



# SCHOOL ON A HILL

The Kozminski Story

Andrzej "Kosmos" Koźmiński

Ewa Barlik



Andrzej K. Koźmiński  
with Graf, the family's pet  
and most loyal friend

Professor Andrzej K. Koźmiński, a well-known economist and scholar of organization and management, has gone down in recent Polish history as the founder of Kozminski University, an elite private facility which, according to *The Financial Times*, is the best business school in Central Europe. His biography is full of successes and examples of the obstacles he had to overcome to fulfil his dream of having his own academic school and a European-class business university. It is also a unique portrait of a Warsaw professor's family, the pre-war intelligentsia who experienced the bloody turns of 20th-century history. The Koźmiński family's strong roots in European culture and the Enlightenment's cult of science proved to be a way to survive the Bolshevik Revolution, both world wars, the deportation of the family to Auschwitz after the Warsaw Uprising, and the relentless devastation of the academic community during the communist era.

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Layout and Typesetting

*Beata Stelegowska*

Published with the financial support of Kozminski University

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ISBN 978-83-235-6645-8 (druk)

ISBN 978-83-235-6646-5 (pdf online)

ISBN 978-83-235-6647-2 (e-pub)

ISBN 978-83-235-6648-9 (mobi)

University of Warsaw Press

PL 02-678 Warsaw, 5/7 Smyczkowa St.

e-mail: [wuw@uw.edu.pl](mailto:wuw@uw.edu.pl)

[www.wuw.pl](http://www.wuw.pl)

1st Edition, Warsaw 2025

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*All my miserable secrets  
Will be, one by one, revealed.  
What a meager life! they'll say,  
And the path so steep!*

*Czesław Miłosz, My Secret*



# THE 1930S AND 1940S GENERATION

The children born in Poland just before the outbreak of the Second World War and during the German occupation form a generation with an unsettled state of mind and consciousness that demonstrates incessantly recurring hope and disenchantment. All these war children knew was that they needed to survive. Some also observed another rule that their families taught them, namely that they should “conduct themselves well,” whatever “well” might have meant. Poland’s turbulent and varied history, living conditions, and individual experiences were all determinants of social norms. Each community and even each family adhered to their own standards of behavior. “I, for instance, knew that my parents would never forgive me if I joined the communist party,” recalls Andrzej Krzysztof Kozłowski, a representative of the 1930s and 1940s generation. Fifty years later, Kozłowski founded a nonpublic higher education institution that was one of the first of its kind in Poland after the fall of communism and the country’s return to democratic standards. Not all representatives of this wartime generation inherited the same moral codes, which were born out of tradition, religion, and personal experience, but the majority certainly received some sort of moral instruction.

The first wave of hope and disappointment came immediately after the war (1945–1949) and combined parents’ relief that they no longer had to struggle for physical survival with their expectations regarding the postwar reconstruction of Poland under a new rule. The military conflicts that swept through the country left a mark on the childhood of the 1930s and 1940s generation. These war children saw the cruel and bloody German occupation, the efforts of the Polish resistance movement, and the entry of the Red Army, which brought in the new communist regime on its bayonets and waged a ruthless and violent campaign against the anti-communist underground.

They were too young or rather too small to fight and, at the same time, too experienced from their earliest age to be deceived by yet another group of ideological missionaries. The war children did not form a homogeneous group. The world of their childhood comprised distinctive sections, such as the urban and the rural, the well-educated and the uneducated, the owners and the “proletariat,” and men and women fulfilling their traditional roles. With the passing of time, these differences diminished in the poor, egalitarian “socialist society.” In their childhood and youth, the war children witnessed the mass migration of people from the countryside to urban areas. This was also a period, unique in Polish history, of mass social advancement, which the society achieved primarily through education. All these processes affected everyone both directly and indirectly. Before the Second World War, secondary education was a privilege reserved for the intelligentsia and the moneyed classes, such as urban middle class and landed gentry. By the 1960s, Andrzej Koźmiński had university friends from working-class and peasant families who were the first generation to obtain university education in their families. The difficult times created a bond among people. Old conflicts were extinguished. It is this feeling of community that makes this group a generation despite its lack of distinctive features. The social consciousness squeezed the war children between the heroic generation of soldiers fighting on all fronts of the Second World War, the fighters of the underground born out of free Poland’s defeat and the Soviet victory, and the red-tied communist neophytes who used the “wind of history” for their own advancement. Because of their exceptionally characteristic representatives, the public debate tends to focus only on these two generations, subjecting them to emotional judgments. However, it was the war children who, half a century later, gave Poland the ethos of learning and working as well as a new understanding of success.

## THE POSTWAR YEARS

The combination of reasonable indicative planning and the three-sector model of the economy, which comprised state, cooperative, and private ownership – the latter still recognized at the time – generated unexpectedly sound results in a heinously damaged country, even compared to the rest of Europe. Despite the nationalization of industry and the brutal land re-

form that erased the landed gentry from the social structure once and for all, Polish agriculture and retail trade remained in private hands, and goods supply was sufficient in the first years after the war. These circumstances benefited the children, especially those from wealthier homes who, like Andrzej, remembered the taste of their first sweets after the war.

The postwar reconstruction of Warsaw was a shining example for many European cities. Schools continue to consider trips to Warsaw's Old Town and the East–West Route an attraction, with Poles treating these destinations as a source of pride. Hailing from the Polish Socialist Party, absorbed by the Polish Communist Party in the late 1940s, the economic leadership showed common sense while the country was virtually occupied by Soviet troops and engaged in a civil war with the anti-communist underground. With the completion of the three-year Plan of Reconstructing the Economy (1947–1949), the communist government abandoned any semblance of pluralism and tolerance. Duplicating the ideas of the Soviet Stalinist regime, it began to rule through mass terror, amplified class struggles, conflicts with the Church and religion, forced collectivization of agriculture, and compulsory goods deliveries, as well as nationalization and monopolization of trade, known as the “battle for trade.”

By the end of the 1940s, the Polish Communist Party's “new elites” had taken all senior positions in the state, including those in the dependent, nationalized economy. Those who, in many cases, had miraculously survived the war began to feel seriously threatened by widespread denunciation in the service of various secret and overt police organizations. Hundreds of thousands of random victims of Joseph Stalin's terror were sent to prisons and labor camps. The forced collectivization of agriculture led to a decrease in agricultural production, supply shortages, empty shops, and long lines. A long, dark shadow spread over Poland. Strongly encouraged to join the communist-controlled scouting movement, children of the 1930s and 1940s experienced disillusionment and fear. This new fear of persecution was a sign of the times, and a likely root of young people's “conversions” to the Soviet faith. Many adolescents joined the ranks of the Union of Polish Youth (ZMP), a mass communist youth organization. However, it soon became evident that not all of these conversions were permanent, let alone sincere. Many children of the time felt and appreciated the risks of different behaviors toward different people in different situations and learned to calculate potential personal advantages.

## THE LITTLE STABILIZATION

The Polish October 1956 was a time of breakthrough that offered new hope. After Stalin's death in 1953, during heightened uncertainty felt across the entire "socialist camp," the supporters of the "Polish road to socialism" came to power as a consequence of violent and bloody social protests. These newcomers pried open the gates of prisons and internment camps, freeing not only dissident communists such as Władysław Gomułka and his circle but also many soldiers of the Home Army and the anti-communist underground as well as thousands of ordinary citizens repressed on principle. The Soviet "military advisers" in charge of the Polish army, including Marshal Rokossovsky, the famous Second World War commander, were sent home. Poles took pride in the fact that Gomułka forced Russians to recognize him as the legitimate Communist Party leader instead of receiving the name in a file straight from Moscow, which was the natural order in other Eastern Bloc countries known as "people's democracies," such as Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

The Polish government proceeded to establish a special relationship with the United States of America. Its symbol was the "grain loan," allowing the purchase of American grain and repaid in Polish zlotys. Contacts with the Federal Republic of Germany led to Germany's recognition of Poland's western border, which included areas that had belonged to the German Reich before the war. Private peasant farms on small strips of land replaced kolchozes, and the government reached a historic compromise with the Church. The state began to tolerate the private sector in trade and services, and even in small-scale production and artisan work. Private entrepreneurs became society's financial upper crust despite the dislike and occasional ostentatious persecution by the authorities, who gradually began enjoying the fruits of corrupt deals. Polish citizens embarked on their first trips abroad both for work purposes (scientists and specialists) and based on dubious and mostly private invitations "from families," enabling them to seek work and income in such host countries as the US, Germany, or France.

Poland secured a special, unique status within the socialist camp that was the envy of other Eastern Bloc countries. Many Hungarians, Romanians,



and Russians learned Polish, as this knowledge gave them access to magazines and books published in Poland at the time. Effort was made to translate “almost everything” from world literature and the humanities, while the return of prewar professors and their students to universities led to an open public debate. The situation resembled a civilizational change or even a “rebirth.” Poland did not see the emergence of re-Stalinization, unlike other countries of the socialist camp. For the 1930s and 1940s generation, this period was a time of fascination with a vision of “socialism with a human face” and of attempts to build one’s life within the constraints of comrade Gomułka’s real socialism. The years 1957–1968 became known as a period of “little stabilization.”

## THE FIRST DISILLUSIONS

Polish citizens did not have to wait long for the first disappointments. Already in October 1957, the authorities shut down the daring, reformist weekly *Po Prostu* and began to violently disperse groups of protesting youth. In a sense, these actions were symbolic of the war children’s experiences. Socialism began to lose its “human face.” Censorship was turning the screw, and people had to read the daily press “between the lines,” although a few weeklies – such as *Polityka* and *Tygodnik Powszechny* – fought for freedom of expression with considerable success. The state declared a war on “revisionism” on the ideological front, but its pace was sluggish. Despite some political trials ending in several-year-long sentences, fortunately, not all of them were fully enforced.

The intellectual elites of the prewar years, often of Jewish heritage, were “holding fast” thanks to compromises with Gomułka’s circles. They also gained a good international standing through internationally recognized “Polish schools” of film, poster art, sociology, and theater. The intelligentsia section of the 1930s and 1940s generation benefited from this compromise, deriving from it personal advantages. This blocked the advancement path for the “wheat and beet” communist “youth,” whose social progress stemmed from their membership in the Union of Polish Youth. Consequently, tensions and conflicts were growing at the very pinnacle of the communist elite.

Witold Jedlicki, Andrzej Kozłowski’s friend from his sociology studies, depicted this situation after his exile to Israel in a prophetic article “Chamy

i żydy” (Oafs and Jews), published in the Parisian *Kultura*, an influential émigré journal, in 1962. The 1967 Arab–Israeli War and the street protests after the ban on the performance of *Dziady*, one of the greatest works of Polish Romanticism, at the Polish National Theatre triggered the provocation of “oafs,” that is uneducated masses of simpletons, against “Jews” in March 1968. In practice, this provocation caused an enormous antisemitic purge within the intelligentsia circles – especially in academia – and the emigration of thousands of the best-educated, most internationally knowledgeable and advanced scholars and specialists. The purge had a devastating effect on the international standing of Polish science and caused damage comparable to that resulting from the Second World War.

The Polish political crisis of 1968 presented the 1930s and 1940s generation with an incurable trauma, especially for the intelligentsia. Poles faced the need to adapt to the new reality, and this required some form of a “rotten compromise.” Some went quite far in this compromise, for instance, by joining the Communist Party to accelerate their careers, while others, just like Andrzej’s close childhood friend Jakub Karpiński, decided to fight the system. Others still made attempts to “deceive” the authorities by fulfilling their mission and obligations to the country as “politically neutral professionals.” They believed that the less the authorities knew, the better they slept, and the better they slept, the better it was for everyone. Koźmiński explains:

■ *Practically nobody from my generation served the authorities wholeheartedly. We were able to come to an agreement in this regard when we needed to interact to pursue our interests from time to time. We provided each other with “services,” such as fake sick leave notes, in return for the ability to purchase ham or other attractive goods without queuing, or providing someone with a voucher entitling them to buy a car at the official price – much lower than the free market one – in return for a promotion at work. This was how solidarity with a small “s” was born.*

Despite the extreme antisemitic and anti-intellectual campaign in the mass media, the trauma left by the 1968 political crisis was mainly, if not exclusively, the experience of the intelligentsia representing the 1930s and 1940s generation. Most Poles began to feel the inconveniences and deprivations of everyday life more and more acutely. Based on coal exports and the efforts

of state-owned enterprises that maximized outlays and employment numbers instead of profit, Gomułka's "primitive socialism" was unable to satisfy the financial aspirations of a society awakened by the opportunities for contact with the West. This gap grew ever wider, and as fundamental reserve stocks became depleted, the deficient economy caused acute shortages of basic food supplies. The authorities attempted to finance their own ineptitude by raising the prices of the already increasingly hard-to-find foodstuffs and by lowering the population's standard of living while showing contempt for its needs. They did so, for example, by building apartments without bathrooms or with shared ones.

Workers' strikes and protests, organized in large workplaces typical of real socialism, were growing in number. The year 1970 brought bloodily suppressed riots and strikes on the Baltic coast and the end of Gomułka's rule. The generation that remembered the Polish October 1956 felt frustration and bitterness, but first and foremost, distrust toward the authorities and a conviction that the system was capable of genocide. The shots fired at protesters in Gdańsk in December 1970 once again reverberated in deafening silence.

## THE ERA OF GIEREK

The task of overcoming the mistrust of Polish society fell to the incoming leader of the Communist Party, Edward Gierek. A former emigrant to France and the leader of the Polish Communist Party in Silesia, he is remembered for his well-known question, "Will you help?" The next team to take power in Warsaw, invariably with Moscow's approval and support, began its term with promises to rectify the mistakes of "primitive socialism" while combining a socialist agenda with Western prosperity. This was "an offer people could not refuse": by accepting communist rule and alliance with the USSR, they would get "almost" Western-like prosperity. Although the state made efforts to fulfill these promises between 1970 and 1980, and achieved some small successes, particularly at the start of the decade, the definition of the "almost" caveat only grew wider.

Increased imports and a smarter policy toward private agriculture improved the supply of food, while the government built around 300,000 apartments annually. Although these flats were of poor quality, the waiting

times for accommodation became much shorter. The automotive industry saw the launch of the Fiat 126p production “for the populace,” and people could keep foreign currency or even open currency accounts in the state bank. Thanks to “invitations from families,” an increasing number of Poles traveled abroad and found employment in the West (for the most part, illegally). On return to the country with the “real” money they had earned, people flocked to PEWEX shops, known for their impressive choice of goods. This chain of “internal export” stores stocked scarce goods that were only available to the lucky owners of US dollars. The free-market exchange rate between hard currencies and the Polish zloty used in private transactions continued to rise and break new records. However, one needed to have these dollars in the first place. And this is what the “dollarization” of the Polish economy was all about. People’s expectations and material aspirations also kept on growing.

Recovering from the 1968 political crisis, the Polish intelligentsia circles focused on strengthening their contacts with the West. What emerged were demands for the liberalization of the political system and a focus on human rights. These aspirations and demands reached the general public in a more or less veiled form, creating an atmosphere of expecting more of the West in Poland. At that time, members of the 1930s and 1940s generation were at the peak of their potential and were looking to the West to find reference points for their aspirations and dreams. The optimal life strategy was to earn abroad and spend at home. This particular generation learned about the West and discovered market mechanisms from the position of the common person.

## YET ANOTHER DISAPPOINTMENT

Gierek’s prosperity was dependent on Poland’s rapidly growing debt in hard currencies. Disappointment with his rule resulted from people’s everyday living conditions. All these loans had to be repaid, and things started to get complicated as Poland’s economic efficiency proved poor despite the imports of Western technology. Therefore, the government continued to take on new loans while Poland spiraled into debt. Attempts to rebalance the Polish economy meant a gradual abandonment of the promised prosperity. Empty shelves in stores and never-ending lines made their unwelcome return. The quality of

accommodation and cars continued to decrease, while the waiting lists grew longer and the prices more unaffordable. There was great disillusionment and a growing belief that the authorities had broken their contract with the public. To make matters worse, the deterioration of living conditions did not affect everyone equally. Sources of privilege included permanent access to hard currency through steady employment abroad or regular remittances from family, having acquaintances providing access to scarce goods, and running a private enterprise guaranteeing high-income dynamics and value, which might have been legal, semi-legal, or illegal. A large proportion of the 1930s and 1940s generation was by that time relatively skilled in “managing” and in quite a comfortable situation thanks to these three methods. The privileged groups were so numerous that they became visible, which was all the more irritating to the rest of society. The growing rebellion culminated in the ten-million-strong Solidarity movement. Its aim was to defend the interests of “ordinary people” against abuses of power. At that time, there were no plans to change the political system. Workers’ revolts, such as the one in June 1976, took place under the slogan: “Yes to socialism! But without distortions!” “Socialism with a human face” returned as the leitmotif of workers’ resistance to the authorities.

The 1930s and 1940s generation welcomed these changes as another beacon of hope. Some of its members joined Solidarity; however, it was the younger generation born in the 1950s who played a key role. We can explain the moderate approach of the 1930s and 1940s generation towards the “Solidarity carnival” by its pragmatism, considerable life experience, and, above all, by its sober risk assessment of the immediate future. This risk materialized on December 13, 1981 with the introduction of martial law in Poland and the internment of Solidarity activists. The disillusionment of the 1970s gave way to a sense of hopelessness in the subsequent decade. At the same time, the survival instinct that the war had embedded into the DNA of the 1930s and 1940s generation emerged with full force.

The economic difficulties and shortages of the late 1970s aggravated further. Whether legally, semi-legally, or illegally, they needed compensation, and those in charge of the bankruptcy estate of the Polish People’s Republic were increasingly coming to terms with this problem. What followed was a period dominated by “private initiatives” and companies set up by members of the Polish diaspora around the world, who held foreign citizenship and frequently were active players on the Polish black market and ordinary

“stand-ins.” The forty-year-old war children already had the necessary knowledge, often obtained abroad, as well as contacts and “real” money to take advantage of the right sets of circumstances. Caution recommended operating within small, quasi-mafia structures comprising family members and close friends. In the conditions of poverty and acute shortages of consumer goods, corrupting the authorities was a straightforward process.

The 1980s was the kindergarten of Polish capitalism. Younger Poles fought and built visions of a future “wonderful world,” while older generations remained passive or simply occupied with professional life and everyday problems. They attempted to make themselves feel at home in a world they did not accept but had to come to terms with. The representatives of the 1930s and 1940s generation had already seen too much in their lives, so they trusted no authority or institution. Instead, they sought independence on their own initiative. The subsequent governments ruling in the already free Poland failed to significantly alter these attitudes. What prevailed was the desire to make the best and the fullest possible individual use of the area of freedom created by the new system, which particularly included economic and personal liberty. They all wanted to make the most of the “window of opportunity” that was finally open.

## POLISH CAPITALISM

The 1980s capitalist kindergarten brought results. The year 1989 saw Poland’s first democratic elections, which restored the country’s independence despite the elections not being entirely free. If we trace the roots of Poland’s successful private entrepreneurship, they tend to reach the late 1980s and early 1990s. It was the generation of the war children that left its strongest mark on the Polish model of capitalism in terms of mentality, cultural patterns, and methods of operation. Polish capitalism, on its part, proved exceptionally effective in compensating for the losses accumulated over the centuries and during real socialism and highly resilient to external and internal crises and disruptions. During the following thirty years, Poland witnessed a GDP growth and experienced a giant civilizational leap. One of Europe’s pariahs in 1989, Poland is currently a moderately prosperous EU country that is steadily advancing its position in the wealth ranking.

Immediately after the “great transformation” of 1989, many people from the 1930s and 1940s generation gained experience abroad or by working in multinational corporations making their entry to Poland. A relatively small group stayed in these roles until the end of their working lives. However, after years of servitude, Poles craved freedom and the ability to exercise their own initiative, and these two aspects were absent in the corporate world. Polish citizens did not want to obey anyone’s orders, and if obedience was a must, they learned to feign it. Noble Prize winner and poet Czesław Miłosz was right when he referred to Poles as Europe’s most experienced slaves, and the generation in question led the pack.

The most vital feature of the war children’s mentality was their imperative to survive. This was the case during and immediately after the war, as well as under real socialism and the emerging “predatory” capitalism. Following the principle of “survive before all else,” Polish companies and the Polish private economy after 1989 demonstrated exceptional resilience to the shocks, crises, and perturbations occurring in the markets and in politics. The efforts of the 1930s and 1940s generation supplied the Polish DNA with the spirit of entrepreneurship and resilience to astonishing amounts of incompetence, wastefulness, and abuses enacted by each successive agent of the political “good change.” Such a drive toward survival comes at a price linked to caution: Polish companies are known to take only well-calculated risks. As a result, they fail to grow beyond the local or regional level. There are no unicorns among Polish start-ups, and we are unlikely to see any in the near future. Such an activity would involve too much risk, especially in an environment full of envy and suspicion.

The war children generation displays an extremely low level of trust in strangers and an invariable desire to “cheat the system,” often operating on the edge of law but without any violations. It mastered the art of sensing the “weak signals” of opportunities and threats and reacting accordingly without delay. Because the 1930s and 1940s generation experienced poverty in their childhood and youth, they demonstrate a characteristic concern for personal material interest. Depending on the historically determined opportunities and risks, this concern may take the form of “multi-jobbing,” casual private work, informal trade, working abroad, entrepreneurship on an ever-larger, sometimes global scale, or simple “thrifting.” Caution, however, dictated both careful concealment on the “islands of luxury” and avoidance of activities

outside the law. The acquired experience also commanded caution in being too ostentatious with popular charity events or sharing the fruits of one's material success through large donations, as these could attract the authorities' attention. Private luxury consumption, especially conducted abroad, is less noticeable and less provocative to domestic observers and the envious.

The difficult childhood and youth of the 1930s and 1940s generation also underpinned its unique concern for the welfare and prosperity of the offspring. Poland's private businesses saw the return of family enterprises and "dynasties" of all shapes and sizes. Their now mythical founders were most often war children, who satisfied their overwhelming need for security and stability. Only subsequent generations introduced changes in organizational cultures and management styles. However, it is still too early to assess the potential loss of relevance by the strongly entrenched cultural and mental heritage of the 1930s and 1940s generation.

Similarly to other countries building capitalism belatedly, Poland experienced the prevalence of a paternalistic and rather authoritarian style of management based on hierarchy, discipline, and privilege. Despite such patterns, examples of charismatic and talented leaders did exist. There were also instances of frequent and brutal efforts aimed at continuing the management style that was born under real socialism but inherited from serfdom. This approach relied on arbitrariness and violence that superiors inflicted on subordinates. A simplified and, at times, crude version of neoliberalism served to justify such practices; unfortunately, the public still upholds these associations.

The 1930s and 1940s generation remains politically neutral or perhaps even politically indifferent. After years of harsh experiences, these people are unable to give serious consideration to ideological or political statements. Professor Andrzej Koźmiński, a representative of the war children generation, explains:

■ *As the representatives of the 1930s and 1940s generation, we always strive to establish whose interests are served by ideological declarations and attempts at their implementation. Only after answering and validating these questions can we approach the political sphere instrumentally and arrange relations with the authorities with our personal interests in mind. Contrary to what certain members of the public believe, these*



*are not attractive arrangements for individuals or groups with access to considerable financial, social, and intellectual resources. The reason for this is the poor quality and instability of the political class, especially the inability to base relationships on solid and widely respected customary and legal foundations. We welcome successive “programs for Poland” with hope, but we look to them with our personal opportunities and interests in mind, waiting for the results.*

This particular generation did not arouse great expectations. Researchers and journalists fail to mention its existence or characteristics. But it is thanks to this generation that Poland survived real socialism, the first turbulent times of transformation, and the madness of the “good change.”

Looking to provide a general description of the war children, the following terms come to mind: a generation of rationalists, serious pragmatists, opportunists, and cynics, but at the same time nonconformists and individualists striving to “cheat the system,” and for this purpose joining ad hoc coalitions and overcoming their deep-rooted distrust. All in order to survive and perform their tasks and missions, and sometimes simply to live a comfortable life with the family or possibly become well-to-do. This generation is now waning. The skeptics might be surprised by the answer to the question “what will they leave behind?” which is: Polish capitalism with all its advantages and disadvantages. Nothing more and nothing less.

*But our home is our home  
Let us lie on the threshold like dogs  
And our end will be like that of the dogs  
And our howling only to God*

Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, “Ciemne ścieżki,”  
*Urania i inne wiersze*  
 (“Dark Paths,” *Urania and Other Poems*)



# FAMILY LEGENDS

The source of his most important challenges have always been the present and the future. Andrzej has never studied his family's history or genealogy. As no one had ever rekindled his longing for the past, he knew little about it. His home had no material mementos or photographs of the distant past, and only sometimes did the oral accounts of the mother, father, and both grandmothers include threads of family history. One of his grandfathers never spoke about such matters, while the other died in 1914.

Andrzej's parents were born in the mythical Eastern Borderlands of the Republic of Poland, which at that time included most of the territory of present-day Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania. They both lost their small homelands and had to change their place of abode so frequently that they ultimately became accustomed to this transience. However, they needed stability, and sometimes succeeded in achieving it. The enduring points of reference for Andrzej's parents were the Latin Quarter and the Luxembourg Garden in Paris, places never destroyed or erased from their memory. Both mother and father enjoyed them separately in their youth because they met later, when already in Poland.

To an extent, Andrzej inherited the same points of reference and returned there often, first in real life and later in his thoughts. During his countless visits to Paris, he made sure to spend at least a few minutes at the Luxembourg Garden. The hotel on Rue Monsieur le Prince, where his father lived during his university days between 1927 and 1929, stands to this day, albeit converted into apartments, while the restaurant where he dined is run by yet another generation of Chinese proprietors. Andrzej has visited the place more than once. This was where he celebrated the purchase of his first

car in 1967 – a second-hand Volkswagen Beetle in a beautiful sea-green hue with double “American-style” bumpers.

The Koźmiński family’s founding myth proclaimed that in the fifteenth century, the family divided into two lines: the Wielkopolska line, gravitating toward Koźmin, and the Ukrainian line, residing in the fertile eastern lands of the Republic of Poland. Settled and ordered, the Wielkopolska line achieved considerable prominence and was said to have been raised to countship. The Ukrainian line included adventurous ancestors who occupied themselves with unending skirmishes and battles with the Tatars, Cossacks, Turks, and Russians, as well as their own neighbors. The Bolsheviks’ cruel and bloody crackdown on the Polish landed gentry in Eastern Borderlands erased this entire colorful tradition. From his adventurous ancestors, Andrzej inherited a strong desire for independence and the maximum freedom of action, a certain amount of defiance, and a propensity to take risks.

