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THE OLD AND THE NEW ROLES OF THE INTELLIGENTSIA IN POLAND

It was L. Ha s s's new book on the history of Polish intelligentsia¹, especially one of its aspects, that spurred me to present my own reflections, for Hass had questioned certain social roles of this class. I, too, have recently re-considered certain questions concerning the intelligentsia mainly in the post-1945 period².

In view of the broad chronological and thematic range of the subject, which far exceeds the range of my research, the reflections that follow may not always be scientifically exact and some of them may lack sufficient evidence. They are my own subjective evaluation of events.

1. The social role of the intelligentsia up to 1918

The first of these roles consisted in servicing social life, members of the intelligentsia being leaders and experts³; in the 19th century they were often practitioners with but a superficial training or a minimal general education which was not necessarily acquired at school, but some of them were experts with the indispensable education and experience.

¹ L. Ha s s, *Inteligencji polskiej dole i niedole. XIX i XX wiek (The Good and Bad Experiences of the Polish Intelligentsia. 19th and 20th Centuries)*, Łowicz 1999; see the review pp. 171–182.

² *Epoka dwóch wojen. Epoka powojenna 1945–1989 (The Epoch of Two Wars. The Post-War Epoch 1945–1989)* in: I. Ihnatowicz, A. Mączak, B. Zientara, J. Żarnowski, *Spółczesność polska od X do XX wieku (Polish Society from the 10th to the 20th Century)*, 5th ed., revised and enlarged, Warszawa 1999, pp. 593–713 (pp. 673–713, concerning the post-war period, were then published for the first time); *Awans społeczny w Polsce powojennej. Problem inteligencji (Social Advance in Post-War Poland. The Question of the Intelligentsia)*, paper read at the 18th Congress of Polish Historians in Wrocław, September 1999.

³ The term is borrowed from J. Szczepański, *Struktura inteligencji w Polsce (The Structure of the Intelligentsia in Poland)*, "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" 1960, № 1–2, p. 37. See also J. Żarnowski, *Struktura społeczna inteligencji w Polsce w latach 1918–1939 (The Social Structure of the Intelligentsia in Poland in 1918–1939)*, Warszawa 1964, p. 59.

The qualifications possessed by the members of this class depended on occupation and the educational requirements for a given category, also on the gender, for with but a few exceptions women were not expected to have a secondary or higher education, nor was mental or intellectual work demanded of them. In this respect changes began to occur at the end of the 19th century. The required level of education was not the same in politics, administration, the educational system, the health service, etc.; for instance, it was high in medicine with regard to full-fledged physicians and partly also in the educational system, but relatively low with regard to technical professions. Ryszarda Czepulis has written about the situation of these two categories in the Polish Kingdom⁴. The situation of technicians in Galicia was at first similar to their situation in the Polish Kingdom, but educational requirements (higher education) were significantly raised later on⁵. In the Congress Kingdom the conditions were unfavourable, for from 1831 to the end of the 1850s the Kingdom had neither a university nor a higher school, and from the end of the 1860s education was Russified. Difficulties were also encountered in other partition zones, in Galicia (the educational system was Germanised until the beginning of the autonomous period) and in Prussian Poland (Germanisation of schools and the German authorities' refusal to open a university in territories inhabited by Poles, in particular in Poznań).

As time went on professionalisation progressed and at the turn of the 19th century it was much greater than at the beginning of the century. The discrimination of the Polish intelligentsia by the partitioning powers, especially Russia and Prussia, made it difficult for that class to service social life.

⁴ R. Czepulis, *Lekarze urzędowi (1832–1862) (Official Physicians (1932–1862))* in: *Spółczeństwo Królestwa Polskiego. Studia o uwarstwieniu i ruchliwość społecznej*, ed. W. Kula, vol. III, Warszawa 1968; eadem, *Kształtowanie się inteligencji technicznej w Królestwie Polskim (The Emergence of Technical Intelligentsia in the Polish Kingdom)* in: *Spółczeństwo polskie XVIII i XIX wieku* (continuation of the series), vol. IV, Warszawa 1970. Similar information can be found in R. Czepulis's book "Klasa umysłowa". *Inteligencja Królestwa Polskiego 1832–1862 (The Intellectual Class. The Intelligentsia of the Polish Kingdom 1832–1862)*, Warszawa 1973, pp. 235–240.

