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Executive Summary:

"National and International Factors
in the Constitution of New Expertise in the Post-communist
system:

The Case of Poland"
by Michael D. Kennedy.

After money, expertise is generally identified as the most important ingredient for making post-communist Europe economically rational and democratic, but the transmission of international expertise to post-communist societies is not a technical matter only. Expertise is the internationally favored mode of intellectuality but it is also the kind of knowledge which makes local intellectuals inferior. The international transmission of expertise is likely to generate a local resistance of intellectuals who promote various forms of intellectuality that continues to privilege their own status, even while they adapt to the new intellectual fashion.

Institutions of higher education are desparately trying to incorporate the new international expertise into their own curricula. New business schools are forming, old academies of economics and universities are designing new business oriented curricula. Those who claim business expertise are the new intellectual elite.

Others are affected more negatively by this international transmission. Engineers, in particular, are declassed in the new system, with the old polytechnic schools struggling to stay afloat. Physicians are stalemated by the elevation of free market ideology in the

government, despite their new dominance within the health sector.

Those who claim expertise in matters not challenged by the new expertise, most notably those in theology, claim not only relevance to post-communist change, but a superior position to international expertise, however. They are the only administrators of higher education which seemed confident about what they had already done in their curriculum.

Many institutions of higher education will likely suffer cuts in their support, despite university protests to the contrary. One principal escape route for these declassed intellectuals will be politics. Ironically, the state will again be the source of employment, except this time for the unemployed intellectuals rather than underemployed workers.

The policy implications are considerable. Disaffected intellectuals are typically sources of anti-systemic political mobilization. If the transition to democratic capitalism is to proceed, more attention should be given to assuring intellectuals a place in the new order. After being accustomed to a status as "moral government of the nation", subordination to crass entrepreneurial politics is likely to provoke considerable resistance.

National and International Factors
in the Constitution of New Expertise
in the Post-Communist System:
The Case of Poland

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When the reconstruction of Eastern Europe is discussed, two things are generally identified as being in short supply but great demand: money, of course, but following that is usually "expertise." But what is this expertise, and how is it to be made and controlled? And how is it related to existing forms of intellectuality?

Along with Ireneusz Bialecki and Barbara Heyns, I have begun research in Poland on this issue. In this presentation, I shall discuss orienting questions and initial findings in this project. My discussion will address the following issues: 1) the connotations of expertise in this context; 2) the relationship of higher education to the making of this expertise; 3) the role of professionals in controlling this expertise; and 4) the relationship of the Polish intelligentsia to this expertise. All of these sub-themes are designed to address, from different angles, the place of new expertise in post-communist Poland, and in particular, the principal conflicts and contradictions surrounding its introduction. My principal thesis is that while the new expertise is identified with international and not national systems, national institutions and actors also claim competence on the basis of their own intrinsic character. Contradiction and conflicts within education, the professions and the intelligentsia can be

understood, in part, in terms of this conflict between international expertise and national character in the estimation of competence.

WHAT IS EXPERTISE?

Expertise is a kind of knowledge, but not all forms of knowledge constitute, or at least connote, expertise. Expertise is an exclusive form of knowledge, often associated with higher education, but is also narrower than that. In addition to being abstract, expertise connotes a practical application which can solve concrete problems. These problems can be practical or scientific.

If it addresses practical matters, the knowledge on which intervention is based must be grounded in abstract theoretical reasoning. The plumber, for instance, has "skills," but we often do not consider him holding "expertise." Although the politician does use abstract knowledge, and perhaps even political theory, her success in politics is generally not based on "expertise," but the expression or representation of power. Expertise requires an explicit connection between the theory and the solution of problems.

The priest holds abstract knowledge, and this knowledge can be devoted to practical matters, like alcoholism or immortality. But the priest also is unlikely to claim expertise, and rather will base his intervention on claims of competence related to faith. Expertise is associated more with science.

Expertise based on science is the dominant form of knowledge in the modern world system. It is designed to allow those who control this expertise to control also the physical and social world. To bring expertise, or this abstract and efficacious knowledge based on

science, to Eastern Europe is an attempt by those who control expertise to influence the outcome of post- communist transition. But who controls expertise?

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EXPERTISE

Higher education is generally associated with the constitution of expertise, but this is not its exclusive, nor was it its original function. Higher education was originally designed to refine character and make better, more cultivated persons, both intellectually and morally. Industrialism changed that, turning curricula and whole institutions toward practical applications, as illustrated in the polytechnic. The communist system of higher education was a variation on this very theme.