His father, Leon Koźmiński, was born on October 14, 1904 in Daszkowce, a small village twelve miles east of Winnica and almost forty miles west of Bar. The landed gentry living in the area hardly included highly educated or sophisticated individuals. For the most part, they were soldiers and farmers taking advantage of the fertile lands and the Ukrainian population that inhabited the area, which cruelly retaliated for its exploitation and humiliation in 1917–1920 and later in 1943. Leon Koźmiński was probably one of the first in his family to attend a university, obtain a doctorate abroad, and become a professor.

Leon spent his childhood in Wyszczukusy near Żytomierz. His father made an excellent living as a tenant farmer and agricultural entrepreneur, having bought the Wyszczukusy estate at the express wish of his wife Maria, who craved stability and the associated social standing among the borderland landed gentry. Leon’s father married Maria after the death of his first wife. The manor house was beautiful and had a palatial feel, which was fully in keeping with Maria’s aspirations. Leon had a French governess known for her exceptional talent for cooking. The family often seconded her to the kitchen, leaving Leon in the care of the cook. The Koźmińskis also had a house in Żytomierz, where they liked to spend their winters. By 1907, a cinema had opened in the town of Żytomierz to the absolute delight of the family cook. Leon accompanied the cook on his trips to the cinema, where they would watch several screenings in a row. Surprisingly, Leon became neither a movie buff nor an amateur chef.

The nobility of the Eastern Borderlands led quite extravagant lives. Excessively lavish parties, propensity for gambling, insufficient investments in farms, or debts were not all that uncommon. Andrzej's grandfather, Bolesław, got in much trouble due to his devil-may-care lifestyle. According to some accounts, he used to send his tailcoat shirts to a laundry in Vienna. However, it was the cards rather than his shirts that brought about his financial ruin. He started at the grain fair in Kyiv, and then, depending on his luck with cards, there was Warsaw, Vienna, and ultimately, Monte Carlo. From each of his gambling trips, Bolesław used to bring his wife a stunning item of jewelry to quell her justified anger. Paradoxically, these silent witnesses to her spouse's trespasses enabled Grandma Koźmińska to survive the tough times. She would sell a ring, a bracelet, or a necklace and, in this way, supplemented her modest budget. She managed to hold onto a small bracelet and a ring until she died in 1970. The story goes that she used a clever ruse to smuggle her jewelry out of the war-torn Ukraine, partly controlled by the Bolsheviks. Apparently, she painted all her diamonds red and pinned the brooches in prominent places on her clothes and hat. This clever trick helped her save some of her possessions. Grandma Koźmińska continued to cash in her resources to purchase increasingly smaller properties: a house with a garden in Kościerzyna, a cottage in Reda near Wejherowo, and finally a studio apartment on Filtrowa Street in Warsaw. Andrzej's parents often sent him on alternate holidays: he either visited his grandmother Maria at the seaside in Reda or the Szołkowski grandparents in Szczecin. As one can expect, Andrzej preferred to spend his holidays with his grandfather, who gave the young boy a lot of freedom and believed in his future as an officer or at least a warrior. Grandma Maria was very strict, sent her grandson to church, and generally kept him on a short leash.

In light of the family's history related to Grandfather Bolesław, Andrzej's father made his son swear that he would never play cards or engage in gambling in any form. Keeping this promise was never a challenge for Andrzej. Despite visiting casinos all over the world, he had no inclination toward gambling.

## A SCHOOL IN SWITZERLAND

Bolesław Koźmiński died in Warsaw at the age of forty-seven and was buried in the Powązki Cemetery in 1914. When Andrzej visited his grandfather's

grave on All Saints' Day together with his grandmother and parents, he often pondered the meaning of the puzzling inscription, which most likely described the profession of the grandfather he never met: "landed citizen."

After the untimely, tragic death of her husband, Grandma Maria took her nine-year-old son Leon to Switzerland to the Collège Champittet boarding school in Lausanne. The war, which hung in the air in the spring of 1914, was sooner or later bound to engulf the whole of Ukraine and Eastern Galicia because all the military forces streaming across Europe needed food, and this region had always been the largest provisioning base. The geopolitical position of Switzerland, additionally hemmed in by mountains, ensured peace and security in the event of war raging in Europe. This was the likely reason for Maria Koźmińska choosing this location for her son. Health might also have been a deciding factor, as Leon reportedly suffered from frequent illnesses. Finally, she intended to provide the boy with "European savvy," in which she fully succeeded.

In the 1990s, Andrzej visited the school where his father once studied. Collège Champittet, one of Switzerland's top boarding schools, exists to this day and continues to admit wealthy kids from around the world. During his visit to Switzerland, Andrzej was able to recognize buildings from the post-cards his father kept, as the only later addition to the school were exceptional sports facilities with an enormous gymnastic hall and a swimming pool. He asked about the 1921 graduate but was told that they only kept records for twenty-five years.

It must have been a very difficult childhood for his father, if only for mundane financial reasons. First, the money that his mother had left with friends living in Switzerland ran out, then remittances stopped coming, and, in the end, the boy lost contact with his mother for at least two and a half years. Leon was left to his own devices, and he rarely mentioned friendships with his peers from this period. Andrzej remembers an anecdote his father told him about some brothers, sons of an American car manufacturer, who offered to take him to the United States. He eventually received care from a Catholic priest who taught religious studies at the school. Father Kunzli requested an exemption from school fees for Leon and took him on long mountain hikes during school holidays. His love of the mountains stayed with Leon for life. Although he did not speak Polish himself, Father Kunzli helped Leon to nurture his mother tongue by sourcing Polish books for

the boy. Often, these were books by Henryk Sienkiewicz, the author of ever-popular patriotic historical novels.

Maria Koźmińska was right to escape from the Eastern Borderlands, and she did so at the eleventh hour. From 1917, the nearby Żytomierz suffered overruns alternately by soldiers of the White, German, Bolshevik, and then once again White forces. In one year alone, the town's administration changed hands as many as thirteen times! The Treaty of Versailles after the First World War left the question of the eastern borders of the Republic of Poland unanswered. As a result, in November 1918, Poland engaged in a military conflict with the West Ukrainian National Republic. Fierce battles were fought over Lwów, present-day L'viv. In December 1918, the Red Army went on the offensive. Maria was in Wyszczykusy at the time. On the orders of the command, a Cossack colonel of the White Guard arrived at the manor house with his detachment to ensure her safe departure. He warned her that in the event of the White Army's retreat, the local peasants would ransack and set fire to the manor house and later kill her. He mentioned that the Cossacks could preventively shoot some peasants, but that would not be a long-term solution. Grandma Maria quickly understood that she had to travel to Poland, a country she had only seen once before, during her honeymoon trip to Warsaw and Krakow.

In 1920, the Eastern Borderlands became a bloody battlefield in the Polish–Soviet War. Eventually, as a result of the Treaty of Riga, the border between Poland and the Soviet Union was set in the spring of 1921. Everything that once belonged to the landed estates of the Koźmińskis, the Dyakowskis, and many other wealthy families was gone. Manor houses turned into ruins alongside entire towns and cities, including Kyiv. Poles were leaving *en masse* for Poland, which was undergoing a rebirth after 120 years of subjugation. The only sensible strategy was to look into the future and not to look back.

## RETURN TO POLAND

In 1920, Leon regained contact with his mother and returned to Poland. After escaping from Ukraine, Maria Koźmińska settled in Pomerania, in the town of Kościerzyna. Her friend from the Sacré Coeur girls' boarding school in Lwów, the left-wing writer Helena Boguszewska, had a small landed estate

in the area. Maria helped Helena with its everyday management. At the same time, she taught religious studies in the local school. These were financially challenging times. The sixteen-year-old Leon passed his secondary school final examinations in Tczew. He did not find them easy, as his Polish was poor, and he was behind in subjects such as history and Polish literature. Leon's prospects for studying at a university abroad were limited due to the family's difficult financial situation. For this reason, Leon attended military preparation camps for young people in the summer holidays, where he felt very comfortable. With many of his relatives serving in the army, he gave a military career some serious thought. As luck would have it, another relative, Dr. Tadeusz Ruszczyk, extended a helping hand. Before the revolution, Tadeusz was one of the best-known doctors in Kyiv, and in 1920, he moved to Warsaw. Tadeusz helped finance Leon's studies at the Warsaw Higher School of Commerce – later renamed Warsaw School of Economics – and this is how the Koźmiński family's adventure with this university began.

The Warsaw School of Economics was Leon's great passion that lasted all his life. Here, he wrote a thesis on the Polish aristocrat-entrepreneur Prot Potocki, who was active in Ukraine during the reign of King Stanisław August Poniatowski and organized the export of grain to France. Leon's thesis supervisor was Ludwik Krzywicki, one of the founders of modern Polish empirical sociology. Krzywicki inspired Leon to study at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Humanities between 1925 and 1927, where he attended lectures of many luminaries of Polish science, such as Władysław Witwicki, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, and Leon Petrażycki. However, the Warsaw School of Economics always remained Leon's alma mater.

## STUDIES IN FRANCE

Andrzej's parents always regarded Paris as their special place on earth. Leon traveled there at the start of the 1928/1929 academic year as a holder of a scholarship awarded by the Polish government. In the previous year, after completing his master's degree at the then-called Higher School of Commerce, Leon joined the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Warsaw to study Romance philology, motivating his choice by a desire to teach French in schools of commerce. Having completed the first year of studies, he got



a governmental grant to write his doctoral dissertation in Paris. He only returned to the University of Warsaw in the 1930s to have his Parisian doctorate recognized in Poland.

The interwar Paris attracted visitors from all walks of life, not only scholars. At the time, the city was the intellectual and artistic capital of the world. Leon lived close to the Sorbonne, in a hotel on Rue Monsieur le Prince at number 20, in the immediate vicinity of the Luxembourg Garden. His future wife, Janina Szołkowska, also resided in Paris and studied at Sorbonne University at the time. She was continuing her studies in Romance philology, French culture, and civilization, which she had begun at the University of Poznań. Upon his return to Poland, Leon Koźmiński forever became associated with the Warsaw School of Economics. Between 1949 and 1991, the school was known as the Central School of Planning and Statistics (SGPiS). His wife Janina was a French teacher at the university from 1945 until her retirement in 1971.

## THE FIRST LOVE: THE WARSAW SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Before the war, the Warsaw School of Economics was an extraordinary educational institution. It was a university with a mission, created by Bolesław Miklaszewski, a comrade-in-arms and prison cellmate of the future Marshal of Poland Józef Piłsudski during his leadership of the Polish Socialist Party. The university's role was to provide the reborn Poland with an enlightened and modern European middle class: entrepreneurs, traders, managers, and civil servants. Shaped after French *écoles de commerce* or German *Handelshochschulen*, the university ranked among Europe's top schools already in the 1930s. In part, this was thanks to its modern, impressive campus located on Rakowiecka Street, built inside a private school but funded with state money, which also housed the best economics library in Europe at the time. Its lecturers included some of Poland's most prominent scholars, economists, sociologists, and statisticians. Rector Miklaszewski was keen for the younger generation of scholars to obtain degrees and undertake longer internships at leading academic centers abroad. Leon Koźmiński and others followed this very path.

Although the German occupiers closed the university in 1939, it was reborn in clandestine conditions as the Municipal School of Economics, headed by Edward Lipiński and his deputy Aleksy Wakar. Lecturers and students attending secret classes risked their lives, with some of them paying the ultimate price. One of the lecturers killed during the war was Professor Stanisław Rychliński, a prominent sociologist. Leon Koźmiński did not miss a single lecture of this “flying university.” During the occupation, he also taught at several secondary schools, which helped him support his family. Scarcity was a fact of life. One of Leon’s students at the time, later a popular sports commentator Bohdan Tomaszewski, recalled that one group of students had collected enough money to buy the professor a pair of shoes as a Christmas present. While performing his teaching duties, Leon was also active in the military underground, but the family never discussed this subject at home even after the war.

Despite his difficult financial situation, Leon refused to accept money for his activities in the Home Army because he was not a professional military officer. In his laconic account of his experiences during the war, he wrote: “I used to give more than forty hours of lessons, lectures, and classes a week, and it is hard to believe that so much could have been endured under the conditions of the German occupation in Warsaw.” Every stroll or ride in a tram placed the residents of Warsaw at risk of a round-up, arrest, and potentially death. Bohdan Tomaszewski later told Andrzej that his father personally visited the homes of all lecture participants when he found out about a planned German ambush on one of the locations where the underground classes took place.

Thanks to the hard work of the faculty who survived the Second World War, the university rose from the ashes like a phoenix in the late 1940s. However, 1949 brought nationalization and a Stalinist degeneration. Reborn again after October 1956, the university was crippled once more by antisemitic purges in March 1968. Another attempt to regain the former luster took place during the disappointingly short “Solidarity carnival” of 1980–1981, followed by the dark years of martial law. These persistent attempts to bring the idea of a modern economic university to life formed the primary focus of Leon Koźmiński’s work. Originating from the prewar Warsaw School of Economics, Leon instilled this vision in his son. Andrzej also felt the spirit of the prewar school; in fact, he has mentioned this sensation on several occasions. As soon as Poland regained its freedom after 1989, his father encouraged him

to open, together with his colleagues, a private business and economics university aimed at the Polish middle class. The Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management, which later changed its name to Kozminski University, was registered in 1993, less than one month before the death of its future patron.

## THE RATIONALIST

Leon Koźmiński was a European and, above all, a Francophile. He adored the Cartesian precision and soundness of reason, the practical sense and technical excellence of everything French, as well as the French sense of aesthetics – the country’s worship of art, science, and thought. He wrote and defended his doctoral dissertation, “Voltaire the Financier,” at the Sorbonne in Paris under the guidance of the famous French historian Claude Mornet. Presses Universitaires de France published the dissertation in 1929. To this day, a Google search shows this study as the most important work on the topic. In 2019, the book was translated and published in Polish. Ninety years after its first release, it remains an in-depth historical study of one of the richest philosopher-entrepreneurs in European history – Voltaire.

Leon Koźmiński’s European and pragmatic mentality encouraged him to keep in touch with the practical side of business from the very beginning of his academic career. On returning from Paris with his doctorate in the 1930s, Leon became involved in a business venture, the publishing house “Dom Książki Polskiej” (Polish Book House). He was a member of the supervisory board in charge of distribution and later its chairman. After the Second World War, Leon also advised institutions responsible for the organization and technology of trade. Moreover, he was a member of the State Commission for the Evaluation of Investment Projects. Andrzej must have inherited his pragmatic mind and the inclination to become involved in business ventures from his father.

Leon Koźmiński was a supporter of statehood who had great respect for the state and its institutions. He believed that Poland’s place was in Europe, in its heart, mind, mentality, and customs. He regarded both Russification and Sovietization as disasters threatening the nation’s existence, although he did not condone Russophobia. He was convinced of the necessity to work together while retaining separateness and independence. It may seem surprising, but this intellectual with a Sorbonne doctorate was largely shaped by

his military service and the military training courses of his early youth, when the army acted as his substitute family. He graduated from the Officer Cadet School of the Polish Infantry Reserves in Śrem, took further training courses which culminated in his promotion to officer, fought in the September Campaign of 1939, survived an escape from Soviet captivity, was part of the Underground Resistance, and lived through the Warsaw Uprising and an internment in a German Oflag. Leon had great respect for the Polish military uniform. Thus, it came as a terrible shock to him to learn that Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, the Solidarity chaplain, had been killed in a cruel, gangster-like fashion by people wearing the uniforms of Polish officers. He could not comprehend this, and this event contributed to his first stroke.

## THE WAR

Leon experienced every defeat suffered by independent Poland as trauma. His sporadic recollections of the Second World War, the occupation, and the Warsaw Uprising teemed with bitterness against politicians and commanders. Only his stories of his military and officer training days had an optimistic feel. This was when he felt part of a formidable force. On one occasion, he participated in two Polish infantry regiments' march through the Free City of Danzig, whose authorities refused to accept the presence of the Polish Army. He recalled: "The Germans were in a panic because we had the resources to occupy the city."

There was never a dispute between the father and the son on this particular issue. Like his father, Andrzej believed that independence was the ultimate good that one could only maintain through civilizational development, a well-commanded army, wise alliances, and being a part of the Western world.

From the start of 1939, Leon took part in numerous military training courses. On September 1, 1939, he was an officer on duty at the headquarters of the newly formed 44<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Łowicz. In his recollections, he described the utter chaos that ensued. He received an order to go with a driver to Warsaw to collect a car and money for the new division. On their return, that division was no longer present in Łowicz, and he never managed to track down his unit. Thereafter, Leon joined the Detached Unit of the Polish Army, made up of survivors and lost soldiers just like him. This unit fought in the

Lublin region and later in the Zamojszczyzna region, engaging in operations against both the Germans and the Soviets. Being short of ammunition, they tried to break through to the German side using bayonets but found themselves surrounded. The commander, a professional officer, gave the order to disband the unit, giving the soldiers permission to surrender either to the Germans or the Russians, and committed suicide. Having somewhat left-wing views in the spirit of the Polish Socialist Party, Leon chose to surrender to the Russians. On seeing the Russians shoot some captive soldiers, he soon regretted the choice he made. While in captivity, he met Kamiński, a student of his from the Warsaw School of Economics, and together they decided to escape. By jumping from a train at the right moment, they evaded the fate of ten thousand Polish officers murdered by the Russians at Katyn in 1940.

Many years later, Leon explained in detail to his son how to jump off a train. Kamiński was likely not privy to this art, as he broke his leg during the escape. Leon bought a horse-drawn cart from a peasant and drove the injured man to Warsaw. After the war, Kamiński continued fighting; arrested by the communist authorities, he was sentenced to death. Pardoned and released in the mid-1950s, he arrived at the Koźmińskis' apartment on Rakowiecka Street. The Professors' House of the Warsaw School of Economics was almost adjacent to the prison where Stalinist persecutors kept Polish patriots, the former soldiers of the Home Army, and the Underground Resistance heroes. Several years old at the time, Andrzej remembered the visit very well because of the frightening appearance of the emaciated, pale man with a beard, with whom his father had locked himself away in the study. They talked at length in muted whispers. Soon after, Kamiński died.

Andrzej's father never used the word "patriotism" in his son's presence. He would probably find it pretentious, and he despised pretentiousness. He simply believed that Poland was everyone's homeland and that everyone, especially those coming from privileged social groups, had a duty to serve it. Otherwise, we risk uprooting (*déracinement* in French). He took an opportunity to warn his son against the danger of uprooting during a long nighttime walk they enjoyed together in Paris in September 1967.

Despite the unfavorable circumstances prevailing in communist Poland, Leon molded his students according to international standards – similarly to the beginning of his own academic journey. As early as the 1920s, he knew that the only fully objective measure of scientific achievements was their

reception by the international community of scholars. He believed that genuine research careers demanded longer stays at the world's leading universities, so he tried to provide such opportunities for his colleagues even under conditions severely crippled by communism. It was thanks to his father that Andrzej always considered publishing in foreign scientific journals as something completely obvious and natural. His father encouraged him to seek foreign scholarships and internships, and later, also guest lectures. However, Leon expected Andrzej to return home on each occasion so that he would share the intellectual capital acquired abroad with his Polish colleagues.

Such, then, is Andrzej Koźmiński's formation: as a Pole and as a European.

## FAMILY SECRETS

Maria Romana Janina, who used only the name Janina or its diminutive version Nina, came from the borderland landed gentry which settled in Belarus near Mogilev. There are only scraps of information about Janina's childhood, as Andrzej's grandparents avoided talking about their history, probably because the Bolsheviks had slaughtered both sides of the family. Grandfather Antoni Szołkowski never mentioned the years of the Russian Civil War. Andrzej respected his silence, sensing that his grandfather was consciously protecting him from his recollections.

Grandmother Zofia Szołkowska had the French maiden name Passet. After escaping from Russia, she used it while residing in Gniezno. Having helped Zofia and her daughter escape from Belarus, grandfather Antoni returned to the country, engulfed by civil war, and the family lost contact with him for almost three years. He never mentioned anything about this period to anyone. Nothing has survived: no documents, photographs, or letters.

Andrzej's great-grandfather on his mother's side, Monsieur Passet, was probably a typical nineteenth-century French adventurer who, perhaps to escape trouble, enlisted in the French navy for the Crimean War (1853–1856). During the siege of Sevastopol, he was wounded and taken into Russian captivity. Wounded French prisoners were under the care of young ladies coming from the best Polish landowning families. And so, Monsieur Passet married his nurse, who had a substantial dowry, and settled in Belarus. He is rumored to have built and run the best hotel in Mogilev and to have raised

three daughters. Every year, he would spend a few weeks in France, returning with an armful of presents that everyone “talked about.” Paradoxically, he was fortunate in that, having caught a cold while hunting, he died in 1914. As a result, he did not live to see the Bolshevik Revolution, which resulted in the deaths of his wife and two daughters. Zofia was the only one who survived. Her husband, Antoni Szólkowski, took Zofia and their eleven-year-old daughter Nina to Gniezno in western Poland.

Monsieur Passet claimed that his family were herb growers from the south of France, and he even had some kind of a miracle recipe for a medicinal blend to prove his origins. The mixture allegedly enjoyed successful use during a cholera epidemic at the time of the Crimean War. Unfortunately, the family lost this recipe through the years. During their trips to France in the 1930s, Leon and Nina tried to verify this information, but they never came across the Passet name or such a plantation.

Both of Andrzej’s grandmothers – Zofia Szólkowska on his mother’s side and Maria Dyakowska on his father’s side – studied at the same Sacré Coeur boarding school for ladies in Lwów (present-day L’viv) in their youth, but probably at different times. While in L’viv in 2018 to celebrate the birthday of his wife Alicja, who was born in the area, Andrzej Koźmiński took the opportunity to visit the building of the former boarding house. Currently the L’viv Polytechnic, the building still boasts a wonderfully preserved wooden staircase, floor tiles, and window joinery. Andrzej found it immensely moving to be able to touch the same objects that surrounded his two grandmothers almost 150 years ago. For a man brought up without material reminders of the past, this was an important, profound experience.

Antoni Szólkowski’s family shared the violent fate of his wife’s family members. The Bolsheviks murdered his two brothers, his mother, and his sister. He managed to locate his miraculously surviving nephew, who had become mute after seeing a mob led by sailors of the Baltic Fleet murder his mother and grandmother. Antoni took the boy to Gniezno, where, under the care of his family, he regained his ability to talk. Then, he sent his nephew to America to some distant relatives.

After the end of the Second World War, the Szólkowskis settled in Szczecin on Michałowskiego Street. They chose the charming villa district of Pogodno, located right next to the Arkonian Forest Park with a bathing lake and the larger Głębokie Lake. Every year, Andrzej spent one month of his

summer holidays in Szczecin. For him, Szczecin was a veritable wonderland, while his grandparents found in the city their safe haven after an exceptionally tumultuous and difficult life. Andrzej's grandfather joined the Provincial Economic Planning Committee and acted as head of the unit, overseeing the staffing demand. He remained in employment until his eightieth birthday, as his documents made him ten years younger than he actually was. Antoni died in 1960 when his only grandson Andrzej traveled to France for the first time. He is buried in Szczecin in the largest and most beautiful cemetery in Europe, located on Ku Słońcu (Toward the Sun) Street.

Andrzej wondered many times why his grandparents on his mother's side left behind no documentation, not even a photograph, diploma, or letter. There was literally nothing. Just a few snippets of information about their lives before the Bolshevik Revolution and about their years in Poland between the wars. The Szołkowski family's only child was Andrzej's mother, Nina. She was born on November 21, 1906 in Babruysk in Belarus. The Szołkowskis must have belonged to the elite, because grandmother Zofia once said that during the First World War, her husband had a military Mercedes with a driver and mechanic and was in charge of supplying the Northern Front. Therefore, he must have been someone important.

During her parents' stay in Saint Petersburg, Nina Szołkowska had the same French governess, Mademoiselle Leoni, who was later employed by the then Iranian ambassador Reza Shah Pahlavi and brought up his son, the shah – the last monarch of Iran. Indeed, Andrzej's mother had excellent manners, which she tried passing on to her son. She also taught him something bigger and much more meaningful: the respect shown to people of lower social standing. During the difficult postwar years, the families living in the Professors' House received supplies from ladies who brought eggs, dairy products, and meat straight from their villages, lugging heavy buckets and baskets up to the third floor. Nina always made sure to invite them for tea and a chat. She said that only boors humiliate people. That was the reason why "Mrs. Buttermilk," who delivered dairy products, used to call her a "real lady." Nina detested antisemitism. The story goes that in the 1930s, at the University of Warsaw, she had the courage to oppose the fascist militias who were enforcing ghetto benches. She stood up for her colleagues against thugs who had razor blades installed in their canes. The one and only time she slapped her son was when he said "that Jew" about one of his friends. She then gave him a lecture



about the Holocaust. Andrzej remembered it for his whole life. He was maybe eight years old at the time, and the terrible 1940s were coming to an end.

After escaping to Poland in the 1920s, Antoni Szołkowski ran a business venture in Poznań and worked as a clerk. During and immediately after the Second World War, Andrzej's grandfather dealt with timber trade. This made a good business because, in troubled times, no one was brave enough to traverse partisan-controlled forests, where sawmills were located, carrying large sums of money in their pockets. Antoni was not afraid of anything, and the civil war events seemed to have "inoculated" him against any fear. He settled in Szczecin in 1947. A peculiar mystery shrouded his life, and everyone in the household knew not to make any inquiries.

Andrzej treated his one-eyed grandfather as an unquestionable authority on all matters relating to summer holidays. He was his caring guardian and a mostly silent companion during their walks and expeditions into the forests near Szczecin. Antoni taught his grandson how to commune with nature and show it respect. When they saw deer running past, his grandson asked him if he had ever hunted wild animals. Antoni admitted he had, adding that hunting had been standard behavior in his family, but now that the family was gone, he would never hurt such lovely creatures. After the civil war in Russia, Antoni swore before God never to touch any weapons, and he kept his word.

Antoni also taught Andrzej to swim, and he did so by taking his grandson to the middle of the lake and throwing him into the water. From that moment on, Andrzej was never scared of water and liked swimming far from the shore. When Nina found out, a big row ensued, but Antoni explained that this was how his family had always taught boys to swim. Andrzej felt that his grandfather loved him, and that was enough for him. Antoni made his young grandson feel safe during the Warsaw Uprising. He taught Andrzej to be punctual, to make sure his appearance was smart and his shoes clean, and to display a love of restaurants and cafés, which left much to be desired in the rough communist era, but at least they existed. Above all, however, the grandfather inspired him to always maintain his dignity, even in the most adverse conditions. He instilled in Andrzej the belief that one must not be a loser in life, possibly implying his own example. This awareness of the possibility of losing the game of life always stayed with Andrzej, although, fortunately, it never deterred him from taking risks.