⁵ I. Homola, "Kwiat społeczeństwa". *Struktura społeczna i zarys położenia inteligencji krakowskiej w latach 1860–1914 ("The Cream of Society"). The Social Structure and Situation of Cracow Intelligentsia in 1860–1914*, Kraków 1984, pp. 165–190.

Another role of the intelligentsia was a result of modernisation needs and consisted in the dissemination of intellectual and civilisational patterns, to a smaller extent also of technological and organisational ones. In the 19th century the intelligentsia was not the only medium and distributor of foreign civilisational patterns (modernisation consisted mainly in transferring Western patterns to Poland); a part of the aristocracy and even the bourgeoisie disseminated them in industrial and agricultural production and also on higher social levels of private life. What remained for the intelligentsia was education, intellectual life, ideology and the social life on the intelligentsia and urban class level, and also social activity.

The third role of the intelligentsia was a result of national factors, of the aspiration to preserve Polish nationality and also to regain state independence. The last two aims were not identical, but I will not go into this subject lest it should divert our attention from the main question. What role did service to the nation and leadership in the life of Polish society play in the activity of the intelligentsia, compared with the mythologised picture popularised by literature, politics and propaganda? Since the role of the intelligentsia has been called into question, some authors pointing out that it was a frequent, if not common, practice for representatives of the intelligentsia to work in the state machinery of the partitioners, especially Russia (H a s s, C h w a l b a)⁶, let me present my own opinion on this matter.

Only a part of the intelligentsia, a part that was steadily increasing, was directly engaged in political, social, educational and cultural activity, feeling it was their mission or moral duty to organise society and the nation. However, social activity is usually manifested by a minority or even a handful of people of a given social group; so to simplify matters a little let us say that the whole of the intelligentsia worked for the preservation of national identity and for national independence, even though some of its members, if not a majority, constituted but a background for this activity and were sometimes unaware of their role. But this background cannot be ignored for the very existence of a large group of people sharing a defined attitude, even though they seemed to be or were in fact passive, exerted an enormous influence on broad social strata. Without such a social back-

⁶ L. H a s s, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-129; A. C h w a l b a, *Polacy w służbie Moskalt (Poles in the Service of Muscovites)*, Warszawa-Kraków 1999.

ground an active élite could not have existed. Moreover, time and the temperature of the moment determine the proportion of passive and active circles, a typical example being the 1905 revolution, which brought an unprecedented increase of activity; but fluctuations had been evident earlier; after 1831 (failed uprising) activity dropped and servility to the authorities was a frequent occurrence, increased activity was observed after the Crimean war lost by Russia (1853–1856) and before the uprising of 1863; this was followed by a period of conformity and fear, only to give way to a new ideological and political opening at the end of the century. This means that this more passive part of the intelligentsia constituted not only a background but also a reserve for the élite.

Let me express my opinion about the Poles' ill-famed service to the partitioners. First, each partition zone had its own standards, depending on the policy pursued by the partitioner and his attitude towards the Poles. For instance, a career in the Austrian civil service during the period of autonomy did not evoke censure or was condemned only by some circles. Secondly, traditional state and even dynastic loyalty was not yet an anachronism at that time, especially in conservative and *bien pensant* circles, though national-ethnic loyalty was steadily gaining ground. Thirdly, *primum edere, deinde philosophari*: the narrow labour market of those days did not offer much choice to Polish intellectuals if they wanted to set up a family and keep their head above water.

2. The intelligentsia's new roles in independent Poland (1918–1939)

a. Because of the omnipotence of the bureaucracy, the weakness and discreditation of the aristocracy and the even greater weakness of the middle class, the interwar state system in Poland bore the stamp of the intelligentsia. It was the intelligentsia that was then fulfilling the national tasks mentioned in the section referring to the pre-1918 period. During the interwar period, especially after 1926, the ideology of the intelligentsia, especially of its most prominent and active part, the followers of Marshal Piłsudski, became identified with state ideology. In such countries as Poland, a large part of the intelligentsia was employed in the public sector and was closely linked to the state and its apparatus. The fact that this sector was dominated by the

intelligentsia sometimes seems to have been a structurally pathological situation. However, since the intelligentsia is a separate social class only in underdeveloped countries, it depends on the state in all countries in which it exists. The same applies to analogous or similar vocational groups in developed societies. This regularity is disturbed by factors of a state or national character: if an ethnic group has no state, its intelligentsia may be discriminated against in the structures of an alien state apparatus. This is what happened to the Polish intelligentsia during the period of partitions and what affected the intelligentsia of the national minorities in Poland during the interwar period.