The communist system drastically limited or reduced the humanities and law, not to mention theology. Engineering schools were founded and expanded. Medical schools and agricultural schools were separated from universities, making them easier to control, on the one hand, and part of a more specialized education, on the other. Expertise, far more than character, became the system's aim. Obligatory training in the official ideology reinforced this turn toward specialization and non-evaluative expertise, as students sought a less dishonest and more rewarding education. Moral cultivation thus occurred in spite of, and not because of, the official system.

While the communist system thus focused on making expertise, post-communist education finds many gaps in the communist production of expertise. In nearly every school whose representative I interviewed (about 25 schools), there are new interests in and programs devoted to management and business administration. Different groups are forming

management training schools outside the official system too, and many wish to establish full-fledged Masters of Business Administration programs.

Another major initiative is in the teaching of English. English language proficiency does not connote any particular expertise, but it is significant in that it allows the acquisition of expertise which is international. Poland has established new three-year schools designed to rapidly expand the numbers of teachers of English.

This international emphasis on higher education is apparent also in the shift in the liberal arts universities toward a creation of European Studies Programs, designed to facilitate entry to the European Community. But the cultivation of expertise is not limited to international relations.

The liberal arts schools also expressed considerable interest in improving the expertise of their colleagues in analyzing and addressing social problems. One problem which may inspire not only inter-disciplinary cooperation (as at Adam Mickiewicz University) but genuinely inter-institutional cooperation is the ecological crisis. (Poznan is considering just such regional cooperation.) But already, this has led to considerable international cooperation in research, but less so in teaching, especially in comparison to business.

Schools of management have been forming throughout Poland for the last several years, and seem to be the most dynamic sector in higher education. One reason for their dynamism, besides the "need" for this kind of new expertise, is the international support given it, and the credentials that international support lend to the making of expertise.

In the June 20-30, 1991 issue of Gazeta Przemysłowa, for instance, a discussion of Schools of Management in Poland mentioned twelve schools (in Warsaw (4), Katowice (1),

Krakow (1), Poznan (2), Lodz (1), Gdansk (2), and Lublin (1)). Besides indicating their address and attention to small and medium sized firms, each school listed its foreign partners, from schools to consulting firms, as a credential for legitimacy for post-communist management schools.

These programs primarily offer short courses which do not lead to a degree. But many involved in these programs wish to generate just such credentials. Consequently, they cooperate with the reforming older institutions of higher education (in Poznan, with the Academy of Economics; in Gdansk, with the University of Gdansk; and in Lublin, with the Catholic University of Lublin). But the universities and existing institutions have a hard time being the prime leaders in reform, for a complicated set of reasons which I could discuss later in questions.

The national government cannot be faulted. It has introduced a new bill which mandates autonomy. Decisions are made at the lowest possible level. Direct contacts can be made with foreign institutions. Indeed, the reform of curriculum is often designed to assure compatibility with European institutions, to allow more exchange and the creation of a European doctorate.

Autonomy is not complete, of course. Universities receive no tuition from students, have no private endowments, and depend on the state for their funds, the sums of which are not based on enrollments but in large part on faculty rank and numbers. But while there is such dependence, it does not seem to act as a constraint, except insofar as it enables the continuation of what has gone before.

Another source of this inertia comes from the very democracy which the reform movements of the 1980s produced. It does not come from the newly elected leaders of these universities, as they typically represent a new guard of scientifically ambitious, internationally-minded scholars. Rather, in certain settings, the old communist, tenured, full faculty constitute a significant portion of votes, notably in the Faculty Councils. This group prevents certain curricular changes from taking place through the exercise of their democratic rights, hampering in the mind of the new experts the forward march of the university. Hence, many changes must take place on the fringes, in the interstices of the existing university.

There is one important exception to an overall pattern of universities lagging behind the times. The Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) is not moving any faster toward the creation of a business school, but KUL is ahead because it sees no need for reform. According to its prorector, its educational system and curricula are fine. Indeed, its persistence through communism enabled, he said, the salvation of Poland. (It provided 40,000 graduates to Poland. Even now, its professors include the Minister of Justice, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and other prominent persons.) In this remarkable confidence, we can see the elevation of character over expertise. Indeed, national character seems to be the only intellectual foundation for challenging intellectual expertise.

When Pope John Paul II visited Poland in the summer of 1991, he ridiculed the idea of Poland returning to Europe. Poland, he said, has been in the middle of Europe for one thousand years. And thus, its spirituality assures its civilization. By contrast, materialism

and consumerism are that Europe's antagonists. We might, by extension, say that the Pope wished to subordinate expertise to a morality based outside expertise. For Poland, that morality can be found in the character produced by the union of church and nation. This is a powerful combination, but expertise, with the power of western states and capital behind it, is also quite powerful.

