the field of Humanities
doesn't remain without influence on her. Such a move requires not only the total
reconstruction of the management, but also the reconstruction of the concept of
Humanities, driving its research to the concept of *humanitas* and last but not least
the idea man. In each part it causes some new, dramatic transformations, similar
perhaps to those that are being undertaken by posthumanism. In particular, leads
to the total removal of the concept of the management from the area of economy
and make it the descriptive category working in the other field: Humanities. It
will redevelop the dictionary of the Humanities through the reconstruction of the
research field (change of the dictionary will also change the game of the under-
lying objects described by Wittgenstein). This, in turn, affect the position of the
Humanities in relation to other areas of science, and so thus opens the question on
the organization of the universities, which already results in disputes, which we
are already witnesses. A project trying to manage this problematics is just dur-
ing the development at the Institute of Culture at the Jagiellonian University, and
its sample part is also a pragmatic concept of management by the author of this

paper. This concept is based on the making of the management a general (epistemological) category, describing all management processes regardless of their nature and character, thus containing such general actions as judging or acquiring knowledge. Regardless of success, its contribution to the science development is taking into account the epistemological problem which does not appear in this move as a necessary evil, but as a basic subject matter.[1]

Conclusion of this paper coming from already discussed paths of thought – let me remind them: historical situation of university mainly shaped by the Humanities, contemporary change of this institution which is most hardly experienced by the humanists, deep epistemological nature of this change, weakness of the traditional management to understand the change coming from its own limitations and the proposition made on this ground by the humanistic version of it – these paths of thought leads us to the inevitable conclusion. The humanistic management, properly developed, could describe, understand and maybe resolve today problems of the university, because of the deep grounding this management in the Humanities which are the adequate field of thinking about science and the epistemological situation of the man. This is supported by the management part itself because the main problems of the contemporary situation of the university comes from the mostly economical shift of its social and cultural position.

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[1] The closer description of this concept one could find in the forthcoming book by the author of this paper already in the manuscript under the title *Towards the Civilization of the Internet*: *The Management as a Part of the Humanities*.

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