b. The intelligentsia's role of leaders and experts became increasingly important at that time, for the state and its economy were being modernised, vocational and social life was becoming ever more professional, and social, economic and state life was becoming increasingly bureaucratic. This is a trend observable all over the world in the last 150 years. The Polish intelligentsia filled all posts in the public sector and this changed its social situation. Compared with the Western states, the private sector was weakly developed in the economy, in services of all kinds and in education. But even in this sector the intelligentsia found greater opportunities for work than it had had before. Owing to this and to the establishment of the first national school system after the partitions, the ranks of the Polish intelligentsia increased considerably⁷.

c. Modernisation is yet another role played by the intelligentsia. The intelligentsia was the medium transferring intellectual, ideological, civilisational and, to a smaller extent, also organisational and technological patterns from the West. I wrote about this elsewhere⁸ but I would like to add a commentary here. This particular function of the intelligentsia was expanded and enriched during the interwar period. Competition on the part of the weakened propertied classes was insignificant. The state played an extremely important role in this respect and it was ruled by the intelligentsia; as a result the intelligentsia's role in moderni-

⁷ I have discussed these questions in my book of 1964 (fn. 4) and in another book, the second edition of which has been published recently: *Polska 1918–1939. Praca–technika–społeczeństwo (Poland 1918–1939. Labour — Technology — Society)*, Warszawa 1999.

⁸ *Polska 1918–1939*, pp. 363–366 and *passim*.

ing the country increased, even in the technological and organisational fields in which it had previously (before 1918) been limited. The interwar period marked the apogee of the intelligentsia's role in every respect.

3. The years 1939–1944

As a result of the defeat suffered by the state dominated by the intelligentsia and its social order in September 1939, the prestige of that class diminished considerably; the intelligentsia partly redeemed its influence during the wartime years, but the activation of other social strata, e.g. the peasantry, weakened its role. What was specific about the activity of the intelligentsia during the war was that it revived the old socio-national role it had played in different conditions, during the partitions; by keeping alive and developing Polish education and carrying out all possible kinds of cultural activity, it again endeavoured to help the nation maintain and preserve its identity; this time it renounced political hegemony but it played an essential role in underground structures, especially at the beginning of the occupation. The other functions of the intelligentsia were necessarily in the shadow and were greatly restricted. An important role was also played by many representatives of this class who found themselves abroad and could with greater or lesser freedom act in fields which were inaccessible to the intelligentsia in Poland. But on the whole, their achievements were not used for the good of Poland and her population, for after 1945 the emigrés were even more isolated from the country than they were during the war.

4. A change of roles and the attempt to transform the intelligentsia under socialism (1944–1989)

In my opinion the party's endeavours to transform the intelligentsia in 1950–1955 ended in failure but the balance sheet of these endeavours is disputable. In any case the Communist party did not succeed in creating what it wanted to create, namely, an intelligentsia completely dependent on it, servicing only the authorities, its administrative and economic agencies, an intelligentsia based on communist models imported from the East and linked ideologically to the regime.

The intelligentsia preserved as much independence as it was possible to have at that time. This was due to the prestige of the patterns which had been created by the "genuine" intelligentsia.

These patterns, which for some time were ineptly vilified by propaganda, turned out to be stronger than the imposed Russian communist patterns which in 1955–1956, when the pressure exerted by the party and the authorities could have yielded the expected results, brought disgrace upon themselves in the place of their origin, in the USSR and the CPSU, to say nothing of Poland. It was not only in this field that traditions and social authorities turned out to be stronger, at least for some time, than the hastily imposed patterns which in the conditions then prevailing had no chance of gaining social acceptance, let alone internalisation.

However, since the roles which the authorities assigned to the intelligentsia before and after 1956 were subsidiary, this denoted a social and ideological degradation of this class in the official ideology and practice, compared with the position it had held before. Since the authorities had at their disposal, to a much greater extent than before the war, measures which determined not only the economic and social structure of society but also the fate of individuals, this planned degradation was, to a large degree, a success not only as regards institutional life, which depended on the party and the state, but also as regards prestige, manners, etc. This was an opposite process to the above-mentioned partial victory of old patterns over the imposed new ones. Both trends existed, for social development always contains incompatible phenomena. This degradation, especially in the material sphere, affected especially the numerous feminised groups employed in education, the health service, etc. and was deeper than the degradation that would have been caused by a modernising social development that transforms and sometimes even eliminates the intelligentsia as a separate class.