In sum, the construction of new expertise in higher education finds two opponents: the old "experts," or old communists, who resist change. With the promotion of new experts, this resistance in the universities and bureaucracies will fade. A more difficult question is whether international expertise will transform national character, or vice-versa.

So, the answer to the question of who controls expertise in higher education can be framed properly only when we establish the place of expertise in higher education proper. The cultivation of character and morality might be a more important issue on some agendas in the reconstruction of higher education in post-communist Poland. Having the right people, rather than the right competences, may become a dominant theme.

CLASS, STATE AND PROFESSIONAL CONFLICTS OVER THE CONTROL OF EXPERTISE

Professional associations are not about morality, but rather the self- organization of experts and control of their expertise. By focusing on professions rather than education, per se, we might understand better the conflicts and contradictions surrounding expertise's expansion in Eastern Europe. Is it, for instance, mainly a conflict among professions, as Abbott (1988) suggests? Or is it more of a conflict between classes, as Derber et al. (1990)

have recently argued? Or is it a continuation of a theme I have argued about Poland in 1980-81, one of a conflict between civil society and the state? I should like to argue that once again, among some physicians and engineers, the state-civil society model is useful. Abbott's model is more appropriate for considering business expertise and their contest for control over managerial expertise in opposition to engineers. Class analysis of expertise is not really appropriate, unless we attach it to other bases of power and the intelligentsia itself.

Physicians

If we consider expertise in post-communist medical care, we shall find a system in which professionals have increased their power considerably, at the state's expense. Where previously the state controlled professional associations, licensing and sanctions, now this power has returned to the profession (in the guise of a democratically elected Izba Lekarska). But the capacity of doctors to provide expert medical care has not improved.

Medical research, hospital equipment and other infrastructural bases of professional power are woefully inadequate. In this sense, Polish post-communist health care cannot compete with Western expertise. But Western expertise is not in competition with Polish physicians for the health care market. Unlike some other professions, no Western expert seriously challenges Polish expertise; indeed, international efforts even seek to augment that medical expertise with no apparent tangible gain for those Polish emigres who collaborate with native Poles. Internationalized expertise is brought to Poland through the ties of an expatriate national community. But there is a serious threat to Polish medical expertise otherwise.

Because physicians are still dependent on the state and not yet on a wealthy clientele or private philanthropic associations, physicians' expertise is being dragged down by the meager resources provided by that state. Conflicts have emerged on this basis in recent months, as doctors and other health care personnel have protested against the state's inattention to health care reform.

The conflict over expertise in health care is thus not based on a conflict between international and national bases for the estimation of competence. Or at least not at the surface, for there, the conflict remains between state and civil society, with a civil society that extends beyond state borders to include international associations of physicians. The state is, however, international too, as its principal concerns derive from facilitating the transition to a rational capitalist economy, a transition which will sacrifice short term, if not long term, medical needs.

Engineers

The professional project of engineers has never been successful, especially in comparison to physicians. But contemporary Polish engineers are in an even less enviable position than engineers have been previously.

As markets are opened and Western goods and technologies become available, Polish engineering competence becomes even more inadequate. Too many engineers were produced in the old system, and that means that there is an even greater surplus of engineers in post-communism. Their position is undermined still further as the positions for which they were

once qualified, research and management, are now taken by others: Western-trained engineers and business administration experts.

The increasing irrelevance or even obsolescence of Polish engineering expertise, as it currently exists at least, makes this plurality of the Polish intelligentsia ideal candidates for becoming the new kind of organic intellectual for post-communism's dispossessed working classes. Ironic, isn't it: the intellectual symbolizing modernity may be obliged to take the post-modern mantle to retain relevance in post-communism. He may be obliged to represent those whom the system does not incorporate.

"Businessmen"

Business expertise seems to be hegemonic in the introduction of new expertise. The schools, hospitals, state and of course private enterprise all want to know how to "manage" scientifically, how to market "scientifically." Many schools of higher education are introducing such courses, and business schools are the best bet in joint ventures in education. But business expertise depends little, typically, on credentialing. In Polish post-communism, however, it stands a good chance, even with several things against it.

First, business expertise can be acquired, and validated, through commercial success, on the job. Second, businessmen from the West, without academic credentials, are transmitting their expertise. Third, the principal function of business schools in Poland today is to provide short-term business expertise, rather than degrees and credentials. And fourth, the perceived need for this expertise is far greater than schools can provide in credentialed

form. Still, post-communism offers business professionals and professors the best chance they have ever had.