## THE POLYGLOT MOTHER

Andrzej's parents were married on August 26, 1935 in Warsaw at St. Alexander's Church. His father was thirty-one and had already completed his doctorate at the Sorbonne, and his mother was twenty-eight. After the wedding, they moved in together to 6/24 Rakowiecka Street, known as the Professors' House. The building had been designed by Miklaszewski himself to form part of the School of Economics' campus. Nina continued her studies at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Warsaw. Here, she graduated in Romance philology, which she had begun at the University of Poznań. Her master's thesis, written in French, focused on Catholic priests who acted as protagonists in the works of French writers such as François Mauriac or Georges Bernanos.

Nina Szołkowska first attended school in Gniezno and then in Poznań. For a while, she studied at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and at the Sorbonne in Paris. She also spent a year in England working as an au pair for an aristocratic family. This stint gave her an impeccable knowledge of the English language and an elegant accent. Even after the war, she still received letters written on beautiful paper with a coat of arms letterhead. Nina lived in Paris for several years, spending time with the Russian White émigré community. She spoke Russian "in Saint Petersburg style" and wrote beautifully, using classic calligraphy.

Nina only graduated in philology at the University of Warsaw in 1937. Prior to her graduation, she was gainfully employed by the Polish Hunting Association, where she dealt with the export of hares. She also applied for a job at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and several years later, before she had even finished her studies, the Ministry appointed her to a lower diplomatic post at the Polish embassy in Moscow. As her job starting date coincided with her wedding, Nina requested temporary postponement of her service.

During the occupation, Nina was active in the Underground Resistance, similarly to her husband; however, this was not a topic of discussion at home. After the war, she took a job at the Warsaw School of Economics as a French teacher and continued to work there until her retirement. Many students regarded this course as a breath of French elegance in the drabness of communist Poland. Nina wrote and co-authored several language learning manuals and acted as a consultant on French teaching methodology for many years.



PHOTOGRAPHS OF ANDRZEJ KOŹMIŃSKI'S PARENTS FROM THEIR UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW DAYS.

She taught her son to strive for purity, elegance, and precision of language, above all Polish. For her, the mother tongue was of the highest importance. Although Andrzej spoke French and Russian as a child, his mother shaped in him the belief that he should prioritize the Polish language.

Surprisingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted Nina after the war and employed her as a French teacher of communist diplomats. Not having anyone to look after Andrzej during these lessons, Nina used to take her son to the ministerial building on Szucha Avenue and even to the private residence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stanisław Skrzyszewski. At the Ministry, Nina would leave her son in the care of a janitor who would introduce him to the ins and outs of diplomacy over a doughnut from the ministerial buffet. Apparently, Comrade Bierut himself, the president of Poland in the 1950s, once stroked him on the head when exiting the building. “I have kept my head to this day as a memento of that event,” Andrzej quips with a smile. He has worse memories of the Skrzyszewskis’ residence, as his mother had to leave him in the cold outside the entrance of the building on Niepodległości Avenue. Fortunately, the soldier who guarded the house hid Andrzej under his fur coat inside his guard post, which allowed the boy to survive the harshness of the climate and the communist love of children. However, the visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs soon came to an end.

## CHILDHOOD

The Koźmińskis spent their first holidays after the war in Lower Silesia, in the settlement of Bierutowice. They stayed for a fortnight in an elegant hotel transformed into a holiday resort for the employees of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The staff were German and dressed in smart livery. Nina realized at that time that she had no trouble speaking German.

For the next two weeks, they rented a room from a German woman who was preparing to leave Poland as part of the German population resettlement from the Recovered Territories. Her two sons were prisoners of war, so Nina used her beautiful English to write to the British authorities, asking for the early release of the captives so that they could care for their mother and, above all, enquiring for news of their health. This was the summer of 1946, less than two years after the horror of the Warsaw Uprising and all the

atrocities that the Poles had suffered from the Germans. At the time, Andrzej did not care much about this practical lesson in Christianity. The boy had a much more turbulent relationship with Frau Steineman. One evening, the parents went to a dance, perhaps the first one after the war, and left their son in the German woman's care. Frau Steineman was to bathe Andrzej and put him to bed. This was when the reflexes learned during the Uprising came into play. When the German woman put him in the bath, Andrzej became convinced that she wanted to drown him, and decided to save himself. He grabbed a bottle sitting next to the bath, used all his strength to hit the woman over the head, jumped out of the bath in his birthday suit, and hid in the bushes surrounding the house. On returning home late and in great spirits, the parents found Frau Steineman with a towel wrapped around her bloodied head, running around the house and calling out: "Mein Schatz!" Naked and cheerful, the boy jumped out of the bushes and into the care of his parents. He received a sharp reprimand from his mother for his unjustified distrust of his neighbor.

Andrzej has always said of himself: I am a European. He was born on April 1, 1941 in Warsaw, in a hospital on Oczki Street – thus arriving on April Fool's Day in the middle of the war, during the German occupation, amid round-ups, famine, and various epidemics. A Russian saying would describe such a situation as scary and comical in equal measure. Already in the autumn of 1939, the Germans evicted everyone from the Professors' House, commandeered by the SS. The Koźmińskis moved to Warsaw's Mokotów district. Andrzej spent the first years of his life at 8 Naruszewicza Street; this house is still standing today. Andrzej and his parents shared the house with his grandparents and Grandma Koźmińska, also evicted from her home in Kościerzyna. Other residents included Helena Koźmińska (Auntie Helunia), the widow of Dr. Zygmunt Koźmiński – a promising hydrobiologist who had died a heroic death in 1939, commanding a group of soldiers defending Lwów against the Soviets as a reserve lieutenant. Maria (Maryla) Koźmińska, Zygmunt's sister, also lived at the address. She was a cipher clerk for the foreign department of the Home Army's Central Command. During the Warsaw Uprising, she was killed in the sewers between Śródmieście and Mokotów while carrying messages. Afterward, Andrzej never again experienced such a strong sense of familial community. Those who survived the war dispersed in all directions.

Visitors to St. Hyacinth's Church in Warsaw's Old Town can see a plaque dedicated to the siblings Maria and Zygmunt. The plaque was funded in the 1950s by Konstanty Koźmiński – a cavalry officer, a veteran of the Polish–Soviet War, and Uncle Kot to Andrzej. The wording on the plaque contains one deliberate error, which was obligatory in those days: a mention of the “Nazi assault” despite the Soviets occupying Lwów at the time. Uncle Kot was a lifelong military pensioner. During the war against the Bolsheviks in 1920, he distinguished himself with exceptional courage, for which he paid with severe disability. Severely wounded on two occasions and twice decorated with the War Order of *Virtuti Militari* – Poland's highest military decoration for heroism – Uncle Kot always wore his ribbon bars in the lapel of the same pressed suit.

The hidden-away townhouse at Naruszewicza Street witnessed many unusual goings-on. Here, the residents provided Jewish people with shelter, ran – at least for a while – a supersecret cipher workshop of the Home Army's Central Command, and arranged meetings between Underground activists of varying degrees of importance. Such was Andrzej's wartime childhood. His father was barely making ends meet by tutoring and giving lectures. The grandmothers and the mother did their best to satisfy the young child's fundamental needs. The biggest attractions were walks in the surrounding fields and encounters with the goats that grazed in the vicinity of the Królikarnia palace. Demolished in 1939, the building was located almost opposite Naruszewicza Street, on the other side of Puławska Street. Often, these walks resulted in peculiar confrontations.

On one of her walks with a pram, Nina saw a young man walking toward her. With the street being otherwise empty, the man pulled out a gun and made her hand over all her valuables, which consisted of a watch, a ring, and a small amount of money. She took a very good look at the perpetrator. After the war, she saw him in the elevator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was wearing an officer's uniform of the infamous Internal Security Corps (KBW) with the distinction of captain. She prudently turned away so that he would not recognize her. This meeting ultimately contributed to Nina's leaving the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. When confronted with the regime, the Koźmińskis always had to be on their guard. Andrzej inherited this trait from his parents, and it surfaces whenever the world around him becomes more authoritarian and totalitarian.

## AN INSURGENT SCAR

A particularly important, perhaps also formative, phase of Andrzej's childhood began on August 1, 1944, the day the Warsaw Uprising broke out. On that day, Andrzej was three years and four months old. People rarely remember events from their early childhood unless those are traumatic. Andrzej has kept several snapshots from that time recorded in his memory. He was one of the "Warsaw Uprising children," dirty and hungry, spending days and nights in crowded, stuffy cellars, playing with their friends to the sounds of gun shots, and often dying namelessly. Andrzej's favorite toy was his father's gun holster, made from light-colored leather. His dad used to let him play with it, having previously removed the gun, whenever he stayed with the family the place where they hid from bombs and grenade launchers known as "cows" because of their distinctive sound. Always accompanied by his mother, grandmother, or grandfather, the young boy received at least a basic sense of security. Before falling asleep, he used to ask: "Are these our people shooting?" If the answer was positive, he went to sleep. During the Warsaw Uprising, the family frequently changed their place of stay, as they needed to follow the "Baszta" (Tower) Regiment, where Leon served. Another one of Andrzej's recollections centered on a mezzanine with a large glass window. Suddenly, the window shattered into tiny fragments in front of the three-year-old sitting on a potty, who prudently crawled behind some post to hide from a spray of machine-gun bullets. The grandparents praised Andrzej for his judicious reflexes, just as adults praise children for good behavior at the table in peacetime. Wartime abides by its own rules.

On August 25, 1944, the Koźmińskis were staying in a villa on Krasickiego Street. In fear of heavy shelling, many people took shelter in the cellar. Grandmother Szołkowska did not have the strength to push her way inside with the child, so she crouched at the very entrance, cuddling her grandson. Her decision saved their lives, as after the entire house collapsed, rescuers only managed to dig the two of them up. Dozens of people died that day under the rubble. Andrzej's eyes got damaged by lime mortar, and he also developed a hernia and stomach troubles that he continued to experience throughout his life, but all things considered, he and his grandmother came out almost unscathed. The gunfire was so heavy that the doctor refused to treat the

wounded. He only changed his mind under the insistence of Andrzej's father, who carried a gun. This incident had its sequel two years after the war, in the hospital on Litewska Street, where Andrzej had to undergo surgery for a severe case of hernia. He remembered the chloroform anesthetic and the horror stories he heard from his hospital roommates. These village boys wounded by unexploded shells told him of ponds and lakes filled with corpses.

After the fall of the Warsaw Uprising, the Germans forcibly removed the city's residents to Pruszków. Andrzej remembers walking with his grandparents and his mother along a street between houses which were still burning on both sides. Suddenly, he spotted the corpse of a horse, which he considered an unusual sight. Andrzej was used to seeing human corpses lying in the streets – apparently, he even witnessed executions of the captured soldiers of the Waffen-Sturm-Brigade RONA (Russian Liberation Army), allied with Germans and known for mass murders of civilians, whom the insurgents shot on the spot like they shot members of the SS – but this was the first time he saw a dead horse. However, the Warsaw Uprising fighters treated Wehrmacht soldiers as prisoners of war, in accordance with the Geneva Convention. As many as 800 such captives were handed over to the German side on the Uprising's capitulation.

The exiles from the city were driven toward Służewiec and then transported to Pruszków, with an enormous temporary camp set up inside a rolling stock repair plant. The Germans sent Leon to an unknown location together with other prisoners of war, soldiers of the Home Army. Grandfather was leading his injured wife and daughter while carrying their luggage, so Andrzej had to walk on his own and carry a small suitcase containing his belongings. It remains unknown whether he was aware that the Germans were shooting those unable to walk, mainly old people and children, but he clearly had a strong will to survive. On saying goodbye to Warsaw, the little boy saw an unforgettable image. Somewhere near the Warsaw West train station, a large-caliber railroad gun was firing across the dying city. Andrzej followed the huge projectiles with his eyes as they were hitting the façades of houses, which were collapsing in clouds of dust as if they were mere toys. This was Warsaw that Andrzej Koźmiński bid farewell to on October 8, 1944 as a tiny but already conscious human. He was marching in a column of civilians, one of the last columns that the Germans directed from the dying city to Pruszków.



This is the indomitable Warsaw that Andrzej comes from and with which he has always identified. As an adult, he has been highly unpleasant whenever someone treated Polish people with indulgent superiority in his presence. At some party in France, Andrzej met an elegant elderly gentleman with a Legion of Honor ribbon bar in his lapel. When the Frenchman found out that Andrzej was from Poland, he said something about the dumb Polish villagers who came to work on his estate without the ability to operate simple appliances. In response, Koźmiński remarked that there was a certain balance to the migration, as his grandparents employed French cooks and butlers and, above all, French governesses and teachers, who taught the children by day and made life pleasant for the adult part of the male population by night. Unpleasant but true, certainly according to family gossip. At any rate, the elderly French gentleman suddenly became tongue-tied...

Andrzej's recollections from the camp in Pruszków included huge crowds of people and his bed improvised on a trunk. Although it was apparently easy to escape from the internment camp, this proved impossible for the Koźmiński family because of the mother's and grandmother's condition. So, they allowed themselves to be loaded onto cattle wagons heading south. Andrzej heard the accounts of this journey to the end of the night (to borrow from Louis-Ferdinand Céline) mainly from his mother and grandmother. In the corners of the wagons sat soldiers from Russian and Ukrainian auxiliary formations. Aggressive and perpetually drunk, their task was to guard the captives. The wagons were kept locked. The train moved slowly, giving priority to military rolling stock. Although it was October, the weather remained quite hot. Food and, above all, water were running out. When the train stopped in Kielce, Nina tried to attract the guards' attention through gaps in the wagon's wooden planks to see if she could get hold of any supplies, especially water. Unfortunately, the guards would not accept persuasion or even bribe. It seemed that their overseers had made sure to satisfy their thirst for vodka. On the adjacent track was a military transport carrying the remaining soldiers from a defeated Hungarian unit. There were many wounded, horses, vehicles, and lots of weapons, while the soldiers looked exhausted and probably angry at their German ally.

Out of the blue, Nina spotted an elegant Hungarian officer standing on the platform right next to the hole through which she was peering. He was carrying a cane under his arm in the English style and seemed to belong to

another world. The Hungarian officer was talking to some disheveled German noncommissioned officer, who was actually overseeing the transport from Pruszków. The Hungarian demanded that the wagons be opened to provide people with water and bread from Hungarian supplies. The German refused, speaking louder and louder, and finally started yelling at the Hungarian, saying that he was carrying criminals from Warsaw and could not open the wagons. The more the German shouted, the less friendly was the demeanor of the four frontline soldiers accompanying the Hungarian. Carrying lots of weapons, they looked dirty and bedraggled, while their faces showed exhaustion, hunger, and rage. Nina heard the distinctive sound of cocking the locks, at which point the yelling German was looking into four barrels of handheld machine guns and four pairs of livid eyes. The weight of this argument was enough, and the wagons were opened. Hungarian soldiers began to distribute bread and water. The four unkempt soldiers accompanying the Hungarian officer took their positions on the platform, keeping a distance of seventy feet from one another. They had machine pistols tucked into their belts and carried light machine guns and grenade belts across their chests. Nina found them remarkable and, at that moment, developed a fondness for Hungarians. She even traveled to Hungary several times in the 1960s and 1970s on various package tours organized by the Polish travel agency Orbis.

Shortly after this unusual encounter, the passengers discovered the destination of their dreadful journey: Auschwitz, or rather the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The transport continued to stand on the siding. The wait dragged on. It is difficult to describe what the captives were feeling upon recognizing the seriousness of their situation. Suddenly, the wagons moved in an unknown direction, leaving the Auschwitz ramp. What saved them was the German love of order and structured logistics. The camp commandant adamantly refused to accept another transport on the grounds that the “processing capacity” was completely exhausted. This was due to large transports of Hungarian Jews arriving at that time. Had the commandant not refused, Andrzej’s fate would have been a foregone conclusion. Small children were immediately sent to gas chambers. The train stopped somewhere near the town of Słomniki. The wagon doors opened, and everyone was thrown out directly into a field.

During and after the Warsaw Uprising, the Germans expelled all civilians – more than 600,000 people – from the city. They sent soldiers of the Home

Army to POW camps. The interned stayed inside four enormous railway hangars in Pruszków, with the area fenced off with barbed wire. On arrival in the camp, the Germans segregated the newcomers into those who were fit for work and those who were not. The able-bodied were sent by trains to engage in forced labor in Germany. Trains also distributed as many as 350,000 people deemed unfit for work, mostly women and children, across the General Government – without any plan, leaving them to fend for themselves. Of this group, 60,000 people ended up in Auschwitz. Inside the desolate Warsaw, a city of over one million people turned into a desert and a sea of rubble, approximately one thousand “Robinson Crusoes” remained, hiding in ruins.

This marked the start of yet another chapter of Andrzej’s childhood under occupation: his stay in the countryside near Krakow. On arriving at the market square in Słomniki, the stranded family enquired about transport to the village of Masłomiąca, where Grandmother Koźmińska’s brother, Mr. Dyakowski, was once an administrator of some landed estate. They hoped that somebody who remembered Mr. Dyakowski would help them find shelter. All of a sudden, a young German officer approached little Andrzej and offered him candy. The hungry, dirty, and tired three-year-old refused the enemy sternly, which made the officer salute the boy in jest. A little while later, the officer spoke to Nina, offering the family a lift in his truck. This was how they arrived in Masłomiąca, a village that became their home until May of the following year.

The Koźmiński family rented one room from the local farmers, Mr. and Mrs. Woźniczek, who turned out to be good people. They treated their Warsaw refugees kindly. For the child, Mr. Woźniczek built a special cot from wooden planks and filled the mattress with fragrant hay. The highlights included autumn apples, an occasional slice of bread with honey, and baths in a tub. Andrzej found himself in the care of the smallholders’ slightly older daughter, who proceeded to introduce him to village life. Many years later, Andrzej befriended her daughter, who is a renowned econometrician and professor at the Krakow University of Economics. The mother and daughter still live in Masłomiąca.

The liberation of the village by the Red Army brought a series of new “attractions.” The Red Army soldiers found some meat or pork fat hidden in the farmyard and decided to shoot the farmer by way of punishment. Fortunately, the wife managed to bribe them with a supply of even better-

hidden moonshine, and soon, the Russians set off in eager pursuit of the fleeing Germans. Before they departed, however, they made sure to deprive the tenants from Warsaw of everything they had put aside to pay for their accommodation. The robbing proceeded with great professionalism and diligence. Knowing the circumstances, the Woźniczek family kept caring for their guests for as long as was necessary, sharing with them everything they had, which was not much.

## RETURN TO WARSAW

Somewhere at the end of January 1945, Leon Koźmiński returned from German captivity and traveled to find his entire family living in a village near Krakow. His papers confirmed his release due to ill health. By some miracle, he crossed over from the Western Front in the Ardennes, where he was building the Siegfried Line, survived the bombing of Nuremberg, crossed the entire territory of Germany, and ended up in Masłomiąca. Through another stroke of good fortune, Leon had a hidden stash of valuables that helped the family to pay for their accommodation.

After a few weeks' rest in the countryside, Leon set off for Warsaw, no longer occupied by the Germans but utterly destroyed. His aim was to rebuild the Warsaw School of Economics together with Professors Andrzej Grodek, Aleksy Wakar, and Stanisław Skrzywan, and with other survivors. In the future, these men were set to become Andrzej's role models.

In the first months of 1945, living conditions at the Rakowiecka campus were extremely poor, so Leon's family remained in Masłomiąca, waiting for the situation to stabilize and improve. Leon invited them to Warsaw at the beginning of May 1945. Andrzej still remembers this return journey. After a sleepless night spent sitting on their suitcases in an extremely crowded train, which they only boarded thanks to the kindness of some helpful rail worker, the family finally arrived at the Warsaw West train station. Leon was waiting for them with a hired horse-drawn cart. They drove up from the side of Rakowiecka Street and came to a halt outside the prison wall facing the entrance to the university.

It was May 9, 1945. And it was this day that proved the most influential in the so-far short yet eventful life of four-year-old Andrzej. On this day, the

boy took his first step into the paradise world of his childhood and his future life, the world of academia. He remembers many important moments from that time. In the evenings, he heard shots fired in the air and saw fireworks which marked the end of the war. Everyone was smiling, and the wife of Professor Aleksy Wakar, Andrzej's future boss and doctoral dissertation supervisor, gave him a plush toy – a large white rabbit. The magnificence of this gift was beyond his comprehension. The grandeur of his father's furnished apartment overwhelmed him in a similar way. Andrzej was to have his own bed and, even more importantly, his own room! There was also a bathroom with a tub. One evening, a Soviet pop-up cinema screened an American film, *Sun Valley Serenade*, in one of the ground-floor rooms of the library building. On the screen, the little boy saw smiling, tanned people who were skiing against a backdrop of breathtaking mountain scenery. The soldiers used to sing a song whose refrain he still remembers: "This is America, my beloved country, my paradise on earth." Regardless of how much longer the soldiers were allowed to sing this song, Andrzej had never before experienced such positivity with so much force. He began to feel admiration for America. When he saw the real Sun Valley thirty-six years later, he was admittedly a little disappointed, but on May 9, 1945, he was over the moon with joy.

Such was the start of his happy childhood years spent inside the premises of the Warsaw School of Economics. The Koźmiński family was, without a doubt, some of the more privileged inhabitants of the destroyed Warsaw. In the summer months after the war, Nina occasionally took her son to the city center for some shopping, and they would wade through the rubble, which emanated a putrid odor. The Professors' House, Building C, provided the Koźmiński family with a clean, comfortable, and heated three-bedroom apartment that had a bathroom and all home comforts. The only downside was that they lived on the third floor and there was no elevator, but such a minor detail remained irrelevant in those days. They resided opposite Professor Edward Lipiński, so Andrzej would often visit his apartment for various reasons over the years. Professor Lipiński infected Andrzej with his passion for collecting art. The house was set in a beautiful garden tended by Mrs. Skrzywan, the professor's wife, a horticulturist, and a graduate of the Warsaw School of Life Sciences.

She had two daughters, Joanna and Teresa, who later became a professor of psychology. The family lived on the second floor of the same house. Other residents of the same stairwell included Stanisław Kryński with his wife

and son, and Professor Jerzy Loth with his grandson Xawery. Kryński was an Oxford graduate and a specialist in the English language, while Loth was a geographer and member of the International Olympic Committee. The rector of the Warsaw School of Economics, Professor Andrzej Grodek, also lived in the building together with his wife and two daughters, Zosia and Hania. The garden was full of lilac bushes, which formed several alleys. There were many old trees and beautifully maintained flowers, predominantly roses. The roses planted alongside the library posed problems for a while because an exhumation had to take place in that location. The exhumed bodies were identified as members of the SS and transported to a war cemetery. The university garden boasted some rare trees and shrubs, such as dogwood.

The dominant element of the campus was the library building, luckily untouched by bombs. The building contained the administrative office and rooms where the first lectures after the war took place, as well as several provisory apartments. It was Professor Grodek who saved the library from being burned down by a flamethrowing German commando after the Warsaw Uprising. The “trading card” offered to the soldiers was alcohol. In the early years, the library became the university’s command center. Although fire destroyed its interior on the side of Rakowiecka Street, the top floor and the staircase survived. There was a substitute for a student dormitory: a few rooms with bunk beds, and a very important institution, namely the staff canteen, which provided three-course lunches every day for the staff members and their families. This was a great privilege, as groceries were uneasy to come by and very costly. The ever-popular American UNRRA parcels often contained huge tins of tomato juice, Snickers bars, chocolate, peanuts, condensed milk, and, of course, Nescafé instant coffee that was the highlight of Sunday breakfasts. The Americans not only fed but also clothed the Poles: people made suits from army blankets and altered military uniforms. Such were the foundations of the vigorous Polish pro-Americanism.

With practically no hotels in Warsaw directly after the war, the apartment of the Koźmiński family, with an unusually large space for the time, became a place where various relatives and friends from the provinces willingly stayed when they had some errands to run in the capital. Among them were also “people from the forest,” namely anti-communist partisans, so Andrzej’s parents and grandparents instilled in him the rule of never talking about the house guests with strangers.

The reconstruction of the university building from the side of Rakowiecka Street was the responsibility of Stanisław Skrzywan, and the building was ready in 1948 or 1949. German prisoners of war were part of the reconstruction teams. Professor Skrzywan, the founder of Polish accounting, worked before the war at the Lilpop, Rau, and Loewenstein plant, which assembled American cars, including those by General Motors. Being an excellent driver, Professor Skrzywan used to drive other staff members to the Łódź branch of the university in a Studebaker once owned by the American military. It was also Professor Skrzywan who took the Koźmiński family on their memorable holiday in Bierutowice in Lower Silesia. This time, he used a Dodge and was simultaneously carrying supplies intended for a student camp.

During this trip in the summer of 1946, Leon and Stanisław experienced an amusing incident. Their truck arrived in Wrocław in the dead of night, with the air still carrying the stench of burning far outside the city's boundaries. There is an airport situated next to the road connecting Warsaw to Wrocław. At that time, there was no fence around it and, lost in the darkness, the university truck drove straight into a Soviet military airfield. Leon found it to be an unusually wide highway and decided to measure its width. He got out a measuring tape and, with Stanisław's assistance, began metering the road. This was how Soviet soldiers spotted the two men and wanted to arrest them. Fortunately, Nina came to the rescue of the two highway explorers. With her beautiful Russian, she explained the whole situation to the officer in charge, and after a few phone calls, Leon and Stanisław found themselves under the care of the Polish Garrison Command. There, they spent the night and even got fed before continuing on their journey.