And what about the intelligentsia's old roles? The servicing of social life remained and developed as society was being modernised and professionalised. The restrictions and difficulties in performing this role resulted from the intelligentsia's subsidiary role to the party which expected that class to carry out the party's decisions; on the other hand, the progress of professionalisation expanded the intelligentsia's sphere of activity. The point of gravity shifted to work requiring expert knowledge. The non-party intelligentsia shared higher posts with members of the party *nomenklatura*.

After the initial period of social advance and the consequent developments in the life of the intelligentsia, the general opinion was that the rulers were incompetent; this promoted endeavours to reconcile the monopoly of power with professionalism, but these endeavours were, on the whole, unsuccessful. In any case, some categories of posts began to be filled with persons who had some qualifications, although until the end of the regime incompetent *nomenklatura* members could be found in the highest positions. But the growing specialisation made it necessary to entrust some, especially new, expert functions to new specially trained categories of employees. This was so in the technical trades and even in education; besides, the new fields of technology and social life (e.g. new media) required experts; even though these posts were sometimes held by ignorant members of the *nomenklatura*, they were usually filled with educated, though weaker and less talented persons who tried to compensate their deficiencies by political influence; this negative selection has been described by I. Berend in his book about the countries of East-Central Europe after 1944⁹. But are such practices non-existent nowadays?

The intelligentsia could still perform the function of transferring civilisational and cultural patterns, but only to a limited extent. The authorities, which were at first slavishly, and then more loosely and less ostentatiously, dependent on Moscow and on the internal conditions in the Soviet bloc, later assumed responsibility for determining priorities in the country and for taking decisions on technological and economic patterns connected with production, administration and defence. All that remained for the intelligentsia to do was to transfer new patterns of consumption, of private life and high culture, for these fields were less dependent on the Communist party and the State. But after some time this function, too, was reduced, for the broad masses gained an ever wider access to foreign patterns through the media (particularly important was the spread of television) and foreign travels, which became quite frequent during the last few decades of the regime. These gradually developing nuclei led to the present situation where there is no need for a middleman, especially an intellectual, to transfer foreign patterns.

⁹ I. T. Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944–1993. Detour from the periphery to the periphery*, Cambridge 1996, see the review in "Acta Polonica Historica", vol. 82, 2000.

Preservation of the values of national culture, creation of new values and leadership in the nation's life are the national function of the intelligentsia. It is disputable whether the intelligentsia performed this function during that period. The authorities did not foresee this role for the intelligentsia which was only to service the party, but after the initial transition period, the intelligentsia adopted, to some extent, the official ideology and under the influence of the events and disturbances of 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976, gave in, recognising the priority of the working class and the peasantry. After some time, some intellectuals endeavoured to perform the national function (the letter signed by 34 intellectuals in 1964 was one of the earliest manifestations of this aspiration).

It should be pointed out that the intellectuals (usually identified with creative intelligentsia, but I will not delve into definitions here)¹⁰, set up a separate specific quasi-class which vicariously took over the demands and aspirations of the intelligentsia. This was by no means strange for the intellectuals were a much more numerous group than they were before the war. While before the war Poland had only hundreds of writers and scholars, she now had thousands and even tens of thousands. New categories, e.g. journalists and persons employed in the new media, scientific workers of various kinds and different ranks began to claim, more or less convincingly, that they were intellectuals engaged in creative work. The system that then existed made it impossible for the intelligentsia in the broad sense of the word to organise itself and carry on unhampered activity, but the intellectuals had their own largely autonomous organisations and the authorities tried not to pick a quarrel with them; they recognised (perhaps even overestimated) the intellectuals' political importance and were afraid of negative publicity should they resort to repression. The material situation of the intellectuals was as a rule much better than that of the broad strata of the intelligentsia, post-intelligentsia would perhaps be a better word. Moreover, it was the intellectuals who were awarded the scholarships, training possibilities and prizes which in later years began to flow in streams into Poland from the West, and it was the intellectuals whom the Western papers and institutions supported in their conflicts with the party.