The credentialing of business expertise is advantaged in four ways:

1) in contrast to the West, business schools are not emerging after the establishment of a bourgeois class, but alongside it; 2) these schools have the aid of international business schools, whose credentials as established actors among the world bourgeoisie have more legitimacy than local emergent bourgeois classes; 3) the uncertainty of method, but the certainty of direction, in transition makes expertise in business the most desired form of knowledge, but also therefore the most open to fraudulent representation, thus increasing the need for regulation, which credentials allow; and 4) the dominant domestic class, the intelligentsia, faces extinction or at least declassing unless it assures the state and the university a prominent place in the formation of the domestic bourgeoisie. And the only legitimation strategy for that is, once again, to lead, and defend the nation.

In sum, international and national factors in the making of expertise are important when considering the professions, but at a deeper level only. On the surface, physicians are in conflict with the state, Polish engineers are embattled by both Western experts and domestic businessmen, and domestic businessmen are being supported by international expertise. But clearly, the issue in this context remains: who will control, and with what principle, the construction of the new expertise regulating post-communism. I believe the contest is now between international capital's representatives, and the nation's representatives. Unfortunately, for analytical purposes, the conflict has not taken on a

simultaneously dichotomous form. Because definitions of the "nation" are at stake, this is reflected in the contest among intellectuals for the state. Still, however, the intellectuals must fight over the state, for that is their only hope for retaining their class identity. The intelligentsia must constitute the state to remain a class.

EXPERTISE VS. INTELLECTUALS: STATE SANCTUARY?

When we think of sanctuary, we normally think of the Church. The Church can be a sanctuary for many beliefs, and in the modern world, it can be a safeguard for one form of intellectuality against the demands of expertise. Church intellectuals need not prove their worth in the control of the world, for they argue control lies elsewhere, or at least that control of one's soul is the primary concern for a true intellectuality. Expertise, by contrast, is hardly concerned with the soul.

The Polish intelligentsia has, under communism, found some sanctuary in the Church, but for an increasing portion of their lot, the Church is no longer adequate. The Church is not only inadequate because it now is demanding greater orthodoxy from those it will protect, but also because the Church cannot protect intellectuals from the onslaught of expertise. The Church cannot provide employment to those unsuitably credentialed for the new system. The state can.

Replacing communists in the state provides new opportunities for the intelligentsia. It will give intellectuals jobs where the new lean and mean civil society will not. More important, it gives intellectuals, or I should say the intelligentsia, the opportunity to continue their class identity in a system whose civil society wishes only to recognize expertise, not the

role of any intelligentsia. After all, that cultural mission was to save the nation and direct it toward prosperity. Now, however, the intelligentsia cannot choose the direction -- that is done, albeit indirectly, by the world system and its lending institutions and actors. The intelligentsia can but try to become the captain who steers the nation toward a destination already marked. And by struggling over the particular course of that journey, the intelligentsia can preserve its class identity.

Of course, there are raging conflicts among members of the intelligentsia for the right to rule, or at least to steer the system. But I want to emphasize here that the intelligentsia do not rule (much as Fred Block so long ago argued about the bourgeoisie in capitalism); the system and its rules and resources shape the intelligentsia's course of action far more than the intelligentsia shapes the state. Indeed, the intelligentsia's desperate fight over the character of the state may be at most a desperate struggle to assume their place in the only sanctuary that will allow them to continue their class role of leading the nation. The intelligentsia do not have, in general, the right "expertise" to rule, precisely because expertise can only serve a system. For the intelligentsia to exist, it must struggle to lead a system.

CONCLUSION

Expertise, in the current conjuncture of post-communist transition, is the dominant form of knowledge in Poland, because it is the form of knowledge favored by those who shape the possibilities for transition. All actors must therefore adapt themselves to this internationally favored mode of intellectuality.

Institutions of higher education are desperately trying to incorporate that expertise into their own curricula. Professional business experts are empowered by it, Polish engineers are declassed by it, and physicians are stalemated by the particular form of expertise hegemonic in the constitution of post-communism. The intelligentsia, as a class, is threatened by it, and can preserve its identity only so long as the state is infused by its ethos, and populated by its members. The state is the sanctuary of the intelligentsia from the onslaught of expertise. Expertise may be challenged by civil society, however.

Various forms of nationalism and traditional intellectualities challenge expertise. Populism challenges expertise too. Religious morality challenges expertise. In effect, I should like to argue, the anti-systemic movements we shall see in the coming decade in post-communism will likely be not only the expressions of the most frustrated and most oppressed, but also stimulated by those intellectuals who have no place in a civil society run by expertise; a society directed by no class but only regulated by a large impersonal system. For a class like the intelligentsia accustomed to being the moral government of their nation, intellectuality can only lead to a challenge to the hegemony of Western expertise.