Nina, who – similarly to her husband – had many classes with her students during the week, only cooked dinners on Sundays. Before the Sunday dinner, Leon used to take his son to the church and then on long walks across Warsaw. They typically reached the complete desolation of Warsaw's Old and New Town. Andrzej remembers a disturbed old woman living in the ruins opposite the damaged cathedral in the Old Town who looked after hundreds of pigeons. On passing former Nazi prisons, the Geśliówka concentration camp, the former Gestapo headquarters, or Dworkowa Street, where the Germans executed hundreds of insurgents coming out of the sewers, Leon would tell his son about these places and about other similarly tragic locations, which Warsaw has in abundance. Even as a child,

Andrzej recognized the extent of the suffering endured by Warsaw, which is why he and his father were able to appreciate the increasingly visible signs of reconstruction, which included the W-Z Route and the rebuilt Old Town. The upper Mokotów district had surviving buildings on Rakowiecka and Puławska Streets. Shops were opening, the famous market on Puławska Street offered fresh produce from the country, and a small green wooden shack next to the market's entrance sold exceedingly delicious ice cream. An abandoned tank stood on Wiśniowa Street for perhaps two years after the war. The vehicle provided a playground for Warsaw children – those who survived the wartime devastation, and those who arrived here with their parents after the war from every direction. It was not long before trams started running along Rakowiecka Street. Only the prison opposite the university evoked feelings of dread. At the time, the apartment windows looked out onto the building. The family often heard shots fired in the early hours of the morning. One day, having woken up very early, Andrzej saw his parents standing by the window, listening to the shots and saying a prayer.

The corner at the intersection of Rakowiecka Street and Independence Avenue housed employees' allotment gardens. These were tiny plots of land where professors grew fresh fruit and vegetables with a view to stretching their household budgets and diversifying their menus. Leon once tried to grow tomatoes in such an allotment garden, but the results were disappointing. With an improvement in the food supply, he quickly abandoned gardening with relief.

As the university had its own boiler room, all the building interiors stayed warm in winter. Next to the library were garages and a parking lot with several vehicles sourced as military surplus from the American army. Andrzej was fascinated by these cars and spent a lot of time with the drivers. One day, he hid in a truck headed for Radom, and no one knew his whereabouts for an entire day. His concerned parents were unable to locate him despite their best efforts. On returning home, all he got was an earful. They were understanding toward the boy, perhaps feeling a little guilty about his risky early childhood from which they were unable to protect him.

Andrzej preferred to entertain himself in the vicinity of the garages while watching the mechanics at work instead of staying home alone. Often teaching classes at the same time, his parents preferred to lock him inside the house. He disliked it very much, so he would place a chair against



the entrance door and watch the stairwell through the spyhole. He gained more freedom when he got a bit older but stayed under strict instructions not to embark on any escapades. Andrzej did not consider this ban burdensome most of the time, as the university campus offered a great variety of attractions. He had no babysitter, and when his mother had something to do in town, she would take him with her. Together, they traveled on trams, crisscrossing the ruined streets of the city bedecked with adverts of private business ventures. From tram windows, Andrzej used to look out over the ravaged Marszałkowska Street, at the time developed only to the “ground floor” level and full of stores, workshops, studios, and eateries. Such was the charm of Warsaw in the immediate postwar period, miraculously stocked by members of the entrepreneurial private initiative sector. In later years, having won the “battle for trade,” the Communist Party “equated the intelligentsia with the workers, the workers with the peasants, and the peasants with the land,” as a popular joke went.

Nonetheless, Poland recovered rapidly during the first few years after the war. This recovery was aided by multi-sectoral economy and tolerance of private property not only in agriculture but also in trade, services, and, to a smaller extent, industry. The Three-Year Plan (1947–1949), drafted under the strong influence of members of the Polish Socialist Party, such as Bobrowski and Hochfeld, was the only one in the history of communist Poland to see full and successful implementation. Warsaw was beginning to look increasingly prosperous against the backdrop of the ruins. Shops, stalls, and markets offered a wide range of products, and the quality of the clothes worn on the streets was also improving. This situation was a stark contrast to the Soviet reality. In this setting, Andrzej remembers seeing an extraordinary spectacle of a Soviet cavalry division moving along Puławska Street on its retreat from Germany. He remembers small, tousled horses, riders resembling Tartars or Kalmyks who were laden with loot, such as longcase clocks or cookers, the clatter of hooves, and the ever-pervading stench. American Jeeps kept the entire column in check, driving on the outside with machine guns on their bonnets pointed toward the riders. Another civilization altogether. This difference could once again be seen in the 2022 Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Andrzej’s idyllic childhood ended with the nationalization and Stalinization of the university, renamed the Central School of Planning and Statistics

by a decree of August 1949. The Communist Party's increasing influence also resulted in the construction of the university's main building on Niepodległości Avenue and two large residential buildings. The scenery changed to a messy building site that engulfed the wonderful garden.

One day, Andrzej was sitting in a tree above a garden bench occupied by several young people from the communist youth group, all wearing red ties. One of them, pointing at the boy, said with evident contempt: "This is the son of a prewar professor." On hearing these words, Andrzej spat a cherry stone toward the boy and jumped down from the tree. He understood that such hostility would now be a common occurrence.

# UNSENTIMENTAL EDUCATION

On one of her walks in the park, Andrzej's grandmother, Maria Koźmińska, noticed an energetic elderly lady playing with two boys, a six-year-old and a three-year-old. This was Mrs. Iżycka, a distant relative of the Koźmińskis and Leon's private teacher from before the First World War. She taught Leon back in Wyszczukusy in Ukraine, before he went to school in Switzerland. The boys were Jakub (older) and Wojtek (younger) Karpiński, sons of the well-known architect Zbigniew Karpiński, later the designer of modernist buildings in the center of Warsaw, dubbed the Eastern Wall. Mrs. Iżycka was their tutor. Based on an interfamily agreement, Andrzej began to study together with Kuba, one year his senior, and Wojtek, two years his junior, as part of a homeschooling arrangement.

He would walk alone to the home of the Karpiński family, who lived nearby on Narbutta Street. Mrs. Iżycka taught the boys from prewar textbooks intended for the first two years of primary school, among them the classic primer by Marian Falski. She did not forget about the boys' patriotic education, so they sang together: "Lances for the battle, sabers in hand, chase the Bolshevik, chase, chase." A Soviet major forcibly accommodated in Karpińskis' apartment reportedly used to listen to these lessons with understanding. As a Russian-speaking emigrant from the Eastern Borderlands, Mrs. Iżycka felt obliged to "convert" the Soviet "guest" despite the lack of visible results. She would sometimes recall the conversations she had with the major. One day, the major complained that some Poles had stolen his gun on a train, summing up the incident: "The technique was flawless, but there was no culture." Mrs. Iżycka replied: "There was culture, just no guns." And this was how the "liberators" conversed with the "liberated" on occasion...

## THE GREENING CRATER

Thanks to Mrs. Iżycka's lessons, Andrzej was admitted to the third grade of a state school, skipping the first two years. Above all, however, this period of home education gave Andrzej one of the most important friendships in his life. Jakub remained his best friend until his untimely death in 2003. During these carefree childhood years, the boys would often hike to the Zatwarnicki manor house, which carried the maiden name of Jakub and Wojtek's mother and stood nearby at Czerniakowskie Lake. The manor house had a stunning garden and consisted of several rooms decorated with old furniture, which was where Jakub's aunts lived. The family used the estate land to grow vegetables and the best onion in the entire Polish People's Republic. An exciting structure on the estate was the icehouse: a cellar covered with moss and branches. The space stocked blocks of ice taken from the frozen lake in the winter to keep food and curdled milk fresh. During the hot summer months, the children enjoyed eating ice cream with fruit served at the icehouse. Andrzej visited the area with Jakub as late as the 1990s, although the farm no longer existed.

Thanks to the solid educational foundations of Mrs. Iżycka's homeschooling system, Andrzej did not find primary school a challenge. What proved more difficult were the interactions between the children. The war left kids malnourished, sickly, and often very traumatized. Adults paid little attention to their problems and needs. One of Andrzej's friends, a girl called Renata, probably from a Jewish family, was constantly afraid of something and always hiding. Other kids used to say that she was "mad from the war." Not fitting this bleak picture were the children of those employed at the Department of Public Security. Their parents were much better off and had access to "stores with yellow curtains," which served only senior state officials and members of the political elite. There were only a few such stores in the area, and people remained very careful when talking about them, usually with envy and hatred. Warsaw's Mokotów district was known for the largest number of security-related institutions. Andrzej's parents made sure that from a very young age, their son was aware of the importance of words spoken outside the home. This need for caution proved paramount on several occasions. Here is one such example.

After the war, children mostly wore altered clothes, as new apparel was difficult to come by. One neighbor living in the area made some extra money

in exactly this manner. Her husband worked night shifts as a baker. After returning home and getting a few hours' sleep, he enjoyed going to the nearby park to stroll, sit on a bench, and have a beer. This way, he got to know many different people. One day, he told the latest political joke to one of his casual acquaintances. The two men shared a laugh, after which the new acquaintance showed the baker the appropriate badge on the inside of his lapel and accompanied him to the Department of Public Security. The baker returned ill after three years and died soon after.

At school, Andrzej had an excellent prewar teacher, the form mistress Mrs. Gruberska. She exuded warmth and affection for the war-damaged kids, and yet she was able to impose order and discipline, giving them a much-needed sense of security. She was also an excellent Polish language teacher. Andrzej's was the last class she looked after before she retired, and when she died a few years later, almost the entire class attended her funeral at the Powązki Cemetery.

Andrzej's relations with his classmates were difficult mainly because his grandmother, Zofia Szólkowska, who sometimes came to pick him up from school, insisted on speaking only French with her grandson. He had to fight many battles to find his place among the peers. One classmate quite selflessly taught Andrzej the art of fighting other boys, and from that moment on, they left him alone. However, his French-speaking grandmother earned him the nickname "Cosmos," short for cosmopolitan. At that time, even primary schools witnessed political agitation regarding the "just struggle" against cosmopolitanism from a socialist and nationalist perspective. Fortunately, the youth did not care too much about propaganda, and the nickname also contained a certain amount of respect. When he happened to meet his schoolmates years later, they shouted: "Cosmos!" The nickname followed Andrzej to secondary school, which was the Tadeusz Rejtan High School, and further into the world. Being cosmopolitan meant being open to the world. To the Western world.

Andrzej's excellent command of Russian proved a valuable asset at school, earning him straight A's and distinctions. He was also the one to welcome all the "Soviet guests" who visited the school on special and official occasions. His father advised him then to stop flaunting his Russian so much.

The events that made a particular impression on Andrzej during his school days were two deaths: that of Stalin and Bierut. The fact remains that

Bolesław Bierut's funeral was the largest, most solemn, and most opulent state funeral in Poland's postwar history. Here again, we could quote the Russian saying about the situation being scary and comical to the same degree. Andrzej remembered seeing people crying in the streets. He already knew his own mind, but he also knew to show restraint at a time of endless assemblies and formal events at school. At home, he was able to discuss such matters freely. This was the state of mind of many – but by no means all – of his school friends. “Tyrants have both lackeys and followers. Democracy is unable to eliminate this phenomenon,” the old “Cosmos” admitted years later, with a slight touch of bitterness.

## STALINIST ATMOSPHERE

The Tadeusz Rejtan High School on Rakowiecka Street was an all-boys' school. Andrzej's class, graduating in 1958, was the last to follow this formula. The school was considered elite due to its prewar traditions and because its pupils were largely the sons of the Mokotów intelligentsia. The Rejtan High School has an exceptionally impressive list of graduates. Jakub Karpiński is, of course, one of them. The teachers were “prewar,” although the headmaster was already “ordained” by the authorities. Andrzej's form master was an incredibly handsome and relatively young geography teacher. He was the brother of Tadeusz Zawadzki, the legendary “Zośka,” the hero of the Home Army who died in action. Enveloped in his family history, the teacher appeared “undesirable” to the communist government and the subservient school management. The restrictions to his self-determination caused his visible suffering. Andrzej personally experienced the last breath of Stalinism in Poland when he himself fell into disfavor with the headmaster.

He wrote a poem in which one motif was the Katyn Massacre: a series of mass executions of several thousand prisoners of war, mainly Polish officers. The killings took place at Stalin's order in the spring of 1940 near Smolensk. Andrzej proudly showed off the poem to one of his school friends, who in turn notified the relevant authorities. The minimum penalty suggested by the school authorities was expulsion from school. In itself, the punishment was quite light, but this was already late autumn after the Polish October 1956, when “de-Stalinization” began. Perhaps it was the intervention of Władysław

Bieńkowski, a friend of Andrzej's father who became the Minister of Education after the Polish October, which prevented the boy's expulsion. However, this event left its mark, so Andrzej's memories of high school are not all positive. He learned and experienced more outside the walls of his school.

However, the standard of teaching at the Rejtan High School was indeed high. Professor Stefania Dzięciołowska, known as Stefa, was a very thorough and, therefore, much feared teacher of Latin. Andrzej did so well in Latin that he qualified for the Olympiad of Classical Languages held at the University of Warsaw. This way, in 1957, he found himself for the first time on the premises of his future alma mater. Although he failed to achieve any great success in the Olympiad, he was genuinely impressed by the university's atmosphere and by the eminent Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki, who was personally handing out books with dedications to the participating high school students. Ever since that moment, every time he passed the building of the Institute of Classical Philology while walking to the Casimir Palace, where the rector's office is located, he always recalled his first contact with the university. Although Andrzej soon forgot about Latin, some useful knowledge must have stayed with him, as several years later, he mastered Italian in very little time.

His Polish teacher was Professor Sztaudyngerowa. Always perfectly prepared for her classes, she was both strict and fair when grading students. She was quite a caustic person, most likely also deeply religious, although she never demonstrated or even revealed her beliefs, being a trueborn teacher in a "socialist school." She seemed a great authority for Rejtan's pupils, even though they teased her mercilessly at times. For instance, she very much regretted sharing a surname with the then extremely popular, frivolous epigramist Jan Sztaudynger. This was the recurring theme of regular student pranks, which she was deeply upset about despite their quite innocent nature. She used to hurriedly erase Sztaudynger's epigrams from the blackboard after the students had left them there during recess. One example of these epigrams is: "In her experience, a pious dame discerns between priest and capon only too well."

Another exceptional character was "Mucha," the mathematician, Professor Łaganowski, endowed with a bawdy sense of humor and a certain propensity for spitefulness, for which there was no shortage of opportunity. Although mathematics was not the favorite subject of most students who considered themselves "humanists," they respected this corpulent man

with a number tattooed on his arm, if only for the fact that he had been in Auschwitz during the occupation and survived. Unfortunately, the official teaching of history at the time followed the only “correct” line set by the Communist Party, so students used to look for alternative sources of knowledge. Andrzej was one of the few who could take advantage of the books held in the university’s library. Even during the Stalinist years, the university bought everything it could, and librarians cautiously made prohibited works available to friends and certain individuals. The library offered such rarities as Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski’s monumental *Modern Political History of Poland*, published in Paris in 1953, originally in the Polish language. Andrzej remembers reading the book with great excitement, as history has always fascinated him. For instance, he was curious about the origins of the twentieth-century tragedies. Therefore, during his high school years, he read things like *Mein Kampf*, published in French (“utter gibberish”), and Benito Mussolini’s *The Doctrine of Fascism* (“a decidedly more logical argument”). He also read *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System* by Leon Trotsky and Milovan Djilas, a Yugoslav “revisionist” thinker.

Today, such a choice of readings may seem surprising for a teenager, but he was a child of war and dictatorships, curious about the underlying causes of it all. Also, these were only supplementary books. During his school years, he never stopped reading. Thus, he became acquainted with the entire canon of world literature and anything that was newly published, such as the then fashionable Françoise Sagan and the great masters: Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Graham Greene. He devoured all the Polish bestsellers of the period: Marek Hłasko, Leopold Tyrmand, and Edward Stachura. In his later years, he liked to stay up-to-date with the latest novels, poetry, and the books of authors who won the Nobel, Booker, and Nike prizes. Already in his role as management professor, Andrzej admitted that he did not have enough time for “airport literature,” but he still felt obliged to keep track of new arrivals and buy them.

In his teen years, he also adored the world of motion pictures. He often queued for hours with his friends outside cinemas such as Moskwa, Palladium, Atlantyk, and Praha to see foreign movies, among them: *Rome, Open City*, *Bicycle Thieves*, *Fanfan la Tulipe*, *Before the Deluge*, or *The Wages of Fear*. Some of them engaged in ticket touting in front of the Moskwa and Stolica cinemas but never succeeded in expanding the business outside making some pocket money.



## SENTIMENTAL SZCZECIN

Summer holidays played an important role in Andrzej's life. He spent the month of August with his grandparents in Szczecin, in a room rented to a female student of medicine during the year. Having access to all the latest publications on her shelves, Andrzej had no shortage of spiritual nourishment. During his stays with his grandparents, he read family sagas, including John Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga* and Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*.

Immediately after the war, the Szolkowski grandparents moved from place to place, renting flats in various towns near Warsaw. It was not until 1947 that the grandfather moved permanently to Szczecin. The grandmother would occasionally come to stay with her daughter, taking this opportunity to practice French with the grandson. The grandfather rarely visited the capital. On one occasion, he arrived from Szczecin and treated Andrzej to some ice cream at the Gajewski confectionery on Marszałkowska Street. Although the confectionery operated inside a converted German bunker, the ice cream was spectacular and served in "silver" goblets. Andrzej only experienced such luxuries with his grandfather, who enjoyed spending time at smart cafés and restaurants.

In Szczecin, every Sunday, he attended mass with his grandparents at the beautiful Church of the Holy Family, built in the modernist style just before the Second World War. Originally a Protestant temple, it was rebuilt and consecrated as a Catholic church immediately after the war. The church stood on a street named after the Virgin Mary: Królowej Korony Polski (Queen of the Polish Crown). As the newcomers were religious, they did not allow for changing the street's name throughout all the years of communism. The authorities had no choice but to tolerate the residents' will.

The city center, the harbor district, and the Oder River crossings were significantly damaged during carpet bombings by the Allies. Many years later, while exploring the extraordinary labyrinth of underground shelters, Andrzej learned that Szczecin had become one of the first German cities where, as a result of Allied incendiary bombing, a "firestorm" broke out with temperatures exceeding 2,700 degrees Fahrenheit. Due to lack of oxygen, fire consumed even materials such as stone and steel. The target of attacks included an important transport hub and a plant manufacturing synthetic

petrol from coal, located in the nearby city of Police. This fuel was crucial for maintaining the combat capability of German forces.

Slowly, new life began to enter Szczecin. After 1956, private cafés appeared on the city streets, and Andrzej visited them with his grandfather. The once-German factory located on Wojska Polskiego Avenue, just next to the junction with Michałowskiego Street, launched the production of the iconic Polish motorbike called Junak. Despite their spirited yet concealed anti-communist sympathies, Andrzej's grandparents taught him to rejoice in every success of the Polish Szczecin. He experienced real joy and satisfaction when he visited the city in the twenty-first century, during the rule of Mayor Piotr Krzystek. They met in person on the occasion of Professor Andrzej Koźmiński's visits to the University of Szczecin, which awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2015, more than sixty-five years after he first visited the city. Andrzej found the event incredibly moving, and he has remained sincerely grateful for the honor to the rector and the university's senate. Today, the University of Szczecin is quickly gaining importance on the map of Polish higher education institutions.

Szczecin became home to Andrzej's friend, Alberto Lozano Platonoff from Mexico. Alberto arrived in Szczecin by a strange coincidence decades ago and founded Opus Dei educational establishments which educate young people in the Catholic spirit. He obtained a doctorate and habilitation in management and later became a professor at the University of Szczecin. Furthermore, he founded the innovative company Copernicus, which manufactures and exports insulin dispensers to markets around the world. Alberto married a Polish widow with several children and also has children of his own. He is busy bringing up his Polish–Mexican offspring. Being well-known and well-liked in West Pomeranian business circles, Alberto considers Szczecin and Poland his home.

## TRIPS TO THE MOUNTAINS

Andrzej's other holiday destination was the Tatra Mountains. The whole family used to travel there in July and February. First, it was the three of them, and later just Andrzej with his father, as his mother experienced heart problems and reacted badly to high altitudes. From his childhood years spent in Switzerland,

Leon Koźmiński was passionate about hiking and skiing. Most often, he traveled with his friends from the Warsaw School of Economics, namely Andrzej Grodek and his partner Marysia Królikowska. Sometimes, his companions were Jan Drewnowski and his wife, or geographer Stanisław Berezowski with his daughters. Staff members of the “old” Warsaw School of Economics knew that they could talk freely about any topic in their own company.

In the summer, Andrzej and his father visited Bukowina, a village in the Tatra Mountains. They stayed on the edge of the village, at the home of Pietras, a smallholder known for his great height and powerful build. People were afraid of him because he had reportedly fought under “Ogień” (Fire), the leader of anti-communist partisans active in the Polish Highlands. In the 1940s, the village of Bukowina had its own cultural center known as “People’s House,” with an inn and an auditorium. There, they listened to highland musicians and sometimes attended theater performances. There also, the legendary Rhapsodic Theatre from Krakow staged *Pan Tadeusz*. Is it possible that Karol Wojtyła, the future Pope John Paul II, was one of the actors? This seems very likely to have happened in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Andrzej remembers setting off on several-days-long expeditions into the mountains together with the Grodek family. They also visited Zakopane. On one occasion, Andrzej’s parents took him to Zakopane’s district of Kuźnice, to a conference dedicated to the “new order” at the Warsaw School of Economics, which took place in the winter of 1949, after the university’s nationalization. Although Andrzej was only eight years old at the time, he sensed an atmosphere of nervousness and his parents’ despondency. He remembers the same trip for the exhilaration he felt during his first skiing lessons. On each visit to the mountains, the Koźmiński family made sure to visit Zakopane at least once, as Andrzej’s parents had prewar memories of the town.

The streets of Zakopane were empty in the early 1950s. As buses were the family’s means of transport, Andrzej remembers the taxi rank next to the bus station on Kościuszki Street, where four identical Austro-Daimlers waited for clients. These large cabriolets from 1911 regularly carried tourists to the Morskie Oko Lake in the mountains. Many years later, in 2016, Andrzej saw a beautifully restored Austro-Daimler when attending a classic car rally in the Champagne region. The car’s driver, Count Jan Potocki, claimed that the vehicle belonged to someone in his family, but perhaps it was one of those taxis from Zakopane? After all, one legend does not invalidate

the other. Everyone knew one another at the U Kmicica café, a place teeming with journalists, artists, and writers. Zakopane was intent on retaining remnants of its intellectual and snobbish character.

Andrzej's father once took his son on a summer expedition to Turbacz, the highest summit of the Gorce Mountains. They slept on hay in the barn of a farmer who was a good friend of Professor Grodek. Andrzej found it difficult to get comfortable, feeling something hard under the hay. They both had a rummage and found a Maxim heavy machine gun, well preserved and complete together with a case. The father advised Andrzej to try sleeping elsewhere and consign the find to oblivion.

Another one of their memorable trips was to present-day Slovakia. The trip became possible owing to the thaw in politics after the Polish October and the opening of the border strip for small-scale tourism. The year was 1957, and this was Andrzej's first foreign trip. They hiked in the mountains, staying overnight in villages, but on several occasions, they traveled on the Tatra Electric Railway. The ubiquitous large signs "with Sovětský svaz for all time" were surprising, but the trains arrived on time. They reached both Horný and Dolný Smokovec, as well as Štrbské Pleso. Seeing what the stores had on offer from a Warsaw resident's perspective, Czechoslovakia seemed a fabulously wealthy country. During their foreign adventure, Andrzej's father bought him a pair of sturdy leather outdoor boots that made the boy's friends back in Warsaw green with envy.

A memorable place was a mountain pass called Przystop Miętusi and a tiny hut perched below the row of mountain peaks known as Czerwone Wierchy, a little below the Wantule forest, which was home to lynxes. This is where Bronka Staszal-Polankowa, a prewar world cross-country Olympic champion, ran an unofficial mountain shelter for visiting tourists. There was one big bed in the chamber called the "family burial ground," where everyone slept next to each other. Baca, a giant Tatra Shepherd dog, acted as the "guardian of morality," growling at anyone moving unnecessarily. For a young boy from Warsaw, Baca was the central figure of the place. Stories had it that he had once fought a lynx in the Wantule forest, barely making it home due to the injuries sustained. When, on the nearby beginners' lane, the skiers practiced their skills by going up and down the hill, Baca watched them closely and knocked the weakest ones over face down into the snow by grabbing their ski



LEON WYCZÓLKOWSKI'S *THE MONK* FROM THE KOŹMIŃSKI FAMILY COLLECTION, DEPICTING THE ICONIC PEAK IN THE TATRA MOUNTAINS, ENABLES APPRECIATION OF THE POLYSEMY OF NATURE AND ART.

poles. It was compulsory to march with the skis on your back to the shelter on the Hala Gąsienicowa meadow, enjoy a cup of tea, and then ski down.

The return from a skiing holiday back to Warsaw followed a set pattern. They would take the bus to Krakow, leave their belongings in the train station's luggage room, and enjoy dinner at the famous Wierzynek restaurant. Guests entering the establishment immediately felt the atmosphere of pre-war elegance – the food was exquisite, the service polite, and the interiors beautiful. On his visits to Krakow, as a child of Warsaw shattered by war, Andrzej always felt like he was on a foreign holiday, and this impression stayed with him forever.

## POLISH OCTOBER 1956

During his high school years, Andrzej felt himself drawn to writing poetry, which became his main hobby. His idols were the “cursed” poets, especially Arthur Rimbaud. After the Polish October, which introduced a temporary liberalization of political rule, there was a visible resurgence of the publishing sector. The book stalls along Ujazdów Avenue, set up to celebrate Book Days, saw long queues of those wishing to get their hands on works by American authors, such as Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, or John Steinbeck, as well as books by the French existentialists – Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Vercors, and Françoise Sagan. The young people at the Tadeusz Rejtan High School competed in class for these publications, boasting about their acquisitions. Owning and knowing all these new books was the done thing. In the second half of the 1950s, post-Stalinism Poland was returning intellectually and mentally to the Western world, with young people absorbing everything avidly.

The importance of the “Polish Spring,” which happened in October 1956, remains underestimated. When compared to the Stalinist era of 1948–1955, Poland changed radically. One could even say that it underwent rejuvenation. The authorities released hundreds of thousands of people from internment camps and prisons, and the threat of blind mass terror disappeared. The government scaled down repressions, although real or imagined opponents of the system were still kept in check. Western culture, art, and science entered the official circulation and almost automatically marginalized the “social-

ist content” present in social consciousness, especially among the younger generation. Above all, however, the prewar professors removed from universities returned to work. These included, among others, Edward Lipiński, Stanisław Ossowski, Maria Ossowska, Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, Władysław Tatarkiewicz, and Aleksy Wakar (after his return from a Soviet Gulag camp). They joined other luminaries who managed to survive one way or another, sometimes by collaborating with the “regime.” Here, we can list Oskar Lange, Michał Kalecki, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, and Janina Kotarbińska. These professors were among the world’s best, while their students, with Andrzej Koźmiński among them, were probably the last generation in Poland to have tutors of such high, world-class caliber.

