

## OBITUARY

### WŁODZIMIERZ WESOŁOWSKI (1929–2020)

Włodzimierz Wesołowski was born on November 29, 1929, a teacher's son, in the village of Boryslawice in the Kalisz district, Poland. This is where he lived for the first ten years of his life before moving to large cities. In Łódź he completed his secondary education and started his education as a social scientist at the University of Łódź, the College of Social Sciences. In later years, he transferred to the Department of Philosophy at the University of Warsaw, where in 1954, he graduated with an M.A. degree in Philosophy. Right after graduation, he started his ten-years work at the University of Warsaw. In 1961, he defended his doctoral dissertation devoted to analyzing social stratification theories; three years later, he presented the monograph on social classes and power as his Habilitationsschrift.

In 1964, Wesołowski was named Chair of General Sociology at the Institute of Sociology of the University of Łódź, where he organized an effective team of young social scientists. With this team, he conducted a study on social stratification in large cities, specifically in Łódź, Szczecin, and Koszalin. This study produced extensive knowledge about differences among socio-occupational groups concerning education, income and its components, possession of durable goods, housing conditions, ways of spending leisure time, social-class patterns of marriage and friendship, types and rates of social mobility, and, finally, psychological aspects of the status attainment process, and identification with social classes. The major article from this study was published in the volume edited by J. Jackson (*Sociological Studies I: Social Stratification*, CUP, 1968).

In 1968, Wesołowski returned to the University of Warsaw and worked there till 1982. Simultaneously, he worked at other institutions, including the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences (IFiS PAN), with which he was affiliated to the last days of his life. He was Deputy Director of the Institute for Fundamental Problems of Marxism-Leninism (1974–1980), Senior Research Scholar at the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health (1980–1982), and President of the Polish Sociological Association (2002–2005). He will be remembered as an excellent teacher in Poland (University of Łódź, University of Warsaw, Collegium Civitas, and Graduate School of Social Research at IFiS PAN), and abroad (Central European University, in particular).

Wesołowski holds a renowned position in the international sociological community. Indeed, the publication of several of his significant works in English has been a crucial contributing factor. At the end of the 1970s, he, together with Kazimierz M. Słomczyński, presented a synthetic theoretical framework of social structure in Poland, also reviewing the main empirical results (*Investigation on Class Structure and Social Stratification in*

*Poland, 1945–1975*, IFiS PAN, 1977). His book *Classes, Strata, and Power* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976) became a well-received contribution to the discussion on the changes in contemporary societies' social structure. He co-authored, with Bogdan W. Mach, *Social Mobility and Social Structure* (Routledge, 1986), favorably reviewed in the leading sociological journals. Two volumes were devoted to the Polish-Finish comparative studies: one co-edited with Erick Allardt *Social Structure and Change: Finland and Poland. Comparative Perspective* (PWN 1980), and the second, co-edited with Matti Alestalo, Erick Allardt, and Andrzej Rychard, *The Transformation of Europe: Social Conditions and Consequences* (IFiS Publishers, 1994). Together with John Higley and Jan Pakulski, Wesołowski co-edited *Post-Communist Elites and Democracy in Eastern Europe* (Macmillan, 1998), containing new and up-to-date studies written by specialists from around the world.

Wesołowski's papers appeared in journals and edited volumes in Russia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Portugal, the United States, Japan, and other countries. He published in *American Sociological Review*, *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, *International Sociology*, *International Journal Sociology*, *Current Sociological Perspectives*, *Polish Sociological Review*, and several other journals.

In 1970, during the International Sociological Congress in Varna, Bulgaria, Wesołowski was a signatory of the renewal of the Research Committee on Social Stratification (RC28) of the International Sociological Association. Four years later, he organized a conference of the RC28 Committee in Warsaw. When, 25 years later, the RC28 Committee met again in Warsaw, many attendees praised Wesołowski for organizing the 1974 conference, which had proved to be one of the most successful meetings of the RC28 Committee.

Wesołowski was a member of Academia Europaea, and Honorary Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was awarded the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa* of the University of Helsinki.

His contribution to sociology will last for generations.

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