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## Introduction

You are invited to read the exceptional manuscripts which are the review of Polish contemporary psychology in its period of flourish.

The very beginning of Polish scientific psychology was connected with the establishment of the first Polish laboratory of experimental psychology at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow in 1903 by Władysław Heinrich. Quickly after, two other important laboratories were founded: in Lvov and in Warsaw. Since that time three schools of psychology has had considerable impact on development of philosophy, science, logic and psychology. Many students who graduated Warsaw-Lvov University (M. Kreutz, W. Witwicki, S. Błachowski, A. Lewicki and T. Tomaszewski) have substantially influenced the image of contemporary Polish psychology (after Strelau & Doliński, 2008).

Polish psychology is associated with the universities. We will present the major units that educate psychologists on the MA degree. Each of the largest centers have their

specialization areas which will be briefly described (after Brzezinski & Strelau, 2005). The *Faculty of Psychology (Warsaw University)* gave birth to the first academic textbook on psychology (by Witwicki). This is the place with the largest number of PhD academic lecturers in Poland. The Faculty publishes a journal *Psychology of Language and Communication* (editor-in-chief: B. Bokus). The main scientific interest at the Faculty of Psychology is focused on psychology of personality, individual differences, developmental psycholinguistics, psychophysiology, behavioral genetics, neuropsychology, social psychology, environmental psychology, cognitive psychology, clinical psychology. *The Institute of Psychology within Polish Academy of Science in Warsaw* is mainly the scientific centre. The research activity has been focused on social psychology, personality and motivation psychology, political psychology, cultural psychology, economic psychology, psychology of language and communication, cognitive psychology. *The Warsaw School of Social Sciences and Humanities* was the first non-public college whose aim was to educate psychologists. Employing about 50 full and associate professors makes the Warsaw Faculty the largest psychological center in Poland. It gathers the most prominent Polish scientists whose research is focused on broad areas: social psychology, political psychology, cognitive psychology, individual differences and especially the theories of temperament, economic psychology, clinical psychology, cross-cultural psychology, health psychology, comparative and evolutionary psychology, educational psychology. Nowadays, the WSSSH has five Faculties which are located in Warsaw (with Andrzej Elias as a president), Wrocław (with Dariusz Dolinski as a dean), Sopot (with Bogdan Wojciszke as a dean), Katowice (with Katarzyna Popiołek as a dean) and Poznań (with Janusz Romul as a dean).

*The Institute of Psychology at the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznań)* has strong clinical and health psychology on the one hand and human development and socialization traditions on the other. There are also intensive research on methodology of psychological

research, statistical applications, psychometrics and psychological diagnosis. The Institute of Psychology in Poznań issues two psychological journals: *Czasopismo Psychologiczne* (*The Psychological Journal* with A. Bańka as an editor) and *Poznańskie Studia z Filozofii Humanistyki* (*Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Humanities* with J. Brzeziński and L. Nowak as editors). *The Institute of Psychology at the Jagiellonian University* staff specializes at cognitive psychology, intelligence and creativity, experimental psychology, cognitive neuroscience, clinical and health psychology, stress, developmental psychology, psychology of management. *The Institute of Psychology at the Catholic University of Lublin* specializes especially in experimental psychology and personality psychology. The other fields of research are concentrated on the psychology of religion, political psychology, clinical psychology of children and adults, psychology of emotions and motivation, psychological diagnosis. This unit publishes the *Journal of Mental Changes* (A. Biela as an editor), *Przegląd Psychologiczny* (*The Review of Psychology*, with A. Sękowski as an editor) – journal with the longest tradition in Poland and *Roczniki Psychologiczne* (*Psychological Annuals*, W. Prężyna as an editor).

The above presented scientific and educational psychology centers are the most important ones but we should remember there are over 15 public and non-public units (institutes, universities or colleges) educating psychologists (in Warsaw, Wrocław, Opole, Łódź, Katowice, Gdańsk, Toruń, Bydgoszcz). In all of them over 1000 psychologists with scientific degrees of Professor or PhD title are employed. Most of them are associated in scientific or professional organizations both Polish (such as Polish Psychological Association) and international. These centers publish numerous scientific journals among which the most important are *Czasopismo Psychologiczne* (*The Psychological Journal*), *Journal of Mental Changes*, *Kolokwia Psychologiczne* (*Psychological Colloquies*), *Polish Psychological*

*Bulletin, Przegląd Psychologiczny, Psychology of Language and Communication, Studia Psychologiczne (Psychological Studies)*. Moreover Polish psychologists are members of editorial boards of many of international journals. There have been organized numerous international conferences e.g. of the European Association of Personality Psychology (Gdańsk, 1985; Cracow, 2000), the International Society for Research of Individual Differences (Warsaw, 1995), The European Association of History of Behavioral and Social Sciences (Poznań, 1993), the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology (Pultusk, 2000) and many others.