The publication of “A Poem for Adults” by Adam Ważyk in 1955 became a symbol of the intellectual circles’ mutiny against Stalinism. With bated breath, young Poles were learning that:

*A stilt walker taught the art of walking,  
the blind carried torches,  
the deaf in the marketplace checked consciences,  
and ascetics begot crimes.*

Readers gained access to magazines full of new, “revisionist,” or simply contemporary content, such as the legendary *Po Prostu* and *Współczesność*. Andrzej made his debut in the latter magazine, which published his short poem in 1957. The Polish literary scene saw the emergence of an entirely new generation of young writers and poets of both sexes. This generation shaped Polish literature for decades to come. The biggest name was Marek Hłasko. Poland’s literary scene was populated by people from a variety of backgrounds, most often but not exclusively intellectuals. They were all actively involved and interested in art; they wanted to discuss it and attend author’s evenings, debates, concerts, exhibitions, and various social and alcohol-fueled events that followed them. One venue for such meetings was the Cultural Center in Warsaw’s Old Town Market Place. Artists could use the available rooms, while the building’s cellar held the Largactil nightclub. Relatively inexpensive, the club featured the legendary “Hanka Pies” on the piano and a jazz band. “Largactil” evenings always ended in the morning. Fascinated by this atmosphere, Andrzej quickly became an active participant in this urban legend.

During the Polish October events, Andrzej's older friend, a student at the Warsaw University of Technology, took him to one of the rallies held in the university's Main Hall in support of Comrade Władysław Gomułka, the newly reinstated head of the Communist Party. He still remembers the prevailing sense of enthusiasm during the event. Unfortunately, sometime toward the end of 1957, the whole post-October "spring in autumn" drew to a close. Gomułka tightened the screw on the intelligentsia. The symbolic event of this turn was the closure of *Po Prostu* in October 1957, a weekly addressed to students and young members of the intelligentsia. *Po Prostu* discussed matters omitted by other periodicals, such as the issue of Home Army soldiers' rehabilitation. Moreover, the weekly published works of rebellious young writers, including Hłasko. This time, the youth protested, which resulted in demonstrations, bludgeoning, detentions, and the release of tear gas in the streets of Warsaw. Andrzej experienced these attractions in the flesh.

During a protest by young readers of *Po Prostu*, militiamen snatched Andrzej and his friend from the corner of Jerozolimskie Avenue and Marszałkowska Street and loaded them onto a truck. Mindful of his father's teachings of "whenever you can, run," he jumped off the truck at the first opportunity and ran home. His father made sure to compliment him on the successful escape. His friend was less fortunate, though: he hid inside a gate where prostitutes plied their trade within the rubble of the capital. At that time, Warsaw was not short of either rubble or streetwalkers. Wanting, quite understandably, to maintain good relations with the authorities, the ladies handed over the unfortunate boy to a militia patrol. Later, his parents had to collect him, already slightly worse for wear, from a Citizens' Militia commissariat.

Importantly, though, Poland did not return to Stalinist patterns of rule after the Polish October. It became a completely different country, which also meant different from the other "people's democracies." Soviet "advisers" and military commanders with Marshal Rokossovsky at their helm finally returned home. Moscow assumed a more indirect form of control over Poland. The madness of forced collective farming came to an end, which safeguarded peasant farms. Poland became the only socialist country with private agriculture. The treaty concluded with Germany in 1970 provided a validation of Poland's western borders. Gomułka firmly opposed any border adjustments that Nikita Khrushchev was reportedly considering at the expense of Poland, or more precisely, Polish Szczecin, in his search for a compromise with



Germany. The authorities also reached an agreement with the Church thanks to the unyielding stance of some of the clergy, especially Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, during the Stalinist period. The communist authorities realized that they could not eradicate folk Catholicism in Poland. Polish Catholicism has retained its folk nature to this day, diverging from the intellectual currents present in Western Europe's religious life.

Prewar professors remained at the universities, the publication of well-known books by Western authors continued, cinemas were buying a substantial number of foreign films, and there were opportunities to travel abroad on invitations from "family." Andrzej took advantage of this opportunity and the invitations to France signed by his parents' friends and acquaintances. People could also travel, albeit under supervision, to conferences, seminars, internships, or on organized holidays with Orbis, the state-owned travel agency.

In 1956, Leon Koźmiński traveled abroad for the first time after the war. Admittedly, his destination was "only" Hungary, but other excursions followed soon, above all – the trip to France. As a French teacher, Nina Koźmińska traveled to France several times to participate in language teaching methodology courses. As allowances for these trips were very modest, Andrzej sent his mother some small sums when she was abroad. At that time, he was in Rome doing an internship paid for by the Italians.

The authorities relaxed censorship on scientific publications, as well as in relation to journalism, theater, film, and the stage. On their part, scientists, journalists, and artists became highly skilled in cheating the censors. Of course, these changes did not mean total freedom, as best demonstrated by the fate of the movie *The Eighth Day of the Week*, based on Hłasko's short story. The movie remained shelved for decades, while Hłasko himself met a tragic end. Then there was the trial of Hania Rudzińska, Andrzej's friend in the 1960s. Nevertheless, the atmosphere was more relaxed than before, also in comparison to other Eastern Bloc states. As in the first years after the war, the authorities tolerated private ownership in trade, artisan work, and services. Officials dismissed from the administrative sector as part of "de-bureaucratization" could apply for loans to set up their own businesses. Such a state of affairs did not last long, of course. The number of beneficiaries was modest, and the loans were even more so, but these government activities generated a lot of discussion. The Economic Council, set up by the government after the Polish October, under the direction of Professors Oskar

Lange, Czesław Bobrowski, and Edward Lipiński, advocated decentralization and transition to a market-oriented economy. The government also found space for two ministers in its ranks who were not steadfast believers in the Communist Party. It was then that Poland earned the reputation of being “the happiest barrack in the socialist camp.”

Many Hungarians, Russians, and Czechs learned Polish to read Polish books, including scientific publications and periodicals, in order to get a glimpse of the forbidden West and to see socialism and “people’s democracy” from a point of view other than Marxist. One of them was the economist Ernő Zalai, the future professor and vice rector of Karl Marx University of Economic Science, currently Corvinus University of Budapest. Andrzej met him in 1971 at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Ernő learned Polish to read Polish economists, such as Lipiński, Brus, Wakar, Kalecki, and Lange, as many of their works were unavailable in English.

## THE POET

As an aspiring poet representing the Tadeusz Rejtan High School, Andrzej sought to take advantage of this slice of freedom and make his mark in various creative circles. For a time, he was a member of a poetry club organized at the Palace of Youth inside the Palace of Culture and Science. The club was run by a representative of surrealism in Poland, the well-known poet Stefan Flukowski. There, Andrzej opened up to French Surrealism, particularly the work of Paul Éluard. This was also where he met a young poet fascinated by Ezra Pound who later took up acting; they became longtime friends. Sadly, this friendship ended at some boozy ball in the 1960s, when the friend confessed that he had signed up to the Communist Party to get better acting roles. Andrzej berated him mercilessly, and they never saw each other again. In 1957, Andrzej was a guest on Polish Radio for the first time in his role as a “rebellious young poet.”

Friends from the Palace of Youth, feigning slightly to be under the auspices of the respected periodical *Współczesność*, organized poetry evenings in Warsaw cafés. The audience gathered many people, and the discussions were lively and sometimes quite intense with political overtones. Toward the end, more often than not, the drunken amateur poet Jan Himilbach would

come in and sum up the discussion in his own inimitable “schnapps-bari-  
tone” voice: “You, the intelligentsia, are bullshitting here, but the working  
class doesn’t give a shit about you anyway.”

These literary meetings were followed by debates in some bar that contin-  
ued well into the night. Their regular participant was a certain painter whom  
the Polish October thaw had hit very hard. During the Stalinist period, he  
enjoyed the support and recognition of the authorities, received numerous  
awards, and gained lucrative commissions; he even got a studio in the city  
center. This was all down to the fact that he specialized in portraits of Stalin  
in all sorts of poses, settings, and sizes. He could never meet the demand, re-  
gardless of how many paintings he produced. Unfortunately, soon after Stalin’s  
death, the orders dried up and many of the commissioned works remained  
unclaimed. To make matters worse, the artist realized that he was unable to  
paint anything else due to his alcoholism. All that he had were countless faces  
of the Red Tsar staring down at him in his studio. This was when the painter  
made use of his commercial savvy. He decided to take advantage of a huge  
covert demand prevalent at that time: the lack of places where couples could  
make love. Therefore, he spent all his days sipping firewater in the Harenda  
club, renting his studio furnished with a huge bed in the center to passion-  
ate couples craving intimacy. That said, the couples did not enjoy complete  
privacy, as the Generalissimo of the Soviet Union stared at them from every  
corner. In spite of everything, or perhaps because of it, his services won high  
appreciation in certain circles in Warsaw. Apparently, even subscriptions  
were available. Ultimately, the poor artist became a victim of his own success  
as he drank himself to death. The fate of his artistic legacy remains unknown.

Andrzej Koźmiński came of age as a regular at the U Fukiera restaurant,  
which sold wine at retail prices with no mark-up. The place was always full of  
young people. Guests drank Tunisian red wine or Soviet *matrasinskoe* wine,  
which was awful even by the standards of the time. Sometimes, it was the  
Hungarian *egri bikavér* or Tokay, Riesling, sweet Greek wine from Samos,  
or Bulgarian Sophia. He occasionally managed to earn a little money by  
publishing epigrams and short poems. Once, he even received an award at  
the Łódź Spring of Poets. Then, he became involved in the project “Jazz and  
Poetry: Two Parallel Improvisations.” He briefly managed to get the then fair-  
ly well-known band New Orleans Stompers interested in the idea, but the  
project fell into oblivion after a few practice sessions.

## DAILY LIFE IN THE PROFESSORS' HOUSE

At home, the family listened to BBC Radio every night and less often to Radio Free Europe, as they felt that it was too one-sided. Every broadcast from London began with the characteristic “boom, boom, boom,” which echoed down the Professors’ House stairwell at seven in the evening. Its residents were undoubtedly among the privileged families in the ruined postwar Warsaw. The Professors’ House, built in 1935, felt cozy and safe. The Koźmińskis’ three-room apartment escaped wartime destruction, as the SS seized the building having first evicted members of the university staff. The flat had a bathroom, a separate toilet, two “storerooms,” the obligatory room for the housekeepers next to the kitchen, and a balcony. Most of the tenants had lived in the same house before the war; the Koźmińskis did as well but in a different apartment.

During the occupation, Leon managed to move all the family’s belongings to the apartment in Naruszewicza Street, where they survived the Warsaw Uprising. After the war, everything returned to Rakowiecka Street. The furnishings included modernist furniture commissioned in 1935 at Mr. Dzierła’s carpentry workshop. There were also several kilims in the style popularized by the prewar “Ład” Artists’ Cooperative. After the war, Leon bought two beautiful watercolors by Juliusz Kossak, which marked the beginning of his son’s lifelong passion for collecting paintings.

The apartment had a dimly lit dining room with a large extending table for a dozen people and a row of chairs, which were highly impractical and kept falling apart despite their attractive appearance. There was also Nina’s room with a dressing table and Leon’s professor’s office with a large desk and a typewriter that resounded throughout the house as he tapped out numerous articles, books, and expert reports. Leon often worked weekends, and his son inherited this habit.

An essential item in Leon’s room was a succession of ever-larger radios manufactured by the East German brand Stern, with an inseparable tuning indicator in the form of a green “magic eye.” Family life centered around the radio. They listened to a series of broadcasts featuring former Public Security officer Józef Światło, who had fled to the West, where he revealed the mechanisms of the Stalinist regime in Poland and spicy details of the lives of the



JULIUSZ KOSSAK'S BORDERLAND COSSACK IN THE STEPPE MARKED THE BEGINNING OF ANDRZEJ KOŹMIŃSKI'S PRIVATE COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS.

communist elite, especially President Bierut. They listened to these accounts with interest but without surprise. Andrzej had seen quite a lot as a child and knew what to think about the regime. Moreover, he was aware that they could discuss such matters only at home, inside a trusted circle. Radio news was a topic of breakfast discussions on Sunday mornings, especially when the Szołkowski grandparents visited Warsaw from Szczecin. A TV set arrived in Andrzej's house much later, when he no longer was spending ample time at home.

Once a year, on April 11, the family held a larger party to celebrate Leon's name day. The guest list stayed more or less the same, getting shorter as the years went by. Among the regulars were neighbors and professors: Edward Lipiński, Stanisław Skrzywan, Jerzy Loth, Henryk Piętka, Andrzej Grodek, Marysia Królikowska, and Nina's friends: Mrs. Jasińska and Mrs. Kryńska

with their husbands. In fact, almost everyone was associated with the Warsaw School of Economics. Occasionally, people from outside the university would attend the celebrations, but they were all representatives of the economics world. Jerzy Dietl came from Poznań, and so did Bolesław Kasprowicz, rector of the Higher School of Maritime Trade in Gdynia. Although the state had nationalized his vodka factory, he still had some stock left over and always presented Leon with a bottle or two of the excellent *smorodinovka*, a type of strong blackcurrant liquor. The table was set with appetizers obtained with a lot of effort by Mrs. Lutowska, who prepared the food together with the lady of the house. Vodka was served, but the guests enjoyed it in moderation. Conversations always had absolute priority and often continued until late at night.

During the occupation, Kasprowicz and Leon worked together for the undercover Office of the Western Territories. Many of the people who managed the development of the Recovered Territories in the west and north immediately after the war had links with this secretive unit at the Home Army's Central Command called the Western Institute. The communists later eliminated those people, like the Deputy Minister of the Recovered Territories, Władysław Czajkowski. Acting at the time as Gomułka's deputy, he was murdered in 1947 in unexplained circumstances.

Janek Chabrzycki-Białek was another one of Leon's friends, most likely from the time when Leon stayed in Switzerland. He was the owner of a well-known prewar company selling and manufacturing (or rather assembling) "Modro" watches. Although Janek had a hunchback, he always wore elegant clothes and had perfectly tailored suits. He owned a townhouse on Wilcza Street, not far from Marszałkowska, where he lived in a spacious apartment. His housekeeper kept the whole house in check, and his two Miniature Pinschers acted as his bodyguards, preventing anyone from getting close to their master. During the occupation, Janek ran an "open house." His apartment served as the meeting place of various representatives of the underground, agents of different intelligence services, and Germans. Janek reportedly rendered incredible favors to the Home Army's intelligence services. He rebuilt the townhouse – damaged during the Warsaw Uprising – at his own expense, and in return lived to see it nationalized by the state. Fearful of inspections and unfair taxes, he used to give Leon various valuables for safekeeping, which Leon most often hid inside a folding sofa bed. Janek Chabrzycki-Białek died in the 1960s. As a young man, he planned to remain in Switzerland and

develop his painting skills. Unfortunately, back in the 1930s, his father forced him to return to take over the watch business. Janek drowned his sorrows at this lost opportunity and squandered talent in alcohol, and the “Modro” company never regained its former glory.

At Christmas, Grandma Koźmińska would come down to Warsaw, bringing a big turkey she bred herself, which Andrzej always associated with Christmas abundance. She then stayed in Warsaw until spring. After the war, she regained ownership of her house in Kościerzyna, where she settled, working hard to the benefit of the local community.

In the 1950s, an important tenant moved into the Koźmińskis' apartment: Bob the Fox Terrier. Bob had a real Irish temperament! The family could not let him off the leash because he would pursue an unseen target in a frenzy, and his bathing routine, which was the responsibility of the youngest household member, meant flooding half of the apartment. Nobody except Nina could stay in the kitchen during Bob's meals. Bob loved Nina as only dogs can, but all the other family members were, at best, ignored. He was probably the only household member berating Andrzej when he returned home slightly intoxicated. Bob would throw himself at Andrzej and bite him. In the end, the faithful hound died of a heart condition, most likely because he was constantly worried about everything.

Just the three of them lived a comfortable life together. The housekeeper, Mrs. Lutowska, lived in the area. She kept the apartment tidy, sometimes cooked, and devoted herself with great energy to polishing the floors using some strange, specially weighted device. She discreetly kept an eye on Andrzej when his parents were away from home. She was even credited with saving the nineteen-year-old Andrzej's first trip to Paris in 1960. Nina was staying in Szczecin with her ailing father, Leon was somewhere abroad, and Andrzej arrived from Szczecin on the eve of his departure for France. Instead of packing, he naturally went to the Old Town, where he met the poets Maciek Bordowicz and Basia Sadowska. Together, they headed for the U Fukiera winery. His friends refused to believe him about his upcoming trip to Paris, as traveling to the West was inconceivable at that time. Wanting to provide them with evidence, Andrzej invited everyone to his home and showed them his tickets and passport. In the process, the guests ransacked the contents of his father's minibar and fell into a deep slumber that ruled out Andrzej's ability to catch the next morning's flight.

Fortunately, Nina had previously asked Mrs. Lutowska to give her son a physical wake-up call. So, the housekeeper evicted the whole company in the early hours of the morning and shoved Andrzej into a taxi. Robert Mundell once asked Andrzej if he had ever missed a plane. He truthfully replied in the negative. “You’ve wasted half your life in this case!” summed up the Nobel laureate.

The years before and just after Andrzej’s secondary school final examinations felt like a “moveable feast,” in Hemingway’s parlance. The parents showed surprising tolerance for their son’s youthful passions and antics. They believed that reason and principles instilled from childhood would ultimately prevail.



# TWO UNIVERSITIES PLUS

Andrzej parted with his high school with no regrets, as he already had his own different world, but he had to choose where to study after the graduation. Behaving rather passively in this matter, Andrzej followed his father's footsteps and, in fact, his father's advice. With poetry on his mind, he decided that enrolling in the Faculty of Internal Trade at the Warsaw School of Economics and studying sociology at the University of Warsaw would not form a big obstacle to pursuing his literary talents.

For a while, he considered the Faculty of Foreign Trade but was advised against it due to its penetration by communist services. There was, however, a more important reason to choose the Faculty of Internal Trade. The head of the Faculty's Department of Economics was Aleksy Wakar, considered the most eminent Polish economist despite the hierarchies accepted in the community. Andrzej must have sensed instinctively that one day he would work at a university like his parents, so he chose an alma mater overseen by a genuine expert and unquestionable authority.

To secure his place at the universities of his choice, he first attended a written exam at the Warsaw School of Economics, followed by a meeting with the sociology admissions committee at the University of Warsaw. The committee's chair was his future master's thesis supervisor and friend, then an assistant professor in Professor Ossowski's department, Stefan Nowak, Ph.D. Andrzej secured places at both universities. The emotions quickly subsided, and it was possible to return to U Fukiera and the poets.



ANDRZEJ KOŹMIŃSKI AFTER HIS SECONDARY SCHOOL FINAL EXAMINATIONS.

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## EUROPE WITH THE POLISH TEACHERS' UNION

Back in his high school days, Andrzej enjoyed a wonderful overseas holiday with his father. It was a tour that the Polish Teachers' Union organized for the staff of the Warsaw School of Economics. Its participants included Zygmunt Bosiakowski, who later became the last rector of the Warsaw School of Economics before democratic changes (1983–1990), and his wife, Irena Kostrowicka, Jerzy Holzer, and a lively young couple on their honeymoon. Sociologists Jakub Karpiński, Krzysztof Ostrowski, and Nina Frentzel joined the group. The merry party took a plane to Tirana in Albania. They spent several days on the beach in Durrës, in a seaside hotel that still remembered its prewar years. In Albania, they boarded a Soviet passenger ship, *Beloostrov*, and sailed

around the Peloponnese, with a landfall in Piraeus. They crossed the Bosphorus Strait, admiring Istanbul from the sea, and stopped in Varna, Bulgaria. From there, they traveled to the Romanian city of Constanța, where they spent a few days admiring the magnificent casino, as if transplanted straight from Monte Carlo, and dined in the Ovid Restaurant, which strongly denigrated the memory of the eminent Roman poet who was once an exile in this city.

From Constanța, they set off for Bucharest, staying overnight in a student dormitory, and from Bucharest, they took a train across the Carpathian Mountains to Budapest, where they again enjoyed a few days' rest. The journey then continued to Prague and then back to Warsaw. The entire trip took more than a month. Today, it reads like a brochure from one of the hundreds of travel agencies organizing trips round Europe, but in 1958, this was a truly remarkable expedition. As a seventeen-year-old, Andrzej had a unique opportunity to get an idea of what he would face in his adult life, which was fast approaching.

Greece was his first contact with the West. Shop windows stimulated the imagination and appetite for goods unavailable in socialist countries. However, these goods remained beyond the reach of Polish travelers due to their lack of foreign currency. During a twenty-four-hour stop of *Beloostrov*, Andrzej managed to reach the Acropolis, but its ruins did not impress a boy who came from a completely demolished city.

It is, of course, difficult to offer any synthesis of the impressions a seventeen-year-old gained from this extraordinary journey, but it was certainly an overview of the various forms of real socialism at the time. Prague was still "almost" the West. Albania seemed a pauperized eastern satrapy, incredibly picturesque but dangerous. They drove along the only decent road in the country connecting Tirana and Durrës. The fact that they could take a bus along this road marked a special privilege granted to foreign visitors, as the road was essentially reserved for the communist ruler of Albania, Enver Hoxha, and his entourage. Having your own road to the seaside was undeniably a useful perk of the job!

The seaside International Hotel in Durrës was home to several elegant young Arab-looking men who spoke French among themselves, probably assuming that no one else spoke this language. From the snippets of their conversation, it was clear that they had come to Albania to buy weapons for the Algerian National Liberation Front. When the Poles were exchanging

small amounts of local currency at the only bank in Durrës conducting foreign bank operations, they met these men once again as they were loading packages of hundred-dollar bills into suitcases. It was an unforgettable sight in the late 1950s. The hotel's guests also included two beautiful girls from Poland who drove to Albania with their parents in a green Mercedes. Their father turned out to be some high official at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs who kept his family away from the professors.

Several Albanian military pilots also traveled aboard *Beloostrov*. They were heading for training in Odesa, located in the then-brotherly USSR; however, they never made it. As soon as the ship arrived in the port of Piraeus, they took their leave and, taking the only opportunity, requested asylum. It also emerged that *Beloostrov* had been called *Sobieski* before the war, sailing as a luxury passenger ship under the Polish flag. After the war, the Soviets considered it a war trophy and converted the vessel so it could house more passengers in worse conditions. Fortunately, some air of elegance remained, and the staff were friendly and welcoming.

In the interwar period, Bucharest was famous for its wealth generated by crude oil and agricultural produce originating from the backward Romanian countryside. The city itself was impressive, virtually untouched by the war, full of palaces, luxurious villas and mansions, huge Art Nouveau townhouses, and stunning modernist architecture. All of this was slowly falling into disrepair, covered in dust, dirt, and intrusive communist propaganda.

A group of French-speaking intellectuals and artists, such as Emil Cioran or Mircea Eliade, originated from Romania. They were incredibly influential in France in the second half of the twentieth century, while already in exile. In Romania itself, the stigma of communism seemed particularly crushing.

In Budapest, two years after the tragic Hungarian Revolution of 1956, people avoided political topics for fear of not knowing who they were dealing with. Instead, the nightlife was booming, with cafés, restaurants, and bars open late. Visitors to the “Mátyás Pince” wine bar near Elisabeth Bridge could enjoy excellent Roma music, while the Astoria Hotel organized wild dance parties. It seemed that everyone wanted to forget the recent events. Andrzej returned to these places many times in later years, but in that summer of 1958, in the wake of buried hope, the atmosphere in the city was special.

Prague was a different world altogether. The city gave the impression of being the wealthiest on the entire travel route. There was a wonderful old

town untouched by war, with an abundance of goods in shops that looked only a little worse than those in Athens. In a department store, a red Škoda convertible glistened with understated luxury perched on a revolving platform. Restaurants, cafés, and bars were teeming with people. In this place, life definitely felt “bearable.” Above it all towered a gigantic, macabre statue of Stalin with some group, planted there “for all time” to guard the Vltava River. At that time, Andrzej did not yet know the serenity and moods of works by Hašek or Kundera. A superficial and inexperienced observer would find it difficult to imagine that the Prague Spring would come in less than a decade. Still, the Stalin monument was only demolished in the 1990s.

## SOLID FOUNDATIONS

The Faculty of Internal Trade at the Warsaw School of Economics proved to be an excellent business school, probably the best that could have existed in communist Poland in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Female students were relatively few in number and, therefore, enjoyed understandable attention from their male peers. Women’s dormitories were the venue for all parties. Among the Faculty’s students, there was only a handful of regulars at the popular Warsaw clubs, such as Stodoła or Hybrydy, which Andrzej frequented as a young poet. He had his own author’s evenings but also listened to the work of other writers. Sometimes, his friends from the sociology course dropped in, and on seeing Andrzej performing together with Jerzy Skolimowski or Wojciech Siemion, they developed a certain respect for him.

The Faculty of Internal Trade taught students solid foundations of quantitative analytics, namely mathematics, statistics, accounting, and finance. This was quite a challenge for the poet, as he only got a pass in math at his secondary school final examinations, but he managed to catch up with his studies, as the exams went very well. The basics of accounting have proven exceptionally useful for life. The studies focused on a practical approach thanks to subjects such as organization and techniques of trade, trade economics, and consumer economics. Economic policy was still taught by Professor Jan Drewnowski before he went into exile, and then by his successor, Professor Jan Lipiński Jr. The lectures maintained a very high standard, using modern econometric models. These featured practical exercises where

students learned about cargo transport, which today is logistics. It was all about optimization, at least technically, as discussing economic optimization was impossible in the absence of a market. The same approach governed sales organization and techniques, as well as the distribution and stocking of retail outlets (retail supply chain). The aspect of managing human resources in trade also emerged. The useful but unusual issue of “socialist marketing” appeared only in the 1970s.

Students at the Faculty of Internal Trade also learned foreign languages – taught well but not as intensively as at the Faculty of Foreign Trade. Wanting to secure a little time to himself, Andrzej chose French. As he had learned the French language at home, he had no need to dedicate any time to studying it. His mother, however, strongly encouraged him to take up more sophisticated publications. He also decided to study English because already his first trip to Italy revealed that his knowledge of English was far from adequate. Most of those who opted for the Russian language were repatriates from Soviet Russia after 1956, and this group was quite sizeable.