¹⁰ See my article on intellectuals in *Encyklopedia Socjologii*, vol. I, Warszawa 1998, pp. 334–337.

As time went on and the regime was becoming increasingly weak ideologically, and later, especially after 1980, as its disintegration was evident — which induced the authorities to react only to direct political attacks — more and more intellectuals or persons believing they belonged to that group took up political work in the opposition, not always caring whether their new attitudes and enunciations were in accord with what they had said not long ago.

These transformations were also due to other factors which I cannot discuss here in detail, the most important being the events of 1968. In any case, the political change which occurred in 1980–1989 was accomplished with a moderate participation of the intelligentsia and a significant participation of the intellectuals.

Disintegration of the intelligentsia through the spread of education and brain work is a result of world-wide processes of social development which lead to a rise of the average level of the population's education and, in the developed countries, to the popularisation of secondary and even higher education of the first degree (bachelor's degree, licentiate) and to a broad professionalisation and even "academisation" of all vocational activities. For a long time after 1945 these phenomena were no less noticeable in Poland than they were in other countries. Later on, as the system and especially the educational apparatus degenerated, an increasingly evident and widening gap began to separate Poland from the developed countries, for the level of schools and of the population's education ceased to rise in Poland.

Apart from these processes, there was also a degradation and social discreditation of brain workers, who began to be regarded as bureaucratic officials; another phenomenon was a material degradation of the intelligentsia and mental workers, compared with the previous historical period (before 1939); moreover, the intelligentsia disintegrated because of its social heterogeneity and because of the increase in the number and participation of intelligentsia or post-intelligentsia groups in the whole of society; this deprived it of its elitist status.

An important role was also played by the fact that individual milieux and branches, e.g. mining, the iron and steel industry, education, science, the armed forces, formed specific corporations; each of these groups had common interests and privileges

which depended on the importance ascribed to them by the political authorities; this looked as if vertical differences had been replaced by horizontal ones.

The intellectuals became an autonomous group which took over the intelligentsia's myth and the respective phraseology. They often call themselves, and are called, intelligentsia, as in the West; this may denote modernisation, in any case terminological modernisation, an adoption of Western structures.

5. The intelligentsia and the "transformation"

What happens to the intelligentsia in a society undergoing the process of transformation? Can the intelligentsia be distinguished in the present social landscape and does it play a special role? An overwhelming majority of the circles which had once constituted the intelligentsia now belongs to the public sector and shares its lot, which as a rule is not very favourable, for it denotes insecurity, dismissals from work, politicisation (now driven by different political parties and not by mono-party, as before) and a successive material degradation. Only some members of the intelligentsia have ventured to make business their career; another part is linked to the ruling élite. Let us add that much depends on the generation an individual belongs to. Adaptation difficulties are naturally much more common in the middle and old generations. As has been shown in many studies, there is no community spirit between these different groups.

The fate and position of the intellectuals: After the change of the political system the intellectuals were stranded in the middle of fervent prayers they were saying to the new half-educated leaders, whose authentic support and welcome decoration they had been for some time.

The intellectuals, now a quasi-class, do not perform any of the functions the intelligentsia had once performed. They had previously constituted the core of the intelligentsia which was their base at some moments. If we assume that the intelligentsia is now represented only by the intellectuals, we must come to the conclusion that this class no longer exists in Poland in the old sense of the word.

The emergence of the middle class and the intelligentsia: This is a question which is being disputed. Many observers doubt whether a middle class in Western denotation of the term is in

the making in Poland. Some circles which previously belonged to the intelligentsia take part in, or service, economic activity (lawyers) or participate in political activity, which is now remunerated by authentic money, not by revocable appreciation or allocation of some commodities, as had been the case under the previous system. But most of the groups previously called intelligentsia are outside the middle class. Generational differences exist in this respect too.

The middle class holds a hierarchically medium position, higher than the average one, also as regards living standards. It should however be remembered that what is average in Poland is not average in the rich western societies. As regards living standards, the middle class in Poland is far more distant from the majority of society than is the case in the West. For the middle class is not simply a class of medium prosperity in a given society but a certain standard which can easily be established by a comparison with neighbouring countries whose level the élites in countries similar to Poland are trying to reach.