This Special Issue of the Journal of Russian and East European Psychology is devoted to present articles of the most prominent Polish psychologists representing various areas of psychology.

Polish psychology owns its achievements to rapid development of cognitive psychology and experimental studies which began in 1960's. The pioneers of the first psychological theories and research were among others those scientists whose articles can be found in this issue: Maria Jarymowicz and Wiesław Łukaszewski. These great Polish scientists together with Dariusz Doliński, and Bogdan Zawadzki whose work is presented here have introduced new motives into Polish psychology making it more international.

The contemporary research within Polish psychology is concentrated mainly on two fields: social psychology and the psychology of individual differences. One of the invited articles represents the core of Polish social psychology (Dariusz Dolinski) and one embodies one of the most important theories of Polish psychology of individual differences (Bogdan Zawadzki). The invited scientists will be presented now.

Professor Maria Jarymowicz has been interested in the psychology of self, individual identity. Together with her colleagues from the Warsaw University she proposed theories of identity, taking into account the variety of accompanying processes. Professor Jarymowicz in her books and articles widens the topic of me-others differentiation in the context of the self development. She analyses the consequences of values system, agency and self-identifying processes. In her empirical research she focuses on the problem of agency in the field of affective versus reflexive processes.

In the article presented here Maria Jarymowicz describes the categorization of the negative and the positive emotions, referring to different automatic and reflective sources (homeostatic needs, hedonic preferences, visions of the ideal Self, and the axiological concepts of good and evil). A concept of emotions generation is proposed: states, objects or phenomena may be evaluated differently as positive or negative according to several categories. The article is a theoretical review of broad number of concepts. The approach to agency is described from various perspectives taking into account traditional and modern theories.

Professor Wiesław Łukaszewski is the precursor of the first in Poland cognitive concept of personality. In his works he concentrates on the subject of origins and structure of stereotypes and their modification and the process of motivation. His recent scientific interests are connected with the processes of perseverance in performing tasks, self-regulation and terror management theory.

The article by Wiesław Łukaszewski and Ewa Jarczewska-Gerc takes up the subject of factors improving perseverance. They pay attention to mental visualizations (simulating of the process of performing a task / simulating ones' traits) which may increase the control over situations. In the series of six studies it has been indicated how mental simulations works (the

process of visualizing the future, and then regulating behavior and emotions in order to make the simulated future true). The obtained results and implications go far beyond the data about mental simulations gathered till now. Moreover, this empirical article may have tremendously important influence on the practice of educating people to work more efficiently.

Professor Bogdan Zawadzki has been interested in his scientific work in the psychology of individual differences and was diagnosing personality traits. In the cooperation with Professor Jan Strelau (the core of Polish psychology) he is the author of the Regulative Theory of Temperament. They are broadly known for creating the temperament questionnaire Formal Characteristics of Behavior – Temperament Inventory and the questionnaire measuring post-traumatic stress disorder. Professor Zawadzki's recent research is focused on the relation of temperament features and situations of extreme stress.

The present article written with Magdalena Kaczmarek contents the assumption that emotional reactivity and exposure to trauma are significant predictors of PTSD symptoms. In the series of two studies motor vehicle accidents survivors were the participants. It was shown that these MVA who are more emotionally reactive develop more intensive PTSD symptoms when confronted with more severe and stressful experience. As proved in the other authors' articles, temperament plays a regulative role of the stimulating and temporal value of situations and behaviour, according to the individual-specific temperamental traits. This role is especially evident in difficult situations and extreme behaviours.

Professor Dariusz Dolinski, Wiesław Łukaszewski's student, is the dean of The Warsaw School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Faculty in Wrocław and the editor of *Polish Psychological Bulletin*. He is a researcher who is world known of conducting field experimental studies on social influence techniques. He specialises in social influence and

psychology of advertisement. His research constitutes the very core of Polish social psychology.

The article presented here is a review of research on the see-saw technique. Dariusz Doliński, as the co-author of this social influence technique, describes the pioneer studies and the series of research verifying the mechanism underlying the effectiveness of this strategy.

We would like to thank the author of each of the article to make the contribution to prepare the Special Issue of the Russian and East European Psychology. We hope the Reader will find this review of Polish psychology interesting and will stay willing to enlarge his knowledge on the particular topics.

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