Lectures on economic history, aimed at the overall development of students, were of the highest quality and given by Andrzej Grodek and his students: Zbigniew Landau, Jerzy Tomaszewski, and Irena Kostrowicka. The theoretical backbone of the entire academic program was political economy, taught by staff from the department headed by Professor Wakar. The economics of capitalism and socialism were separate subjects. The economics of capitalism covered the basics of Marxist theory of value and reproduction, and introduced the elementary concepts of market, price, commodity, and growth. The students used the comprehensive textbook *Political Economy*. Translated from Russian and edited by Konstantin Ostrovityanov, the book was known as “the brick.” As *Political Economy* was very hard to read, everyone attended lectures instead. They were much more interesting and, fortunately, diverged strongly from the textbook.

Despite the evident political pressure, classes in economics did not have an ideological character but mostly focused on terminology and technicalities. Such structured knowledge proved useful in the future. The economics of socialism according to the Professor Wakar School, taught at the Faculty of Internal Trade, comprised the theory of indirect market calculation (in monetary units). In fact, this was a “smuggled” general equilibrium theory developed by the Lausanne School and the theory of direct market calcula-

tion (in natural units). The latter was considered a generalization of economic practice in socialist countries. Followers of the Professor Wakar School argued that direct market calculation by design did not provide opportunities for optimal allocation of resources and incentives to support technological progress. The form of this message was not straightforward, but its meaning remained unambiguous and essentially in line with the beliefs of economists representing the Austrian School, namely Friedrich August von Hayek and Ludwig von Mises – the harshest critics of the socialist economy. In the future, Andrzej Koźmiński was to contribute to the development of this concept as a member of the Political Economy Department team at the Faculty of Internal Trade.

The highly abstract classes in economics proved very difficult to pass. Moreover, Wakar was a rather mediocre lecturer who confined himself mostly to a script reproduced in the 1960s, entitled *Materials for Studying Political Economy of Socialism*. Edited by Wakar himself, the book had reissues in subsequent years. Fortunately, the regime was simply too stupid to understand the true meaning of this concept. Such a characteristic is common among authoritarian regimes. The students, in turn, were able to understand a lot, provided they made the necessary intellectual effort, with many taking advantage of this opportunity.

In contrast, the seminar classes taught by members of Professor Wakar's department were excellent. Janusz Beksiak, Ph.D., once asked Andrzej to prepare an overview of the work of the then little-known François Quesnay. This eighteenth-century French physiocrat was the creator of the famous economic circular flow diagram, a precursor to the input–output model. With no Internet in existence, assignments of this type were quite challenging yet interesting.

The theory of economic growth was taught by Michał Kalecki, to this day the most famous Polish economist in the world. His exams proved extremely difficult, as Kalecki believed that God deserved the top grade; he himself knew slightly less, while students could get a passing grade at best. Andrzej's return on investment formula earned him the second-best grade possible. Great success! These lectures had the form of a unique performance. A small elderly gentleman, whose appearance brought to mind the diminutive Jewish tailor Lasik Roitschwantz depicted in Ilya Ehrenburg's famous novel, Kalecki would always arrive on time and, without looking at the students, he would

start writing equations on the blackboard while muttering something to himself. In the course of his lecture, he wiped the blackboard several times and then asked the audience for questions or comments. Most of those present were familiar with his publications, but only the professorial “elders” attending the lecture used to speak up, namely Kazimierz Łaski, Ignacy Sachs, and sometimes the young assistant professor Jurek Osiatyński. After listening to the question, Kalecki would once again cover the blackboard with various formulas and requested questions, and this process continued until the end of the class.

Nonetheless, attending his lectures was a thoroughly worthwhile endeavor. Kalecki’s theory of aggregate effective demand remains relevant today, as does modernized Keynesianism. Joan Robinson, the British left-wing economist from the Keynesian School, repeatedly admitted that Kalecki was ahead of Keynes. She was not alone in this opinion, and it is a known fact that Keynes read Kalecki. Andrzej Koźmiński met Robinson in Rome, where he heard her address the topic in this vein. This conversation took place in the apartment of Professor Mauro Sylos Labini, whom Andrzej had met in Warsaw during his visit to the Warsaw School of Economics. The then vice rector for International Relations, Professor Łaski, remembering Andrzej’s first visit to Italy, instructed him to look after the guest of honor and his wife during their stay in Poland. Therefore, Andrzej bought tickets to various shows, organized sightseeing tours, and accompanied the guests to theater performances. In the end, he decided that he was not overly fond of being a guide. However, when Andrzej found himself in Rome again, this well-known Italian economist with extensive contacts regularly provided him with invitations. This was how Andrzej met Claudio Napoleoni, Sandro Petriccione, and Joan Robinson.

## MUCH MORE THAN LEARNING

There was little pressure to study ideological subjects. Students at the Faculty of Internal Trade could choose between Marxist philosophy and the history of the labor movement. Everyone chose the latter mostly because of the lecturer: the former voivode, head of regional administration of Szczecin, Leonard Borkowicz, who tended to use Maciej as his first name.



Borkowicz was a prewar Polish communist of Jewish origin who ended up in the USSR during the war. There, the authorities posted him to the First Polish Army, where he served as commander of a cavalry division with the rank of colonel. His military rank might have influenced his sense of style. Borkowicz resembled a Polish nobleman: he wore a mustache, high boots, and long leather coats. He was a fierce opponent of Russians at a time of decisions about the future location of Szczecin in relation to the Polish–German border. In reward for his efforts, he got the post of the voivode of Szczecin and became known for his lavish manner of fulfilling the tasks of this office. Then, the state appointed him ambassador to Czechoslovakia. During his posting, he physically assaulted his deputy, who was supervising him on behalf of the “services.” Understandably, his actions resulted in disfavor.

The authorities remembered Borkowicz after the Polish October and made him the Head of the Central Administration of Cinematography. His work led to the collaboration of Polish filmmakers with Marek Hłasko, whose scripts served as the basis for filming *The Depot of the Dead*, *Noose*, *End of the Night*, and *The Eighth Day of the Week* with the well-known German actress Sonja Ziemann. During his trip to the Cannes Film Festival, Borkowicz caused a sensation by holding talks with Western producers on numerous potential coproductions. Unsurprisingly, all these efforts ended in a way typical for Gomułka-era Poland: *The Eighth Day of the Week* remained shelved for many years, Hłasko went into exile, which ended in his tragic death in Wiesbaden, Ziemann returned to Germany, and Borkowicz was sent to the Department of Party History at the Central Committee of the Communist Party for eternal “safekeeping.” Nonetheless, this was still progress compared to the recent Stalinist times, where people accused of similar excesses finished either in the Gulag or dead. As an “expert” on party history – of the only party that mattered, of course – Borkowicz was told to give lectures at the Warsaw School of Economics. Already at the start of the term, the lecturer entered the same good grade in the study records of all his students while admitting aloud that talking about such nonsense would be a waste of time. His lectures consisted of anecdotes and jokes, mostly from the interwar period, and thus had a very high attendance rate. Therefore, one cannot say that the students rejected all communists.

The party was not particularly active on the “student front,” as its main concern was university governance and the distribution of positions and

gifts. Party members could take advantage of specific benefits, such as foreign trips, internships, and attractive jobs. In return, they were expected to show obedience and express the “right views” with a certain degree of conviction. These were genuine commercial transactions devoid of any emotion. Only the older generation of party members sometimes showed devotion, but they were gradually dying out. In fact, it would have been quite a challenge to find “real communists” at the university. For this reason, the system changeover went without a glitch. It was only later, in independent Poland after 1989, when it became clear that socialist propaganda had succeeded in leaving deep marks in the collective mentality.

Student life at the Warsaw School of Economics was not overly rousing intellectually, and compared to sociology at the University of Warsaw, it was downright dull. Studying sociology and participating in the capital’s artistic life, Andrzej “did his shift” at the Warsaw School of Economics without getting too involved in student affairs. Never drawn to gambling, he avoided the Hades club, where the official game was bridge, but the players in the club’s basement were actively engaged in rounds of poker. Instead, he was a sincere supporter of his friends Stefan Kwiatkowski and Marek Kamiński, who founded the university’s cabaret troupe “Wielokrążek” – Multicircle. The performances were high on jokes and low on politics.

The festive New Year’s Eve balls held inside the university’s main hall, called the Parachute Hall, were part of the tradition. One year, the students decorated the hall with a giant black bull equipped with an appropriately sized reproductive organ. Such an ornament displeased the prudish Rector Kazimierz Romaniuk, whose uncle was supposedly Bishop Henryk Romaniuk. Thus, he ordered stripping the bull of its manhood. When the clock struck midnight to the accompaniment of the popping of Soviet champagne corks, the bull regained its symbol of masculinity to the great cheers of the jubilant crowd.

In those years, politics at the Warsaw School of Economics was evident almost exclusively on official occasions, such as various party or youth meetings. Andrzej refused any involvement, consistently avoiding all types of memberships. Some colleagues saw it as a tiresome ritual, others as a springboard to a future career, which made them more excited about politics and careful about sticking with the right people. This was particularly true of the Faculty of Foreign Trade.

Internal trade graduates found employment in a variety of enterprises, mainly commercial: Społem and MHD retail chains, the service sector, LOT Polish Airlines, or Orbis travel agency. At that time, students received “sponsored scholarships,” which obliged them to take up employment with their sponsor on graduation. For this reason, a group of Andrzej’s peers started working for LOT Polish Airlines and remained there for the rest of their professional lives. Over the following years, it was possible to draw on social capital in the form of fellow students. They had all dispersed around the country, and contacts had become sporadic and infrequent, but they were always ready to help if there was such a need. In the “shortage economy,” it was useful to have colleagues active in the trade or administrative sectors. Several of Andrzej’s friends went into private business after 1989.

The sociology studies were a completely different story. While the Warsaw School of Economics had more than one hundred students in each year, there was only one group recruited for sociology, which comprised little over twenty students. This was only the second year after the reinstatement of sociology as a university course at the University of Warsaw. During the Stalinist period, the authorities had canceled the program for political reasons. As a result, sociology students basked in an aura of uniqueness and elitism, enjoying the “forbidden fruit.” The sociology division of the university’s Faculty of Philosophy had its headquarters in a presentable historic building on the corner of Krakowskie Przedmieście and Traugutta. The two different years merged both in terms of the attended classes and in social settings. The teaching staff included many renowned figures of Polish science, which enjoyed increased international attention after the Polish October 1956. In those days, Warsaw was an important and frequently visited destination on the sociological map of the world. The city welcomed eminent scientists almost on a daily basis, and these included Talcott Parsons, Charles Mills, Ralf Dahrendorf, Renate Mayntz, and Paul Lazarsfeld. It was during these events, which Andrzej did not want to miss, that he became aware of the shortcomings of his English.

## KUBA KARPIŃSKI

Andrzej began to meet his friend Kuba Karpiński on a more frequent basis. A student of philosophy who also studied sociology with Andrzej, Kuba was a real celebrity in the student community. Despite his pronounced stammer, which ultimately subsided over the years, his papers delivered at seminars or meetings of philosophers and sociologists became important social and scientific events due to his immense erudition and brilliant thought processes. While still a student, Kuba was the first to start publishing articles in major scientific journals such as *Sociological Studies (Studia Socjologiczne)*, published since 1961. Researchers still cite his early works on disputes in the social sciences or indicators of social phenomena. Kuba also edited a special student issue of *Sociological and Political Studies (Studia Socjologiczno-Polityczne)*, in which Andrzej Koźmiński published one of his first scientific articles.

A wonderful, witty conversationalist, Kuba was an excellent companion at countless social events who always enjoyed extraordinary success with the ladies. It was on Kuba's advice that Andrzej signed up for two seminars headed by two stars of Polish sociology who completed scholarships at the best American universities: Stefan Nowak and Andrzej Malewski, who died tragically right at the start of his career in 1963. Malewski championed the idea of integrating social sciences and opposed their division into narrow, specialized disciplines which refuse to cooperate with each other, detaching themselves from other fields by means of artificial language.

## FATHERS OF CONTEMPORARY POLISH SOCIOLOGY

Polish sociology had its own traditions that developed during the interwar period. Florian Znaniecki, Stefan Czarnowski, Ludwik Krzywicki, and Józef Chałasiński – these names have already entered or should enter the pantheon of European science. It is to the great credit of Nina Markiewicz-Lagneau that a comprehensive monograph on Polish interwar sociology appeared in France. Stanisław and Maria Ossowski both represented this tradition of conducting scientific research in the postwar period. They inspired Stefan Nowak and, to some extent, Andrzej Koźmiński. Nowak took further steps

into the modern era in Poland: he pioneered quantitative, empirical survey research conducted in the American style. For example, he collaborated with Lazarsfeld, whom he invited to Poland. He also authored the legendary “Students of Warsaw” survey. Using a representative sample, Nowak examined the attitudes of the student community. The results differed considerably from the authorities’ expectations, who were hoping for the involvement of the younger generation in the advancement of socialism. In fact, the survey proved something quite the opposite: the students’ focus was on personal and private matters, as well as their identification with the family and small peer groups. Authoritarian regimes seem to believe that societies should share their phobias, obsessions, and frustrations. To this end, they activate shameless propaganda and education apparatuses, which, unsurprisingly, have exactly the opposite effect. Looking from the perspective of 2022, nothing has changed in this respect. Ardent Catholics give rise to equally ardent atheists, a mirror image of what was happening in communist Poland.

From Nowak, Andrzej learned the sociological craft in its neopositivist version, namely sampling, constructing, and piloting questionnaires, as well as principles of statistical analysis. Professor Klemens Szaniawski was known for delivering excellent lectures in statistics. He also taught the philosophical, logical, and methodological foundations of statistics and its implications. Andrzej regarded the top grade he got on the statistics exam as one of his greatest achievements, as Professor Szaniawski was a particularly demanding examiner.

Andrzej’s lecturers in his sociology course included many past, present, and future luminaries of Polish science. Students judged the lecturers’ prestige by the publications they were expected to know. Such healthy snobbery is sorely lacking in academia today. The logic tutor was Professor Janina Kotarbińska, an extremely strict examiner who regularly failed more than half of the students at each year. Scoring well in the logic exam was another important achievement for Andrzej.

Notwithstanding his studies at the Warsaw School of Economics, Andrzej voluntarily attended lectures in economics conducted by Professor Edward Lipiński, whom he knew personally and whom he saw almost every day, as the professor lived vis-à-vis the Koźmińskis on the third floor of the Professors’ House in Rakowiecka Street. These lectures were simply extraordinary. Professor Lipiński had a habit of running into the auditorium slightly late,

sitting down behind his lectern, and looking through the *Życie Warszawy* (Life of Warsaw) newspaper. This continued until he found some information or comment he could use to begin his lecture. It could have been news about rising oil prices or problems experienced by the Polish construction industry, practically anything. The lecture was always fascinating and often contained political allusions, which the young listeners absorbed greedily.

Lectures on the history of social thought were the domain of Professor Nina Assorodobraj, wife of Professor Witold Kula and mother of Andrzej's friend Marcin Kula. Like Andrzej, Marcin was studying two subjects – sociology and history – and later also became a professor. Jerzy and Barbara Szacki ran two groups of practicals in the history of social thought. These highly enjoyable classes relied on the manuscript of *Social Thought from Lore to Science* by Howard Becker and Harry Barnes, which Jerzy Szacki himself translated. As there was a long wait for one of the several copies of the worn-out typescript, one had to read it quickly and hand it over to the next person in line. Witold Jedlicki, a friend of Andrzej's, was in charge of Introduction to Sociology practicals. After Jedlicki's emigration to Israel and later to the USA, they wrote letters to each other. Their correspondence was especially lively when Andrzej lived abroad, as he no longer had to worry about the prying eyes of uninvited readers. Letters arriving from the West were often subject to censorship. Jedlicki wanted to know more about the reception of his famous article "Chamy i żydy," published in the *Kultura* monthly in Paris in 1962. Unfortunately, open correspondence on the subject would not have been safe.

Julian Hochfeld, in turn, was a lecturer of the sociology of politics. A leader of the Polish Socialist Party, Hochfeld was later eliminated from its leadership circle by Józef Cyrankiewicz as a result of the party's "unification" with the Polish Workers' Party in December 1948. Andrzej remembers taking an exam with Nina Frentzel at Hochfeld's flat located at Aleja Róż, home to representatives of the prominent communist "aristocracy." On that day, Hochfeld already had his suitcases packed and ready to depart. The next day, he was leaving for Paris to take up a position as one of UNESCO's directors. He died soon after. Hochfeld was a well-educated, nondogmatic Marxist. He wrote, lectured, and published in this spirit and had a reputation for integrity in politics, science, and life in general.

His successor was Zygmunt Bauman, whom Andrzej tried to avoid. Membership in the Internal Security Corps, notorious for its persecution of

Home Army soldiers, was not the best recommendation, and Bauman was an officer in this unit right after the war. Rumors that circled about him were best left unchecked. Still, Bauman's almost hagiographic biography by Artur Domosławski mentions this fact only in passing. His prolific publication output has never commanded the same respect from students as the rare but influential and intellectually intensive publications by Nowak or Malewski.

More than sixty years after his graduation, Professor Andrzej Koźmiński admitted that the Institute of Sociology of the University of Warsaw gave him solid sociological foundations. To this end, students prepared practical exercises and papers, such as the one Andrzej wrote for Professor Osowski's class. Andrzej based his paper – focusing on seasonality in Inuit communities – on an essay by Marcel Mauss, published in French in *Annales sociologiques* in the 1920s. Classes in sociological research methods comprised research practice in preparing questionnaires, conducting participant and nonparticipant observation, and even sociometry according to Jacob L. Moreno's concept of reconstructing interpersonal relations. Despite the authorities' efforts to isolate Polish social sciences from the West's influence, there was only a slight delay in the arrival of new ideas in Poland.

## THE TRIAL OF HANNA RUDZIŃSKA

The “poisoned breath” of politics affected sociology students much more acutely than students of the Warsaw School of Economics. This might have stemmed from their firmly established beliefs and spontaneous reactions to events. Already in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the authorities became increasingly concerned about society's post-October liberalization and opening up to the West. Fighting “revisionism” was the order of the day. This resulted in restrictions on trips to conferences and scholarships and frequent refusals to issue passports. A turning point came with the publication of the famous *Open Letter to the Party* by Jacek Kuroń and Karol Modzelewski in 1965, demanding liberalization and democratization of the Communist Party. Poland saw the beginning of arrests of those who were rebellious enough to dream of “socialism with a human face.”

In 1962, the trial and sentencing of Andrzej's friend Hanna Rudzińska was widely publicized. The court accused Rudzińska of having contact with

the Paris-based *Kultura*. Fortunately, she was released quite quickly. The later Prime Minister (in 1991–1992), lawyer Jan Olszewski, was Hanna’s defense counsel. He played an outstanding role in her release, as he did for many other oppositionists. Andrzej met the lawyer at Hanna’s place quite often at various social, political, and intellectual events, attended by literally everyone and held in her tiny apartment on Konstytucji Square. These guests included Stefan Kisielewski, Paweł Jasienica, Stefan Nowak, whom Andrzej knew from the University of Warsaw, as well as Adam Podgórecki, Jan Strzelecki, Andrzej Malewski, and Nina Frentzel.

Hanna acted as secretary of the Crooked Circle Club, whose meetings Andrzej attended as a young and shy listener among such esteemed luminaries. Cigarette smoke always shrouded these crowded get-togethers, as smoking was a given in those days. The hierarchical structure of debaters remained clearly evident. Opinion leaders and pundits, as we would call them today, were at its very top. Others could also speak, but only if they had something particularly interesting to say.

At the time of Hanna’s arrest and trial, the authorities closed down the Crooked Circle Club in their efforts to “combat revisionism.” Hanna was a person who held various opposition circles together by copy typing texts, manifestos, responses, essays, and everything created in this environment. Moreover, she organized countless ad hoc events in her tiny apartment, running an “open house” in the best sense of the word. People were always welcome and could always count on receiving the necessary support. Some say that without Hanna, no patriotic opposition would have formed in communist Poland. Her daughter, Teresa Bochwic, mentioned this in the introduction to her mother’s memoirs. After the closure of the Crooked Circle Club in 1962, Hanna became secretary of the Polish Sociological Association, where she successfully continued her mission. It would be fair to say that this mission was a free Poland.

## TACKLING QUESTIONNAIREMANIA

The next stage in tightening the screw on social sciences was the fight against “questionnairemania” – empirical sociology represented by Stefan Nowak and his circle. The issue was all the more important because Nowak’s patronage and participation saw the establishment of the Public Opinion Research



Centre (OBOP) of Polish Radio. This was the only institution of its kind in the socialist countries, conducting surveys among Poles using representative samples and publishing the surveys' results. Anna Pawełczyńska oversaw the research center. A distant member of the Koźmiński family, Anna was a former Auschwitz prisoner who wrote a shocking book on the subject. After the Polish October 1956, she registered with the party so that she could establish and manage the facility. Such attitudes emerged within intellectual circles immediately after the onset of Gomułka's thaw.

The center employed many young sociologists on a full- or part-time basis, because research conducted by interviewers and the manual processing of results was very labor-intensive. Driven by curiosity, guests traveled from all over the world, but particularly from the USSR and the Eastern Bloc countries. Nevertheless, much time passed before similar institutions appeared elsewhere. Many years later, the famous Levada Center appeared in Moscow based on its Polish prototype.

The chief Marxist of the communist regime, Professor Adam Schaff, published several articles against survey research in the early 1960s, calling it "questionnairemania." He directed his words specifically against Stefan Nowak and his habilitation dissertation. All in all, little came out of it apart from a few statements by party "yes-people." In the meantime, Polish empirical sociology continued to develop and act as a reference point for researchers in other "people's democracies" for many years to come. Soon after, Nowak obtained his habilitation, became a docent, and entered the history of Polish and European sociology for good. He celebrated his successful habilitation at the National Museum, or more accurately, inside the tied accommodation of his father-in-law, Professor Stanisław Lorentz, who was the museum's director. And what a party it was! Everyone felt that everything was possible in Poland. Guests leaving the party on the cold morning after were ready to conquer the world.

Andrzej Koźmiński's first article, published in 1962 in the *Życie Gospodarcze* (Economic Life) weekly, concerned the defense of empirical sociology and was entitled "Empirical Sociology and Economic Practice." The article aimed to emphasize the practical value of sociological research conducted according to neopositivist methodology à la Nowak.

Andrzej had to face Professor Adam Schaff on the occasion of his philosophy exam. He received a rather surprising question about the

“principles of dialectics according to Stalin.” The year was 1959 or 1960, so Andrzej expressed his amazement at a question that seemed taken out of a very dusty file. Professor Schaff ignored the remark, clearly unwilling to amend his questions, repeated over the years. Or perhaps he doubted the resilience of liberalization? This situation aptly illustrates the intellectual condition of orthodox Marxism.

## EXPEDITION TO RETRIEVE CHŁAPOWSKI’S SWORD

Mastering the sociological craft became a source of decent earnings for Andrzej already during his university studies. He was hired mainly by economists from the Warsaw School of Economics who struggled with research requiring sociological methods. Commissioned by the Cooperative Research Institute, the students were to conduct a survey study of Polish villages. The researchers aimed to investigate the few village cooperatives that had not spontaneously dissolved after the Polish October. Although those units had previously received an ineptly worded questionnaire, this brought no effect. Consequently, sociologists were to travel to these “Polish kolkhozes” to interview their management and members.

Therefore, a small party comprising Andrzej, Dorota Morawska, and Nina Frentzel dutifully set off for the village of Turew. The Poznańskie region harbored several such cooperatives. They reached a village with a research station run by the Polish Academy of Sciences, and this was where problems began. A beautiful manor house, modernized before the Second World War, served as their accommodation. Dorota, who was the daughter of the estate’s last owners, immediately began attracting the local inhabitants’ attention. Visibly impressed by the last master’s daughter, the employees brought in gifts of local produce: homemade cold cuts, honey, and cheeses, while the head of the local distillery, who also remembered the old days, fetched a barrel of his product, which blended exceptionally well with the local honey. During their interviews, the students discovered that the good results achieved by an institution as bizarre as a cooperative were possible owing to the cultural patterns formed before the war.

It was also in the village of Turew where Andrzej embarked on an unsuccessful expedition to retrieve the sword of Dezydery Chłapowski, a brave

Napoleonic officer. Supposedly a gift from the Emperor, the sword continued to decorate the salon of the state-owned palace instead of being in the possession of the rightful heiress Dorota Morawska. Having enjoyed a drink of rectified spirit mixed with honey, Andrzej decided to correct this mistake and the injustice of history. Late in the evening, he made his way through the palace corridors to the drawing room with the hope of retrieving Chłapowski's sword. It was dark, so he had to move very carefully. Suddenly, he shrieked in horror as his foot felt a dead body lying on the floor. As it turned out later, the spread-eagled body on the carpet was that of the director of the local outpost of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Admittedly, he was still alive but undoubtedly dead drunk. The director's "dead body" only muttered something incomprehensible. Andrzej's efforts to retrieve the sword failed.

## KURNAL'S MUSKETEERS

The second project concerned a study of trade employees' attitudes and was led by the then-docent Jerzy Kurnal, who completed a Fulbright scholarship at Pittsburgh University. From his stay in the USA, Kurnal brought back the concept of employee integration, which one could define as employees identifying with their company and its goals. This was Andrzej's first contact with the team addressing management aspects at the Warsaw School of Economics. The project culminated in several publications and the formation of a group of "three musketeers": Stefan Kwiatkowski, Marek Kamiński, and Andrzej Koźmiński. Together, they continued to work on various projects for many years to come. At their alma mater, the "musketeers" conducted research into the state-controlled, albeit formally cooperative, Społem retail chain.

They traveled all over the country to visit Społem outlets and studied employee attitudes by conducting interviews. During this research, they became convinced of the need for pilot studies using questionnaires which check if the respondents understand the questions correctly. When a young female sales assistant was asked about her relationship with her manager, she blushed and whispered: "How did you know?"

Another study they did concerned fraud in the food service industry. Professor Jacek Marecki, the future dean of the Faculty of Internal Trade, provided them with assistance. This was a period when the relatively few,

often besieged cooperative and state-owned catering establishments were becoming a source of unlawful income for the staff. For such a money-making scheme to work well, full cooperation and total loyalty of the service staff and those working in the kitchen, pantry, and bar was essential. There were no exceptions to the rule. The young researcher asked what would happen if someone refused to be implicated. He learned that “if persuasion didn’t work, you had to frame the person for something so that they got fired or went to jail.” These are the same brazen operating methods of syndicates in companies and organizations of all kinds.

## CONSULTATIONS WITH PROFESSOR WAKAR

Both of Andrzej’s master’s theses, namely in economics and sociology, focused on management aspects. While studying at the Faculty of Internal Trade, he attended seminars of Professor Janusz G. Zieliński, who was completing his habilitation with a dissertation titled “Big Business.” Zieliński got the necessary resources for the dissertation from the USA, and the work dealt with management aspects rather than economics.