A remark comes to mind in connection with this question and with a new book by Peter G l o t z, editor of the Frankfurt monthly "Die neue Gesellschaft" (close to the SPD)¹¹. Peter Glotz, who is competent in these matters, calls the Western society a *Zwei Drittel Gesellschaft*, that is, a two-thirds society in which two-thirds of the inhabitants keep pace with social acceleration but one-third should be the target of social policy and social therapy. But does not the former group constitute a third, a quarter, or even a fifth of society in countries such as Poland? This of course changes the character of the whole structure, denoting, as it does, a qualitative, not only a quantitative difference.

The list of Polish wages and salaries published in instalments in a liberal daily "Gazeta Wyborcza" does not single the intelligentsia out, in any case not as regards incomes, that is living standards, and these, to a large extent, define lifestyle. Professions typical of the intelligentsia are scattered and mixed with others in the list in a sea of professions and positions of various kinds, the only exception being probably the highest category of incomes reserved for foreign directors and the most illustrious sportsmen. The pre-war situation when the intelligentsia occupied a definite rung in the hierarchy of incomes has no counterpart today.

¹¹ P. G l o t z, *Die beschleunigte Gesellschaft. Kulturkämpfe im digitalen Kapitalismus*, Reinbek 1999 (Kindler Verlag).

Has anything remained of the old intelligentsia? What are its prospects? Which of its previous roles (e.g. transfer of patterns) have survived and which have disappeared?

Some enthusiasts of liberal society think that this is the end of the evolution, liberal society being its highest stage. This would denote the end of the intelligentsia as a separate class, there being no place for it in the Western model of society. Although social transformations cannot be expected to end, even though we cannot yet guess what direction they will take, the intelligentsia in the old sense of the word is losing its place in society, and the intellectuals, who have inherited its claims, are not playing any special role either. Future social conflicts, which are unavoidable, will take place according to some dividing lines which we do not yet know and which in Poland may be different from those in the West.

The actual political evolution in Poland can serve as a gloss. The Freedom Union (*Unia Wolności*), which at first was a party of the intelligentsia, is becoming a party of managers. I have no intention of going into political considerations, all I want to do is to learn something about social evolution from the development of political parties. The intelligentsia was definitely the base of the Freedom Union, but what is interesting is the Union's evolution which has been taking place for some time. If this is an evolution from a party of the intelligentsia to one of a liberal-managerial type, this would be an indirect, additional indication for a social researcher that the intelligentsia as a class is but a memory today, that it is a tradition of some circles rather than a real social formation.

Who is now performing the functions which have constituted the social task of the intelligentsia during the last two hundred years? The servicing of social life as leaders and experts was originally one of the intelligentsia's main functions, if not the primary one. Today the differences between the public sector and the economic sector are so great that each has its own, completely different group of experts. In the economic sector control is in the hands of businessmen. Business people aspire to reach a position similar to that held by the middle class in Western societies, a class with which they are in steady contact; they have no ambition to be part of a class similar to the intelligentsia. The lower business strata are a more or less modernised version of the petty bour-

geoisie; they decidedly do not resemble the intelligentsia. The public sector will probably shrink as a result of the privatisation of the economy and services; this means that the intelligentsia-resembling categories forming part of it will shrink too.

In these conditions the modernisation of the country is carried out by circles which have nothing in common with the traditional intelligentsia. It is politicians, senior political and economic officials and business circles that determine new directions of development. New circles are now transferring the latest patterns of individual life, an important role in this respect being played by the younger generation, which has gone beyond the frame set by the old intelligentsia, even when it is derived from its ranks. A modern society, also in Poland, a society which constitutes the clientele of modern media and which tries to be in active internet contact with the world, has no special need for a class that transfers patterns and new opinions, for web surfers learn about these things earlier than a decisive majority of the old intelligentsia. Circles typical of the intelligentsia have for long ceased to perform the function of national leadership; in a democratic system they can at best be clients of various political directions in which post-intelligentsia groups have neither a majority nor predominance.

Since this text concerns the roles of the intelligentsia, I could ignore the fate of post-intelligentsia groups or circles. Let me but say that in my opinion, the predominant part of the groups which have not found a place in the modern 21st century middle class belongs to the category of white-collar workers and, to a smaller degree, to respective categories of the petty bourgeoisie. But this is a subject for a further discussion.

If these remarks turn out to be truthful, the intelligentsia as a class will in the future be a subject for historical research. It will not constitute a part of contemporary society. But as usual, surprises cannot be ruled out.

(Translated by Janina Dorosz)