

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

Polish Sociological Review Recommends:



Dyskursy ubóstwa i wykluczenia społecznego

**[Discourses on Poverty
and Social Exclusion]**

**Edited by
Elżbieta Tarkowska**

Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2013, pp. 456

ISBN 987-83-7683-059-9

From the Editor:

Contemporary sociologists are not only concerned with the most evocative and moving aspects of poverty such as extreme destitution, homelessness, and starvation, difficulties and coping mechanisms of people struggling with insufficient basic means of survival. They also stress the importance of the relational, symbolic, and subjective dimensions of poverty as a complex phenomenon. The great Polish émigré sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has shown that the humiliation suffered by the poor today is the most important factor characterizing their position. It is equivalent to the exploitation that has played such a crucial role in past centuries and systems. Numerous researchers and experts on various aspects of poverty—including Oscar Lewis, Pierre Bourdieu, Father Józef Wrzesiński, Ruth Lister and Bronisław Geremek—point out that it is essential for scholars to understand the conditions experienced by the poor and the excluded. They call for us to institutions rooted in a world that has not experienced poverty.

These ideas were the base of the book *Dyskursy ubóstwa i wykluczenia społecznego* [Discourse on Poverty and Social Exclusion] edited by Elżbieta Tarkowska. It presents a number of studies conducted in 2011 by a team of young scholars under the guidance of Elżbieta Tarkowska as part of a research project, financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in Poland. The project aims to analyze how the poor are perceived and treated, how poverty is depicted in Polish academic and public discourse, in chosen media, in popular culture, in the practices of educational institutions and social welfare centres, as well as in the activities of non-governmental charities. The advanced hypotheses concern the presence or absence of poverty as a subject in particular discourses, opportunistic interest in this subject when linked to sensational events in the news, the politicization and instrumental treatment of poverty; and the presence or absence of stereotypical and/or negative depictions of poverty in specific discourses containing elements stigmatizing the poor.

To order: <http://www.ifispan.waw.pl/wydawnictwa/>

Henryk Domański

Polska klasa średnia
[Polish Middle Class]

**Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe
 Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2012, pp. 181.**

ISBN 978-83-231-2969-1



From the Author:

Formation of “new classes” in Poland may serve as some yardstick of advancement on the route to the market society. Analyses presented in this book take processes of ‘formation of the middle class’ as such a kind of yardstick. Based on systematic analysis of data from national samples, author seeks to determine four questions. First, which categories in Poland are candidates to transform into middle class—Domański responds that these are higher managers, intelligentsia and owners who mostly meet criteria of the Western middle class with respect to level of education, occupational position and incomes. The second thesis says that since the beginning of the 1990s Poland systematically (although in a slow pace) moved forward on this route which results mainly in modernisation of occupational structure, growing consumption and standard of life. In the third point he will indicate that some orientations and values—like self-reliance—commonly attributed to the middle class, not necessarily followed changes in structural underpinnings of market society. What changed in orientations seemed to be enforced by objective requirements and constraints. Finally, last point refers to self-evident prognosis: the Polish middle class will emerge not as an exact copy but as a modified version of the Western original affected by specific economic context and cultural tradition.

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