Influenced by Zieliński, Andrzej formulated the title of his master’s thesis as “Managers of Contemporary Capitalist Enterprises.” The professor soon left for Nigeria, where he was to work as a visiting professor for a year, handing over the thesis adviser’s role to Professor Wakar. The latter accepted the theme of the thesis with some interest and added Andrzej to the elite group of his two students: the “pure economist” Ursula Libura and the “sociologizing” Andrzej Koźmiński.

Once a week, the two of them would go to the professor’s apartment and provide an overview of the subsequent chapters of their theses, reading aloud the passages they had written. Professor Wakar’s beloved German Shepherd Szura was also a regular participant in these home seminars. Lying at the master’s feet, the dog watched the students closely from under lowered eyelids. Andrzej knew this process well. During these consultations, the professor formulated comments and gave his advice only after hearing from both students. He listened very carefully, taking no notes. He also rarely interrupted to ask for clarification. The professor’s remarks typically led to

a short discussion in which he encouraged the students to voice their own opinions. At times, he made humorous remarks.

Andrzej considered visits to Professor Wakar's home an extraordinary experience. The two students made every effort to prepare suitably before every such meeting. In time, it became clear that the professor would seek to employ them both in his department. Andrzej's thesis was published by Książka i Wiedza in 1966. In 2000, Alina Gruberowa, the head of this publishing house who made the decision to release Andrzej's thesis, attended his lecture at the Polish embassy in Stockholm. After the 1968 Polish antisemitic purge, she moved to Sweden with her family. They were both touched by this reunion so many years later.

## MASTER'S DEGREE IN HR

While studying sociology, Andrzej signed up for a master's seminar with Professor Ossowski. Unfortunately, the scholar died soon after, so Stefan Nowak took over the seminar, while still in the process of completing his habilitation. Andrzej had previously met Nowak in informal circumstances, especially during the get-togethers organized in Hanna Rudzińska's apartment. Andrzej was probably Nowak's first MA student. The subject he chose was the determinants of labor productivity. As he did not have the means to conduct his own survey, Andrzej decided to refer to a secondary analysis of research carried out by other scholars and in other locations. He used published findings of empirical studies conducted in the USA within the framework of human relations. In 1965, the result appeared as "Certain Psychological Determinants of Labor Productivity" in the periodical *Sociological Studies*.

Andrzej completed exceptional university studies, and everywhere he went, he always felt proud of the quality of his education. He was suitably prepared for either an academic career or the practical implementation of his knowledge. However, his overall academic preparation would have been incomplete without the three foreign lessons he mastered while still at university: French, Italian, and Russian.

## A FRENCH DEPARTMENT STORE

The French lesson focused on practicality. Andrzej completed an internship at the Nouvelles Galeries department store in Orléans, a medium-sized city ruled for generations by members of the local bourgeoisie. He went through every department, starting with a large self-service grocery shop located in the basement and then progressing through homeware, men's and women's clothing, electronics, warehousing, transport, accounting, advertising, and public relations. It was a modern enterprise for its time, managed by a family of related major shareholders who communicated quite well with each other and formed an affinity group.

While in Orléans, Andrzej learned about the decision-making mechanisms related to the structure and sourcing of supplies, pricing policy, promotion methods, and logistics management, as well as selecting, training, and motivating employees. Each department gave him a simple task while allowing him to observe what happened there. In those years, the company benefited from excellent postwar prosperity – twenty-five glorious years, as the French economist Jean Fourastié called this era. Other advantages included the store's city center location, a brand that was well-established even before the war, and economies of scale, which allowed the company to compete effectively with small merchants. Each position had clearly defined and meticulously measured targets: turnover, margins, costs, and dynamics.

For a young man who had come from early Gomułka Poland, such knowledge of how a commercial enterprise operated in a competitive market was simply invaluable. Seemingly of little practical use in the socialist “economy,” it still provided some point of reference for both management theory and consultancy.

Nouvelles Galeries d'Orléans was co-owned by the Chapeau family. Louis Chapeau, the family's senior, was a friend of Leon Koźmiński from before the war. Leon met Louis while he was researching French department stores, to which he dedicated his habilitation dissertation. In 1958, the entire management of Nouvelles Galeries and several other businessmen from Orléans made a study trip to Poland and the USSR. In Poland, their host was Leon Koźmiński on behalf of the Institute of Internal Trade. The trip, which occurred during a political “thaw” in Poland and the Soviet Union, resulted in an internship invitation for Andrzej.

From the time of Andrzej's visit to Orléans in 1960, Claude Chapeau and Andrzej remained close friends until Claude's death in 2009. Thanks to the family's hospitality, Andrzej participated in the life of the French *grande bourgeoisie* and liked its taste, which was completely unknown to those living under real socialism. He also learned that such a life had to be earned. Claude was an important activist and co-founder of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), and this fact helped Andrzej become its member as the only person from a socialist country! The membership provided Andrzej with a wonderful opportunity to attend several international congresses as a speaker, including London in 1978 and Orléans in 1975.

In 1960, not all the bosses at the Nouvelles Galeries were happy with the presence of a Polish intern, suspecting him of being a communist spy. They found it difficult to understand that not every visitor from behind the Iron Curtain was a communist. This might have been the reason why most of the staff treated Andrzej with much sympathy. He even got invitations to private homes of rank-and-file employees, which is quite a rare occurrence in France.

In the 1970s, contacts with Claude and Nouvelles Galeries d'Orléans became a source of extremely valuable business lessons. At the start of the 1970s, Claude went on a study trip to the USA to learn about the latest retail trends. He witnessed the growth of supermarket chains and shopping centers. On his return, he informed the French family that their business was in its final stage and that they were likely to start losing money any minute. With its limited retail space, lack of parking, and – despite everyone's best efforts – its low turnover, the store would soon become unable to compete with large retail facilities located on the outskirts of cities. Claude suggested selling the department store and its entire infrastructure with warehouses, using the money to purchase several large plots near access roads to the city, and building the first supermarket on one of these plots. Had the Chapeau family implemented this plan, they would have had unlimited opportunities to expand and multiply their wealth, just like the founders of the Auchan or Leclerc chains. Unfortunately, the family rejected Claude's idea with disdain, but he refused to quit. Unwilling to lose a significant part of his assets, he decided to sell his forty-percent stake in the company. Deciding against the purchase of Claude's share, the family was forced to sell its own share of the business. A major French chain acquired the entire business for a very good price. Mortally offended, the family stopped talking to Claude. Instead,

they should have been grateful to him because they sold the business at peak value, ahead of the downward trend that soon followed. Claude's prediction shortly became reality. With supermarkets appearing on the periphery of the provincial city, the centrally located department store rapidly began to lose its clientele and fall into decline. Claude did not choose to reinvest his money in modern retail.

Andrzej's French lesson included a small Russian element. His mother instructed him to contact her friends from the Russian White émigré community, who had lived in France since the early 1920s. Many of them were still living out of suitcases in the hope of an imminent return to Russia, a country they missed greatly. The younger generation fared better. However, they all suffered from the same disease, which one could diagnose as an incurable imperial complex. They believed that after the overthrow of communism (when? how? by whom?), Poland must remain within the "natural" Russian sphere of influence, defined by culture, history, and geopolitics. They regarded the Vistula River as a "natural" border of the Russian empire. On discovering their beliefs, Andrzej quickly broke off contact with these émigrés. The events of the following decades demonstrated that the concept of "Russian order" remains very firmly rooted in Russian mentality. Even the collapse of communism and Boris Yeltsin's democratic "experiment" failed to change this state of minds.

The forests near Paris in Sainte-Geneviève-des-Bois are home to a beautiful Russian Orthodox church, a cemetery, and the "Russian House," a kind of shelter for Russian émigrés. Visitors to the cemetery will be able to find graves of famous Russians who died in exile: Ivan Bunin, Rudolf Nureyev, and members of the imperial family. There are also monuments to an army of thirty thousand Cossacks, fifteen thousand soldiers of the Kornilov Division, in which Professor Aleksy Wakar served, and many White Army generals and officers. To this day, the cemetery has an air of the fallen empire and its victims. For many, this is a cause for nostalgia. Visiting the place in the 1960s, Andrzej did not share these emotions, as every day, he had to deal with a contemporary version of the same "insatiable empire" in Poland. After the Second World War, Russia transformed Poland into its base for further expansion to the West, justifying this move ideologically with communism and strategically with its own security. In the eyes of Russia, the only safe borders are those with Russian troops stationed on both sides.



## IN ROME WITH GRETA GARBO

The Italian lesson comprised two internships in Rome: one at the state investment bank Istituto Mobiliare Italiano (IMI) in 1961 and one at the state agency Southern Italy Development Fund (Sviluppo Mezzogiorno) in 1962. Andrzej got his first internship as part of the international student organization AIESEC (Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales), which had just started cooperation with the Polish Students' Association. Andrzej was never its member; he only qualified because of his good command of French.

The second internship was IMI's arrangement as a certain token of gratitude. In total, Andrzej spent about five months in Rome, and during this time, he mastered Italian quite well, although writing still caused him great difficulty. In contrast, conversations and reading were no longer a problem. Above all, however, he managed to perfect his English, mostly through spending a lot of time in the company of an Australian lady called Marlene. For a while, people even noticed his Australian accent. Unfortunately, Marlene also imparted to him a reluctant attitude toward Australia. Her dream was to never see her country again, as she considered it synonymous with crudeness. She uttered this thought while sitting on the grand terrace of a huge flat in Trastevere, where she lived and where Andrzej was such a frequent visitor that neighbors called him *Signore da Signorina Australiana*. He only got rid of his prejudice against Australia after his successful visit to the country in the early 1990s.

When in Rome, Andrzej's favorite establishments included Trattoria da Gonippo, located in Trastevere. One of the waiters was the owner's twelve-year-old son, Carlo. Upon Andrzej visiting the restaurant one last time to say goodbye before leaving Rome, Carlo was in tears, and the regulars wished the Pole *buon viaggio*. During his later stays in Rome, he never located Trattoria da Gonippo again – it seemed to have disappeared. Most likely, it was a place made of magic.

While at IMI, he landed at the Ufficio Studi (Research Department). Everyone in this bizarre institution seemed to have been related. The boss, who appeared at work infrequently in his white Alfa Romeo Spider, was the nephew of the bank's president. Employees included a retired general,

someone's mistress, a former politician who turned out to be a very friendly communist, and two young lawyers from well-connected families. Social life flourished at numerous dinner parties and banquets. The offices were located right next to the presidential palace on Quirinal Hill, and all employees could benefit from the services of an excellent staff canteen. The building had an elevator operated by a pleasant young man in uniform named Giancarlo.

This period of dynamic development of postwar Italy was known as the *Miracolo Italiano*. Rome pulsed with life without a complete overrun by tourists, as is the situation today. Visitors to the famous Via Veneto could see the *dolce vita* in person, just like in a film by Fellini. Anita Ekberg strolled around with some large wild cat on a leash, additionally standing out from the crowd because of her height and statuesque beauty. In the parking lot in front of the famous Da Meo Patacca nightclub, a rider on a white horse helped drivers park their cars. The famous tailor Brioni on Via del Corso advertised himself as Khrushchev's tailor. Donald Trump later used the company's services; indeed, Brioni's clientele was slightly out of the ordinary.

At that moment in time, everything seemed possible in Rome. Andrzej recalls:

■ *I will never forget my nighttime meeting with Greta Garbo. I was in the habit of wandering around Rome at night with a fiasco bottle of Chianti in my hand. I would sit down in picturesque locations and soak up the atmosphere of the Eternal City. One night, I was sitting on a bench in the Trastevere district, which is famous for the mansions of the rich and famous hidden discreetly among the old townhouses of ordinary, local people. The street was empty when a taxi suddenly stopped beside me. A woman in dark glasses leaned out and asked in English for the address of a nearby street: Vicolo dell'Atleta. I replied that it was right next door, but a large American taxi would not fit as the street was too narrow. So she asked me to walk her there and carry her suitcase. She explained on the way that she had flown to Rome earlier that day but that the supper ran late and hence the late hour. The door opened, and she attempted to hand me a note. She must have decided I did not look overly wealthy. The next morning, I saw a photo in the newspaper. It was Greta Garbo arriving in Rome. One could say I spent an evening alone with Greta Garbo!*

## THE CARDINAL'S MISTRESS

During his both stays in Rome, Andrzej managed to rent a room in the best part of the city: on Via della Croce just off Piazza di Spagna, in the house of Signorina Gina. She was the owner of a four-room flat, a seamstress, and reportedly a retired mistress of some cardinal. She proved to have a heart of gold. Whenever Andrzej paid for his room, she would enquire if the fee was not too high and if he had enough money to live on.

The apartment had one other tenant – an elderly gentleman who avoided contact with Andrzej and spent his days away from his room. Andrzej sometimes noticed that he wore black shirts under his coat. Signorina Gina once showed Andrzej the man's room. It was plastered from floor to ceiling with photographs of Mussolini and various Fascist celebrations at which Signor Giuseppe stood proudly right next to the leader of the Fascist Party. Indeed, Signor Giuseppe was one of the well-known Fascist Party activists, co-organizer of the March on Rome, and, for a time, head of the Fascist Party in the capital. One day, having recognized the man, his “grateful fellow citizens” threw him into a fountain and beat him so severely that he ended up in hospital, where Signorina Gina was naturally the only one to visit and feed him. When, many years later, Andrzej was taking a taxi in Milan past the monumental station built in Mussolini's time, the driver sighed and said: “It would be good to have someone like Il Duce again.” History has a way of repeating itself.

The IMI office did not expect Andrzej to provide anyone with anything. The same applied to other employees. Life could not be any better! However, all good things must come to an end. The new president of the bank requested to see the head of the Research Department, asking him to prepare an analysis of the Eurodollar market, namely the market of dollars invested and deposited in Europe. All hell broke loose at Ufficio Studi. Nobody had any idea about the Eurodollar market! It turned out that there were only two economists on the team: a student intern from Poland and Giancarlo, the elevator operator. Giancarlo studied economics extramurally and was close to getting a master's degree. The general ordered mobilization, and from that moment on, the elevator was self-service, while the two “specialists” got access to the library and started to compile the report.

The two of them calculated the volatility indicators in the key markets and isolated their main determinants. Together, they found more and less credible

estimates of dollar inflows and cash holdings. Giancarlo wrote a report, which they gave to the director. The man looked at it suspiciously and sent it to the chairman's office. To his surprise, the report was well received, and there was no end to the celebrations at the Research Department. The authors received cash prizes, and Andrzej got an internship for the following year at the Southern Italy Development Fund. Giancarlo did not go back to his elevator after getting a promotion. He later made a career in Italian banking.

Feeling triumphant, Andrzej returned to Poland with several Italian suits, which attracted a lot of attention in 1961 Warsaw.

## COMMUNISTS FROM GOOD FAMILIES

The Southern Italy Development Fund was the study and research arm of the government institution called Cassa per il Mezzogiorno (Fund for the South of Italy), located just off Via Veneto and the Villa Borghese Park. Andrzej never got the chance to become better acquainted with the head of this institution, reportedly an officer of the Fascist regime in the past. They did meet, but they were never on the same wavelength. This was mostly because Andrzej's boss arrived at the office after *pranzo* (lunch) already in an inebriated state, which only seemed to worsen in the course of the day.

The institute was involved in programming the industrialization of the underdeveloped Italian South. This took place using state money, of course, and in a somewhat socialist fashion. In addition to the construction of roads, bridges, power plants, and production facilities, the program included the construction of steelworks in Brindisi and Taranto. For logistical reasons, at least, leaving aside cultural factors, this was an insane idea, which led to gigantic wastefulness. Needless to say, the biggest beneficiary of this project was the Mafia. Around 30 percent of the funds are said to have been stolen. The econometric models of growth presented to staff and trainees looked perfect. Andrzej, however, did his homework using the first Italian lesson he had taken the previous year at IMI. While at Sviluppo Mezzogiorno, he strengthened his conviction that so-called state capitalism generally leads to parasitism on a huge scale practiced both in state-owned companies and collaborating private companies set up specifically by special "networks" to "siphon" easy state money.

During his internship visits in Rome, Andrzej often benefited from the hospitality of Professor Ryszard Zasepa, an eminent statistician from the Warsaw School of Economics who was working on a contract at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The professor lived with his wife and son in the elegant and modern EUR (Esposizione Universale di Roma) district, built by Mussolini for the 1940 World Expo that was to take place in Rome but had to be canceled for obvious reasons. The Zasepa family hosted Andrzej for several days at the start of his internship. He accompanied them on trips to various beautiful locations in the city. Sometimes, Mrs. Zasepa would shop for him at the FAO's shop, where everything had incredibly low prices. The FAO was a UN agency based in Rome, dedicated to farming and combating world hunger. This is probably why this organization fed its staff exceptionally well while conducting solid research and analyses.

During his second Italian lesson, Andrzej managed to visit the University of Naples to learn about the work of social psychologist Professor Gustavo Iacono, who studied employee motivation in Southern Italy. In contrast to the old, industrialized regions, most of the people there did not display a purely consumerist motivation. Social factors were the most prominent, namely seeking recognition and respect from the primary group, which consisted of neighbors, friends, and schoolmates. The same motif appears in books by the Neapolitan writer using the pen name Elena Ferrante. The city of Naples gave Andrzej a valuable lesson in cultural relativism, so vital in modern economics and management.

Sviluppo Mezzogiorno had several scholarship holders from Latin American countries, such as Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. They were all pure-blooded lefties, as we would call them today. They believed that the South American continent needed a Bolshevik-type revolution and a communist economy following the Chinese model. Well, Andrzej could only treat such views as a bad joke, as convincing them about their erroneous judgment would be an insurmountable task. These left-wing "revolutionaries" all came from good homes and received good education. Appalled by the astronomical income disparities and poverty in their home countries, they became infected with extreme views that had little to do even with Marxism.

However, their ideological radicalism did not prevent them from enjoying the delights of Rome's *dolce vita*, and on this ground, they were already in complete agreement with their Polish colleague. Together, they made up a jolly pack that took part in various events. After a speech given by

the then-presidential candidate of Chile, Eduardo Frei Montalva, Andrzej facetiously gave a fiery address to his colleagues, calling for an immediate and radical revolution. Of course, all this happened after the lively *pranzo*, but he still received a standing ovation and invitations to actively participate in the “permanent revolution.” He never made good on these invitations, although some proposals were quite interesting, such as a trip to Cuba to undergo training followed by an opportunity to join guerilla fighters in one of the Latin American countries. During his stay in Rome, Andrzej met the former Peruvian presidential candidate Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, who talked about the South American contacts between Ernst Röhm and the German fascists in the run-up to the Night of the Long Knives and Röhm’s assassination. This was a strategy of covertly attacking the USA which the Soviet Union attempted later, making use of all sorts of revolutionary idealists.

A crucial lecture that Andrzej remembers was the one given by a well-known Indian economist at Istituto Gramsci, the research arm of the Italian Communist Party. The lecture was translated from English into Italian by the great Polish economist Oskar Lange, who lived in Italy throughout the last years of his life. Lange put forward the thesis of an active pro-developmental role of the state, once again ahead of his time. Not everyone understood his arguments at the moment, but virtually everyone in the economics community admired Lange after the famous polemic between the Lange–Lerner duo and the Hayek–Mises duo on economic calculation under socialism. Lange argued that the optimal – or at least rational – allocation of resources under socialism was possible if one applied sophisticated simulation calculation at the central level (the Central Planner). The Austrians, on the other hand, believed in the impossibility of a rational economy under socialism without the market and private property. For many years, most economists were willing to admit that Lange was right, and so he became the most quoted economist in the world. Only with the eventual bankruptcy of the socialist economy in the 1980s did it become apparent that Hayek and Mises were right after all. In socialist countries, only the Polish Wakar School preached similar views using a different language, justifying the impossibility of realizing the technical principle of production efficiency in socialism. After all, no one in the world had heard of it until the 1980s, when János Kornai developed the Hungarian concept of the “economics of shortage.” This important lesson proves the need to present one’s scientific output in international forums.

On his return to the country, Andrzej managed to secure scholarships for two Chileans from Sviluppo Mezzogiorno to attend a one-year Planning Course of Developing Countries at the Warsaw School of Economics. The course was taught in English by Ignacy Sachs and enjoyed the patronage of Michał Kalecki. Andrzej also gave lectures in both English and French as part of this course. One of the Chileans, Daniel Moore, a doctor of economics from Madrid, was a radical supporter of communism. He was also an exceptionally handsome man and the lucky owner of a Volkswagen Beetle, which conferred a high social status in 1960s Poland. Daniel eagerly took advantage of his popularity with the fairer sex. He wreaked havoc at the Warsaw School of Economics, damaging relationships wherever he went. Having decided that Poland was not a true socialist country, he traveled to China upon completion of his course. After Augusto Pinochet's putsch in Chile, Daniel found refuge in Sweden, where he worked at Stockholm University as head of the Institute for Latin American Studies. In this capacity, he met Andrzej at a conference in Warsaw many years later. He was immediately recognizable through his retinue of female admirers. The men enjoyed dinner together, reminiscing about old times. Daniel had been to Chile but complained that despite his European Union citizenship, the United States had refused to let him in. In his farewell, he said: *la lotta continua*.

The other Chilean, Luchinio, was small in stature, quiet, shy, and hard-working. After returning from Warsaw to Chile, he was employed in some ministry, where he worked until the coup. He was shot dead inside the famous Santiago stadium at the start of the putsch. Many years later, Andrzej had the opportunity to visit that stadium: he went there to lay a symbolic flower. The old caretaker looked at him with understanding and said: *gracias compañero*. This was the only time when someone called Andrzej a comrade without causing him to protest openly.

## A FLIGHT WITH GIEREK

The second Italian lesson included a small Polish element. During his return trip to Warsaw in 1962, at Fiumicino airport, he bumped into the economist Sandro Petriccione, whom he had met previously. Petriccione, a member of the Italian Socialist Party leadership headed by Pietro Nenni, was also fly-

ing to Warsaw to attend a conference. They were soon joined by Edward Gierek, leader of the Polish Communist Party, who, as the then secretary of the Katowice Voivodeship party committee, was returning from a visit to his Italian comrades where he had met Petriccione. The three of them spoke in French, also during the flight, so Gierek was not aware that he was talking to someone from Warsaw. The conversation proved interesting. Gierek was impressed by the Italian economic miracle, the rampant consumption, and the mass production of Fiats 126 “for the populace.” Undoubtedly, he also remained under a strong influence of Eurocommunism, fashionable among the left-wing supporters at the time. The movement’s most prominent representative was Enrico Berlinguer, who became the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party in 1972. Gierek dreamed of combining Western prosperity with socialism through the purchase of Western technology. He overlooked the phenomenon of the productivity gap resulting from a lack of market mechanism, a lack of pro-efficiency incentives, and poor-quality management. Indeed, he completely misunderstood these aspects. This was the last time that Andrzej met Gierek. He remembers the in-flight conversation as a lesson in active utopia bolstered by a patchwork of good intentions which would soon pave the road to hell. As soon as Gierek became the First Secretary of the Communist Party, he put his vision into effect by putting Poland into massive debt.

## A SODA WATER VENDING MACHINE

The Soviet lesson was a direct callback to the first big trip Andrzej took across Europe with his father. This second trip took place in 1962, when Andrzej was nearing his graduation. Once again, the expedition’s organizer was the Polish Teachers’ Union, active at the Warsaw School of Economics. Jan Napoleon Saykiewicz, Professor Leon Koźmiński’s assistant at the time, initiated the endeavor. The participants included Saykiewicz’s future wife Elżbieta; Waldek Rybak, a student at the Faculty of Trade of the Warsaw School of Economics; several sociologists, namely Kuba Karpiński, Nina Frentzel (later Zagórska), and Krzysztof Ostrowski; and, of course, Leon Koźmiński with his son Andrzej.



They flew to Moscow, where they completed a fairly thorough tour of the most important historical monuments and museums. Their visit also included the famous Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy, where each Soviet republic had its own pavilion. The possibility to purchase cheap local liquor made this place particularly attractive to visitors. Throughout their trip, the group's company was Seryozha, a guide and "guardian" in one. In fact, Seryozha was a spy who understood Polish and strenuously tried to "decipher" his charges. As he was not overly friendly, they deliberately spoke languages other than Polish with no other aim but to cause his irritation. His amusing protests against such obstacles in his work gave the group a lot of enjoyment. Under real socialism, surveillance was undisguised and brazen but no less effective.

From his visit to Moscow, Andrzej remembered the wonderful exhibition of Pablo Picasso's blue and pink period at the Pushkin Museum. His attention was drawn to a tour of kolkhoz workers shown around by a spirited young guide, an art historian likely fresh out of university. The group stopped obediently in front of each canvas, listening to a knowledgeable commentary on the painting's history, meaning, and the painting techniques used. Other visitors also tuned in with interest. There was, however, a palpable sense of unease among the kolkhoz workers. Suddenly, an older man, who presumably ranked higher in the group's hierarchy, addressed the guide more or less as follows: "It is all well and good, Comrade, but could you tell us plainly whether these images are good or bad, correct or not, because we don't know what to think about them." Such was the essence of socialist upbringing: the engineering of souls. Andrzej consoled himself that in Poland, even during deep communism, such a statement would not have been possible.

One highlight of the visit to Moscow proved to be a swim in a circular marble pool set up on the site of the giant Cathedral of Christ the Savior, blown up in 1931 on the Soviet Politburo's order. The Cathedral was a votive offering of thanks for the victory over Napoleon almost one hundred years after the event. Stalin intended to use the site to build the world's tallest building, the Palace of the Soviets, topped with a giant rotating figure of Vladimir Lenin. The outbreak of the Second World War fortunately prevented the construction, but the odd swimming pool remained. The participants of the Polish tour knew the story, but someone decided to ask Seryozha about the

pool's origin. He answered that before the revolution, there was a circular building in that location, which had collapsed from old age. Despite their loud laughter, Seryozha firmly stood by the official version. It was all very illuminating. Today, the pool is gone, and the Cathedral of Christ the Savior again glistens with gold, carefully rebuilt during the Yeltsin rule in 1999 as the largest Orthodox church in the world.

