

the history of Armenian community in the United States.

Another example is interview with Alice Shipley (b. 1904), altogether almost 34 minutes long, conducted in April 1985 in Arizona. Sitting behind her typewriter, she narrates her first-hand account of the 1915 Armenian genocide. Starting with incarceration and executions of Armenian intelligence, property and livestock seizures, she goes on to describe how her family had been aided by a civilian aid giver. They went to an American hospital and took refuge there. "Somebody snitched on us and ... the Turks came after us," says Alice. "The American chancellor took us to his chancelate, where we remained for three days. His wife wouldn't let us sleep in the house, we had to sleep out in the yard." Her father worked for the British government, and also the fact that their family had "miraculously" stayed together all the time led to some bad faith from other people. "When the Turks began to get after my older brothers and taking them to jail, then we decided it was time for us to leave the country. So we dressed in Kurdish beggar outfits ... and walked out during the midnight of August 2nd, 1916." On a photograph shown to the camera, the family is pictured in the fake beggar's clothes. They arrived in Russia via Azerbaijan almost three months later. But their journey did not end there, the family migrated to Great Britain and ultimately to the United States of America. Alice Shipley also published a book about her experiences in 1983, titled *We Walked, Then Ran*.

As we can see from these two examples, the new Armenian collection is a variable and valuable addition to the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive. It extends its scope along the lines of the USC SF's determination in documenting genocides through the survivors' and witnesses' spoken accounts. But, once we compare the collection of Armenian interviews to the other sections of VHA, it also illustrates the different ways of speaking about the past for different purposes, and the fact that the past is never fully "settled", but rather interactionally negotiated again and again in various contexts. More explicitly than in the case of oral history recordings, the documentary interviewing

help to unpack the history-talk as a collaborative production. There is much to be gained from secondary and comparative analysis of the interviews, which is the work that is now just about to commence. Researchers, scholars, students and any interested members of public can access the Visual History Archive, along with other oral history resources, in the Malach Center for Visual History at the Charles University in Prague (<http://www.malach-centrum.cz>), but also at more than 40 other access points across the world. Part of the testimonies is also available at Visual History Archive Online (<http://vhaonline.usc.edu>).

Jakub Mlynář

**Conference "What's Next for Democratic Capitalism? Social and Systemic Problems of Central European Democracies",
7.– 8. 11. 2014**

At the beginning of November 2014 Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw became an extraordinary place where tens of European researchers from various disciplines – that at the long-term make efforts to understand various aspects of capitalist structures established in East and Central Europe in the last twenty five years – had an opportunity to present their findings and discuss them with their colleagues. Put it more specifically, the aim of conference organizers "What's Next for Democratic Capitalism? Social and Systemic Problems of Central European Democracies" was to determine obstacles of democracy development and introduction of market economy, to comment upon structural development specificities of individual states in East and Central Europe, to discuss issues of post-communist capitalist development through the perspective of contradiction between objective mechanisms on the one hand and subjective perceptions of actors on the other, etc. The conference took place in Staszic palace in the capital Warsaw that had been built by Polish duke Stanislaw Staszic; as the result of its destruction during the World War II the palace was rebuilt and currently its architecture contains elements

of Byzantine and neoclassical style. Staszic palace was always meeting place of Polish scientific associations and currently it is the official seat of Polish Academy of Sciences.

Organization of the conference was excellent and information about conference (organizers, programme, contact and accommodation) has been and is still available at the following link: <http://conference2014.psych.pan.pl/>; active as well as passive participants of the conference who paid conference fee were also given Conference Book with abstracts concerning all contributions at the sessions. The conference was originally initiated by organizational committee of researchers working at the Institute of Psychology affiliated at Polish Academy of sciences by public call. The call addressed various international research institutions and it aimed at various research outputs or comparative studies of social, psychological, economic and political processes resulting from systemic transformation concerning establishment of democratic capitalism in various countries of East and Central Europe. The conference was introduced by four keynote speakers (experienced researchers); professor Gian Vittorio Caprara, professor Radoslaw Markowski, professor Steve Reicher a professor Janusz Reykowski.

Topics that were debated in six sections concerned various problems of capitalist structures: (1) Social Problems of Democratization (five contributions); (2) National Identities and Nationalism (five contributions); (3) Market Economy and Market Failure – Yes. Distortions – Not? (six contributions); (4) Mentality and Attitudes Towards Democracy and Capitalism (five contributions); (5) Social and Political Attitudes, Styles of Life and Well-Being (five contributions); (6) Social and Political Problems of Contemporary Capitalism (five contributions).

Fruitful international and interdisciplinary debates structured in above mentioned elementary six sessions were complemented by two specific sessions related to posters placed in the corridors of Staszic Palace: (1) Citizenship in the Times of Changes (ten contributions) and (2) Migrations and Identities (nine contributions). Working method in these two specific sessions

was based on communication between Polish researchers or eventually doctoral students on the one hand and participants of the conference on the other regarding information (research result) placed at the poster. Posters located at various places in the building informed the audience about correlation of civic activity and voting behaviour, the role of self/efficacy and work/related affect in employees, dispositional attribution of company success by the external observers, the relationship between the sense of threat and authoritarian tendencies among university students in Poland, etc.

The most interesting contribution of the first session Social Problems and Democratization was *Politicians and Citizens: Cognitive and Dispositional Predictors of Acceptability of Aggression in Political Life* pronounced by Krystyna Skarzynska (Institute of Psychology, Polish Academy of Sciences). The contribution addressed the issue that there has been increasing discontent about political institutions (parties and politicians). The observed divorce between Polish citizens and politicians (governments) leads to building some negative beliefs about politics, political cynicism and also about acceptability of aggression toward politicians. Krystyna Skarzynska has been looking for relations between all these variables and she has focused on mental structures, such as normative beliefs about appropriateness of aggression in social life, negativistic beliefs about social system (its moral delegitimization) and about politics.

I have also found very interesting the paper read by Elzbieta Wesolowska (Warmia and Mazury University) *Deliberative Democracy and Education. Can We Train People for Conscious Participation?* Analyzing the deliberative debate model as depicted by Amy Gutmann and Denis Thompson, Elzbieta Wesolowska assumes that participation in a deliberation requires numerous intellectual and social skills on the side of the citizens. They should be able to analyze in-depth controversial issues, critically reflect on them, present argumentation and justification for the claims they make, respect opponents and their opinions. First, the cognitive development theories as possible mechanisms of fostering

deliberative skills were presented and second, some empirical data on practical implementation of deliberative debates were summarized.

The second session was dedicated to problems of National Identities and Nationalisms and in this context it is worth to mention speech of Martina Hřebíčková and Sylvie Grof *How We See the Ingroup Sometimes Mirrors How We See Outgroups: Polarization of National Stereotypes in Central Europe*. Authors argued that context of national stereotypes can be influenced by multiple mechanisms, one of them possible being the polarization or mirroring effect; the effect describes a phenomenon whereby participants from one country rate their typical representative's characteristics as opposite to those typical of representatives from another country of reference. The aim of the research question was to examine polarization of national stereotypes in the Central European region and the sample was based on thousands participants from Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovakia (it rated typical representatives of their own and four other countries using National Character Survey).

At the fourth session *Mentality and Attitudes Toward Democracy and Capitalism* issues of social justice are highlighted in the paper elaborated by Velina Topalova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) *Perceived Social Inequality, Trust and the Feeling of Agency*. In her contribution Velina Topalova pointed to the fact that in the framework of social theories socially corrosive effects of the rising social inequalities have been recently discussed. Main consequence of systemic transformation – which has taken place in European post-communist societies – has been changes in social structure: dramatic social differentiation and social inequality and their impact on the people's mentality and quality of life. Survey data from the international comparative project with the participation of 13 Central-Eastern post-communist countries have been processed to reveal the relationship among the perceived level of social inequality, trust and agency. The results revealed significant negative correlation between perceived social inequality and the feeling of influence on public life and political effectiveness.

Through my sociological perspective the sixth session *Social and Political Problems of Contemporary Capitalism* has been the most important one and I was particularly impressed by contribution of Wolfgang Scholl (Humboldt University) named *Power, Corruption and Performance in Eastern and Western Europe*. Based on analyses about restrictive use of power and corruption at the personal and at the organizational level, the contribution extends the analysis onto the national culture level. It can be shown that these relations also hold on the national culture level, where corruption mediates the relationship between national cultural and gross national product in a sample of the eighty five most important nations. Within Europe, there are clear distinctions to be seen between Scandinavian, Germanic and Romanic countries in the West and between middle-European and south-eastern European countries from the former Soviet bloc. These distinctions can be further differentiated in terms of culture, corruption and GNP (based on more detailed analyses, causes and remedies were discussed).

I have also found very elucidating the article written by Katarzyna Lis (Nicolaus Copernicus University) called *Category of "Capture" as an Interpretative Tool of Large Corporation Activities under Conditions of Globalization*. The aim of the presentation was to identify dependencies between actions belonging to the communication and organizational strategies of large corporations and the decisions taken by democratic institutions, which may be taken as positive for corporations, interesting explanations can bring a description of large corporation activities in categories of "capture" of subjects, which have become ambassadors of transnational economic organisms. It is argued that vision of consumer action is the illusion of subjectivity, which in fact is only a response to the conditions created by the companies; the most important for them is the assumption that human behaviour is largely (but not entirely) dependent on external situational factors rather than on internal characteristics of individuals. Corporate actors who are able to regulate real factors that influence the actions of individuals, do it in such a way that these actions are seen by the individual as

an autonomous and independent on external circumstances.

It can be concluded that presentations at above mentioned sessions and conference debates contributed to advancement of interdisciplinary knowledge and particularly highlighted various theoretical aspects of post-communist evolution regarding selected aspects of capitalist structures. Despite the fact that results of data collection by means of various methods

from different countries were also presented, composition of samples, limited number of countries investigated and disparate issues treated do not constitute sufficient epistemological basis to draw general conclusions concerning major developmental tendencies of capitalistic and democratic system in East and Central Europe.

Lucie Cviklová