Kuba Karpiński had absolutely no desire to view Lenin's mummified body on display in the mausoleum in Red Square and refused to wait in the long queue of visitors. At that point, the ever-vigilant Seryozha used his special privileges to get him to see Lenin without queuing. Visitors to the Kremlin could also admire two of the "largest" objects of their type: the Tsar Cannon, which never fired a shot, and the Tsar Kolokol, the largest bell in the world, which never rang due to its cracking during a fire. A living proof of the ingenious methods used by Soviet Russia to cope with unmanageable technology was a soda water vending machine standing on Gorky Street. Despite its boastful name, "vending machine," an elderly babushka sitting inside discreetly handed customers their glasses. Yet, it was the Russians who genuinely became the first to fly into space and, for the "defense of peace," amassed the world's largest arsenal of nuclear weapons!

## CAVIAR AND CHAMPAGNE

From Moscow, they flew to Tashkent in Uzbekistan, still rather unrefined prior to the earthquake and the city's subsequent rebuilding. Their hotel was straight from the Tsarist era, and the temperature exceeded one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. The biggest attraction was a large park in the city center with a large swimming pond. In the middle of the pond was an artificial island reachable by boat. The island, in turn, housed a restaurant reserved for "special guests," where the Polish visitors enjoyed a meal. Another guest was an elderly, most likely important, individual entertained by several women. After learning that the tourists had traveled from Poland, he immediately joined the party and started reminiscing about the time he had spent in Poland during the war. His recollections were clearly positive, as he gave the Polish visitors a case of champagne. They had no other choice but to drink

it. The elderly individual, who proved to be a witty and amicable companion, invited everyone to his daughter's wedding.

From Tashkent, they traveled to Samarkand and Bukhara. The Polish group was struck by the sophistication of Islamic culture as well as its emphasis on science (astronomical observatory) and education (the madrasas). On a street in Samarkand, they met an Uzbek woman wearing traditional clothing. She spoke in clear Polish and introduced herself as Mrs. Zalewska. Some of the soldiers of General Władysław Anders's 25,000-strong army formed in 1941, most likely those in the worst condition, did not manage to evacuate and remained in Uzbekistan. Mrs. Zalewska married one of them and subsequently learned Polish from him. After her husband's death, everything Polish remained sacred to her.

The next leg of the journey was Crimea. They visited the Tatar monuments of Bakhchisaray and its famous fountain of tears, the stone city of Chufut-Kale, and also hiked in the mountains. When asked about what had happened to the Tatars, Seryozha had a ready answer that they had left in search of work. Of course, he failed to mention the deportation ordered by Stalin. The journey concluded with a week on the beach in beautiful Gurzuf. The Poles had a wonderful time in Crimea, visiting various bars and restaurants. Someone said at the time that socialism was OK but only when you had caviar and champagne. However, this was not a philosophy that suited everyone. Its spokesman soon became involved in the Communist Party and thus excluded himself from the company. Kuba and Andrzej wanted to change the world, and the opportunities to do so were yet to come.

## COMMUNIST ELEGANCE

Gomułka's era became known as "little stabilization." Repression took on a more incremental, selective, and predictable character. Oppositionists such as Stefan "Kisiel" Kisielewski, Stanisław Stomma, Konstanty Łubieński – members of the lower house of the Polish parliament – and the writer Paweł Jasienica played a bit of a cat-and-mouse game with the authorities, although at times they took great risks, above all during and after 1968. Despite the authorities' curatorship and active censorship, the theater flourished. While

still a student, Andrzej regularly accompanied his parents to performances at Warsaw's theaters. With similar families frequenting these establishments, the Koźmińskis met there Nina Assorodobraj and Witold Kula with their son Marcin and later also with his wife, Gosia. Plays such as Bertolt Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* and Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *The Visit of the Old Lady* sparked discussion both at home and in family circles.

To go to a theater or even to have a drink with your friends, you had to dress appropriately. Clients of leading Polish tailors, such as Gomułka and especially Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz – known for his expensive taste – looked quite elegant at international conventions. Another sophisticate was the famous mathematician, Professor Hugo Steinhaus, who lived in Wrocław but dressed at the Warsaw tailor Elert. To eliminate the necessity to attend frequent fittings, Professor Steinhaus designed an analog machine resembling a cage into which the customer would enter, and dozens of different shapes would be selected to fit the customer's body. This solution provided the tailor with several dozen parameters instead of only a few. As a result, he could cut cloth immediately without the risk of potential errors. The solution served as a precursor of a scanner coupled to a computer. Professor Steinhaus was famous for his predilection for such practical applications of science.

Other ways of getting hold of better-quality clothes included state-owned shops, especially if one had pull with their management. Everyone hunted for so-called export rejects, namely the few Polish products that the state tried to sell in the West. Tweed jackets and formal dark suits were all the rage. Leon Koźmiński no longer had to regret selling his dinner jacket and dress suit during the occupation due to a shortage of financial means. Although the prewar elegance never returned, ladies certainly began to dress better, trying to follow the latest trends in fashion and using more color. During the summer, the streets of Warsaw and Krakow increasingly resembled the West. *Moda Polska* (Polish Fashion) was a state-owned fashion brand that designed sophisticated collections in microscopic quantities. Ingenious seamstresses, supplies sent in parcels from families living abroad, stands offering second-hand clothes at open-air markets, and shops that sold things brought from abroad at extortionate prices helped to bridge the gap between the grey everyday reality and the world shown in color magazines, which were available in Poland to the

envy of other Eastern Bloc countries. Fashion shows continued to attract increasing attention, with models gaining the status of social celebrities.

It was a time of lackluster daily newspapers and solid weeklies such as *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Polityka*, as well as the slightly more party-focused *Kultura* and *Życie Gospodarcze*. Reading the press gave you something to talk about with your friends. It was also the heyday of the cultured, allusive cabarets of Warsaw and Krakow.

Poland was by no means a backwater. In the 1960s, Polish theater (Jerzy Grotowski, Tadeusz Kantor, Sławomir Mrożek) and Polish film (Andrzej Munk, Andrzej Wajda, Wojciech Jerzy Has) triumphed around the world – masterfully “confrontational” (*Ashes and Diamonds*, *Kanal*) but, at the same time, capable of engaging in elaborate fantasy (*The Saragossa Manuscript*). The recently launched Teatr Telewizji (Television Theater) was a series of high-quality theatrical performances shown by the public broadcaster. Polish visual arts flourished, with painting and sculpture (Magdalena Abakanowicz) joining the famous Polish poster school on the international stage. The National Exhibition of Young Visual Arts, *Against War – Against Fascism*, organized by the Arsenał Group, also attracted a lot of attention around the world. Polish paintings were finding their international buyers. Andrzej’s friend from France, Claude Chapeau, an enthusiast of modern art who visited Warsaw several times in those years, always came equipped with various articles dedicated to the art market and spent his time wandering around art galleries. He was particularly fond of paintings by Maria Anto, the then-wife of the well-known expert in management, Professor Jan Antoszkiewicz. World audiences also appreciated Polish contemporary music (Krzysztof Penderecki) as well as jazz and film scores (Krzysztof Komeda). Stanisław Lem had a reputation of the biggest rising star in science fiction literature.

In spite of economic stagnation – Poland exported mostly coal during the Gomułka era – the creative intelligentsia, by means of a sensible compromise with the regime, made numerous nests conducive to development inside the great creative cities. This displeased the “wheat and beet” nationalists sitting in the middle and lower echelons of the Communist Party, eagerly awaiting promotions. Meanwhile, promotions went mainly to the members of their own intelligentsia cliques. The populace grew angry, with Mieczysław Moczar and his “patriots” slowly becoming exponents of this anger. They

were mostly of communist and nationalist provenance (with writer Wojciech Żukrowski as an example). Gomułka kept them on a leash in order to maintain a balance in the party leadership. This proved possible until two separate events disrupted his plan: the 1967 Arab–Israeli War and the demonstrations by patriotic student youths following the ban on the performance of Adam Mickiewicz’s *Dziady* at the National Theatre in Warsaw. As a consequence of these events, nationalist emotions got out of control, and the privileged cliques found themselves on slippery ground. Society’s naive hope for “socialism with a human face” – for a civilized and European, albeit formally socialist Poland – was gone for good. In 1968, “oafs” triumphed, not for the first and not for the last time in Polish history.

# THE WAKAR SCHOOL AND FAREWELL TO THE WARSAW SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Scientific supervision by Professor Aleksy Wakar was Andrzej's dream almost from the very start of his university education. Professor Wakar had by then become a legend. His rapid academic career at the prewar Warsaw School of Economics was both remarkable and inspiring. Andrzej's wish was to match his achievements, and he made them happen.

Wakar graduated in 1933 as a thirty-five-year-old already experienced by life. He prepared his master's thesis at the seminar of Professor Władysław Zawadzki, an eminent economist, pioneer of mathematical economics in Poland, and controversial Minister of Finance for several years during the financial crisis. Only one year after obtaining his master's degree, Wakar got a doctorate for his dissertation entitled "Labor Wage Theory." He completed his habilitation in 1935 with the book titled *The Problem of Variable Price*. After his habilitation earned approval in 1936, he obtained the position of docent at the Warsaw School of Economics. Then, he became associate professor and head of the Department of Economics just before the war, in July 1939.

## FROM KORNILOV TO THE WARSAW SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Aleksy Wakar's path to scientific success was anything but straightforward. This native Russian was born in Samara in 1898 but moved to Warsaw in 1904, where his father was head of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania with the rank of general. The reason for

the move was Anatoly Wakar's heart condition. Feeling unwell in Siberia, Anatoly asked the Tsarist authorities to relocate him to some quiet place within the empire that had a mild climate. Admittedly, his placement was not overly fortunate, as the Kingdom of Poland was witnessing the start of a wave of strikes forming part of the Russian Revolution of 1905. Anatoly Wakar died in 1911 and was buried in the Orthodox cemetery in Warsaw's Wola district.

Anatoly's son, Aleksy, received his secondary school-leaving certificate in 1916 from Warsaw's Gymnasium No. 3, evacuated to Rostov-on-Don when the Russians withdrew from Warsaw after 1915. The language of instruction was, of course, Russian. In the same year, Aleksy began his medical studies at the Military Medical Academy in Saint Petersburg. While visiting his mother in Rostov-on-Don, like many representatives of the patriotic Russian intelligentsia, he joined the Volunteer Army and, more specifically, the famed Kornilov Shock Detachment, commanded initially by General Lavr Kornilov and, after his death, by Generals Mikhail Alekseyev and Anton Denikin.

Wakar got a swift promotion: within less than three years of hard fighting against the Red Army, he advanced from the rank of yunker to major. He twice received the Cross of Saint George, Russia's highest military decoration. Only these two medals were placed in his coffin because his wife said that he had been very proud of them. The Kornilov Shock Detachment always went to locations where the objective demanded all costs, even the cost of human life. The numbers of the fallen on Kornilov's battle trail remain overwhelming: almost thirteen thousand, while the detachment's numbers fluctuated between four and five thousand soldiers. Some have called this unit a "suicide club" for young idealists ready to sacrifice their lives for their motherland in the fight against the Bolsheviks. This sentiment is palpable in Alexander Vertinsky's beautiful song "What I Must Say" and in Mikhail Bulgakov's prose, especially in *The White Guard* and in the famous play *The Days of the Turbins*, which reportedly saved its author's life as it was Stalin's favorite play for many years. He watched it numerous times. Why would that be?

How Wakar's wartime tale ended remains unclear. He may have evacuated from Crimea with the entire White Army – or rather its remnants – or gone into internment with General Nikolai Bredov's corps on Polish territory in March 1920. This corps later became the core of the Russian units fighting on the Polish side in the victorious war against the Bolsheviks in 1920.



At any rate, Wakar was present in Warsaw by the end of 1920. He tried to complete his medical studies, but the need to work for a living got in the way. He worked in the Publishing Department of the Poviats' Local Government Association and, for several years, in the branch of the Swedish company Electrolux. He began his studies at the Warsaw School of Economics in 1927, probably persuaded by his brother Vladimir, who was a demographer, economist, local government activist, and a lecturer at the school. In 1936, on the eve of his habilitation, he took Polish citizenship, which was to save his life in the future.

## RECTOR AND CONVICT

During the Nazi occupation, Wakar was deputy director of the Municipal School of Economics, headed by Edward Lipiński. The school was the underground incarnation of the Warsaw School of Economics. After the war, he became a member of the team raising the university from the rubble and twice its rector and vice rector. It was then that Wakar began to take an interest in the Soviet economy and Marxian economics. In 1948, he made the biggest mistake of his life: he joined the Polish Communist Party and became rector of the nationalized university, the Academy of Political Sciences. This promotion aroused interest of the services, primarily Soviet. Wakar was arrested while holidaying in Sopot and taken directly to Moscow's Lubyanka prison. After a long investigation, he was sentenced to ten years in a Gulag camp but came out in 1955, thanks to the aforementioned Polish citizenship. He returned to Poland and, in 1956, became head of the Political Economy Department at the Faculty of Internal Trade of the Warsaw School of Economics – as a convict removed from the party. Such a thing was unheard of among people's democracies and probably only possible in Poland after the Polish October 1956. Wakar never told anyone about his past, with the possible exception of Leon Koźmiński, whom he visited immediately after his return from Russia. However, Leon also remained discreet, even many years after his friend's death.

Wakar's appearance was unpretentious and in the best taste: he had only two or three well-tailored and always neatly pressed suits, clean and shiny shoes, and a well-matched tie. He spoke Polish and only Polish, without any

accent; no one ever heard him speak a single word of Russian. He read comfortably in several languages but probably did not speak them. In fact, he rarely spoke and disliked small talk, which might have been the reason he kept a monkey at home before the war. When people asked him about the animal, he replied that, with all his visitors focusing on the monkey, he was excused from entertaining them with trivial conversation. Even if this anecdote is untrue, it sums up his character perfectly.

Wakar was not particularly well-liked in the scientific community, as he could be sharp and cold-blooded in polemics or disputes, although invariably polite. He did not hesitate to openly reproach his opponents for their ignorance and lack of logic. Still, Wakar did not aspire to become a “scientific celebrity” and was above that role in his pursuit of scientific excellence that aligned with his vision. Rarely contributing outside the university, he did not attend public lectures or meetings organized by the Polish Economic Society. He did not travel himself but supported the research trips of his colleagues. He only attended scientific conferences where he had a specific role, otherwise directing his focus on working with his own team.

## THE MASTER'S TEAM

Professor Wakar's style of working with his team was absolutely unique, and Andrzej Koźmiński considered it a perfect model of a scientific school of thought, which he tried to replicate on several occasions but with varying degrees of success. The team was to implement the master's theoretical concept. Thus, the team's composition, the tasks assigned to individual members, and the mode of operation all served this purpose. As an economist, researcher, leader, and, above all, developer of general theories, the professor formed an inseparable entity with his colleagues. It is difficult to identify many more examples of this pattern and style of academic work, except perhaps certain German philosophical schools such as the Marburg School. Professor Wakar's School was unique in that the general concept was not dogma. The professor expected that it could and even should change, sometimes radically. He used to emphasize the importance of the ability to “destroy” one's concepts only to replace them with new ideas. There is at least one instance

of such a radical change in the history of Professor Wakar's School: the shift from the indirect model to direct market calculation.

The second peculiarity of this scientific school of thought was its openness to interdisciplinary cooperation with mathematics, sociology, psychology, and management as required. This had never been a frequent approach in the community of economists. Articles written by Aleksy Wakar's team were always published collaboratively rather than collectively, with no emphasis placed on the authorship of individual fragments. Professor Wakar was against private ownership of scientific concepts. He believed that only teams created genuinely valuable works. Therefore, doctoral or habilitation dissertations had a "spokesperson" rather than an "author" whenever produced as part of a team.

Professor Wakar was fond of grand theories encompassing the entire economy and even social life. For this reason, he made the theory of general equilibrium developed by the Lausanne School – Léon Walras, Vilfredo Pareto, and Enrico Barone, among others – his theoretical frame of reference already in his prewar works on the labor wage, variable price, or international exchange, when most economists were making references to neoclassical economics by Alfred Marshall, to give an example. Indeed, the general equilibrium theory encompassed all economic and social phenomena in a reciprocal relationship. Therefore, it gave room for the most sweeping generalizations. Such was the holistic approach Wakar took in his work on the theory of the socialist economy, and Andrzej had a role in this undertaking as a member of his team.

Immediately after his return to active scientific life, Wakar took part in the post-October "model discussion" of 1956–1958 on the desired model for the functioning of a socialist economy. He proposed the original concept of indirect market calculation – that is, one carried out by a central planner based on a market simulation via artificially generated market "shadow prices," namely parameters such as prices and interest rates, reflecting relations within the economy. This concept first appeared in the work *Selected Problems of the Political Economy of Socialism*, published by the Warsaw School of Economics in 1957. This was a creative development of the theses formulated in the debate conducted in the West in the 1930s on economic calculation under socialism (Lange and Lerner versus Hayek and von Mises), discussed in-depth by Professor Wakar's team.

## CRITIQUE OF THE SOCIALIST ECONOMY

Professor Wakar rejected this concept as early as the late 1950s. He concluded that it was too distant from the bureaucratic, genuine realities of socialist economies, which lack the capacity to maintain complex calculations at the central level. Therefore, the professor proposed the concept of direct market calculation carried out at the central level in natural units (pieces, meters, or tons) to achieve a specific structure of the final product, directly reflecting the central planner's preferences and intentions. The process employed input–output tables to display the correlations between the different branches of economy. In such calculation, monetary categories played a purely passive role as calculation units. The concept constituted a generalization of the economic practice of socialist countries.

In essence, it was a war economy following the German model created during the First World War based on Walther Rathenau's concepts, which prioritized the provision of weaponry of a certain size and structure as well as other products needed to conduct warfare. An economic calculation managed in this way sacrificed not only optimization but also the rationality of allocating limited resources and the capacity for innovative changes in production methods. The sacrificial altar was the implementation certainty of the central planner's preferences. Throughout their existence, the Soviet economy and the economies of people's democracies were perpetual war economies. The publications authored by the Wakar team regularly defined this harshest possible criticism of the socialist economy as the impossibility of realizing the "technical principle of production efficiency." The criticism assumed a rather opaque Aesopian language but also accurate and express forms.

Markedly, Wakar opposed the rule of full consumer sovereignty – in other words, the allocation of investment expenditures according to consumer tastes, preferences, and aspirations. He did so in regard to both direct and indirect market calculation. The professor believed that the freedom of choice in relation to consumer goods and services was sufficient, but that its size and structure should be a function of the interest pertaining to the entire society pursued by the central planner. For many years, Andrzej refused to accept this thesis, even on purely theoretical grounds. Today, with ever more stringent environmental, sanitary, and humanitarian requirements, he sees profound meaning in his master's reasoning, as do many contemporary economists.

The general concept of direct market calculation was the theoretical framework for many of the more detailed concepts developed by the team. The idea of economic incentives concerned instruments for the implementation of a plan created via direct market calculation. These can arrange themselves into centralized or decentralized management formulas making use of pricing and other parameters. In doing so, the scholars clearly demonstrated the determinants of chaos, randomness, and the internal contradiction of economic management formulas. Therefore, Professor Wakar's Polish School of Economics emphasized the social mechanisms of management and the degree to which employees identified with the company's goals. Professor Wakar entrusted Andrzej with the development of this concept as part of the textbooks prepared by the department. This task was the inspiration behind Andrzej's doctoral dissertation, "Humanization of Work," defended as early as 1965, and his habilitation dissertation on consumer relations in retail. By working closely with Wakar, he was able to use his sociological education and management expertise.

## PROFESSOR WAKAR'S THEORY OF MONEY

Studies focusing on the role of money were the departure point for another twist in Professor Wakar's theory of socialist economics. These studies emphasized the expansionary nature of parametric management formulas, which lead to "soft" financing of enterprises and distortions in the supply-demand balance of both production factors and consumer goods. In other words, the research focused on demand that was excessive in relation to production capacity, efficient, supported by monetary resources, and indicated by enterprises and households. Such circumstances resulted in an economy of permanent shortage. In consequence, the application of a "monetary brake" became a necessity to restrict the flow of money to economic agents.

In his articles on money, Wakar came very close to the ideas of the then unknown to him Hungarian economist János Kornai, as outlined in his books *Anti-Equilibrium* and *Economics of Shortage*. Similarly to the work of Wakar's team, Kornai's books were written in the late 1960s but became particularly popular in the 1980s. As early as 1972, Wakar's take on the issue of money resulted in the well-known work by Janusz Beksiak and Urszula Libura-Grzelońska titled "Economic Equilibrium in Socialism." Incidentally,

it was Grzelońska and Beksiak who assimilated Kornai's work into the Polish literature. Did Kornai read Wakar? Although we cannot answer this question, we know that several Hungarian economists were acquainted with Polish works at that time.

## SERVICE TRADE THEORY

Professor Wakar took the affiliation of his department to the Faculty of Internal Trade very seriously. The result was an original concept called the service trade theory, which defines a product created by trade as a trade service provided to consumers. The team applied the entire analytical apparatus of direct market calculation and management formulas to the final product understood from such a perspective. Andrzej Koźmiński used this concept as a framework for his habilitation dissertation "Trade and Consumers," which he wrote in 1966. To carry out research dedicated to aspects of trade, the faculty established a research unit known as the Institute of the Fundamental Problems of Trade. This informal structure dealt with interdisciplinary research conducted by economists, sociologists, and business practitioners. Other faculties later replicated this pioneering idea.

At the Institute, Andrzej prepared a series of studies on the sociology of trade together with sociologist Professor Adam Sarapata. Professor Wakar used a similar approach in retailing the general theory of economic management in his last work on managing foreign trade enterprises: he used a brand-new analytical apparatus borrowed from economic cybernetics. In this way, he bequeathed Andrzej a direction to pursue in his research, namely the systems approach. These wonderful and incredibly intense years of working under Professor Wakar shaped Andrzej as a scientist to a considerable degree. Andrzej finds it hard to believe that this period lasted less than four years.

## MEETINGS AT THE "EGG"

Professor Wakar's School worked methodically under the strict regimen introduced by its leader. The team consisted of around twenty people who were department members and regular contributors. The team's composition was

not rigid and periodically included people with specific scientific specializations, such as econometrics and industrial or trade economics. Still, the core comprised members of the department. The professor himself introduced each new theme under analysis with a presentation of the theoretical frame of reference and a detailed outline of key research issues. Then, the team members distributed detailed research of these issues among themselves, some of them relating to the members' doctoral and habilitation dissertations in progress. Every week, or at least every fortnight, each person presented the results of their research during a meeting attended by a relatively fixed number of team members. Everyone, therefore, alternated between being a "spokesperson" within their own team and a participant in several others. The professor himself participated in all the small teams. Meetings took place in the staff club inside a café on the second floor of Building A and later inside the "Egg," which was a café in the main building. The professor stayed at his post all day, and only the other people at the table rotated. These small team meetings also took place at the professor's home.

Wakar appreciated originality of thought. He was not a fan of multilevel references and extensive bibliographies. When Andrzej once tried to demonstrate his erudition, the professor first listened to what he had to say and then, smiling mischievously, said: "But what is the point of repeating all this if other authors have already written it down? Why not write down what you yourself think?" Andrzej considered this moment as an important lesson for the rest of his scientific life.

Every Friday at two in the afternoon, the professor held plenary meetings of the department to discuss texts that were excerpts from books, articles, and habilitation and doctoral dissertations prepared by the team. Team discussions lasted no more than an hour and a half, as the professor disliked unnecessary talk. The texts were copy typed on a machine several times by the departmental secretary. When the university acquired a spirit duplicator which was an early predecessor of copiers, it became Urszula Libura's and Andrzej's job to make copies of texts. They hated their new task, but someone had to do it. The device stained everything and everyone around and generated a highly unpleasant odor of denatured alcohol. Urszula always wore a special navy blue apron when using the duplicator. Thanks to this unique model of work and its intensity, everyone received support and was kept up to date on what the others and the team as a whole were doing.

Andrzej drafted his texts on the social aspects of management while working in teams focusing on the role of money in the economy, economic calculation, and planning.

## MODERN TRADE IN COMMUNIST POLAND

Familiarity with the overall subject matter was immensely useful in teaching. There was a lot of economics on the agenda, and it needed diligent teaching. To concentrate fully on his research and work on his future academic degrees, Andrzej crammed all his teaching activities into one day. He gave lectures on Monday from eight-thirty in the morning to eight in the evening with a one-hour break. He managed to survive it somehow, just like his students did.

He taught classes on the political economy of socialism. He remembers well a proseminar group of evening students comprising the executives of ZSS “Społem” (the Union of Polish Food Cooperatives), which, after winning the “battle for trade,” incorporated almost the entire Polish retail trade outside rural areas. It was the head of this institution, Irena Strzelecka, who ordered them to complete their studies. During the Gomułka’s uninspiring rule from 1956 to 1970, Strzelecka was a great modernizer of Polish trade. In addition to building the Sezam department store in Warsaw, she introduced a network of self-service stores across Polish cities that became part of an important cultural change. She could afford to act boldly because she was married to Ryszard Strzelecki – a member of the Politburo and the third person in the state. Strzelecka pursued active cooperation with the Faculty of Internal Trade at the Warsaw School of Economics, at the time called the Central School of Planning and Statistics.

These mature “Społem” employees sent to complete their education had many years of practical experience – sometimes veteran status – and, of course, were members of the Communist Party, which was obligatory at that level of professional seniority. They included women who had fought during the war as part of the Polish People’s Army, which entered Poland alongside Soviet troops. Andrzej had stage fright. They were discussing a book by Włodzimierz Brus, which contested Professor Wakar’s concepts: *The General Problems of the Functioning of the Socialist Economy*. Andrzej orchestrated a dispute with different teams presenting different points of view. Never



before had they experienced anything like this. Miraculously, they became so fond of each other that Andrzej kept in touch with this group for many years, and they provided him with food provisioning support in the most difficult times of market shortages. Thanks to the group's assistance, Andrzej was able to carry out empirical research at "Społem," the results of which he included in his habilitation dissertation.

## IRON DISCIPLINE

Wakar treated all his colleagues in the same manner: politely yet with a touch of irony. He might have been fond of Andrzej as he pushed him to put in maximum effort with the view of getting his doctorate and habilitation, which is the highest academic degree in Poland, in the shortest possible time. He once told Andrzej that such achievements act like shields that can protect a person. Thus, he wanted to equip Andrzej with these protective shields as soon as possible, although he was aware that Koźmiński was a controversial figure in science, not least because of his interdisciplinarity. However, he used to say that only bland people without achievements were uncontroversial.

To meet Professor Wakar's expectations, Andrzej had to follow a strict regime. Every day, except Mondays, when he taught all day from morning to night, he would get up at four in the morning and work until eleven. He used his father's old German typewriter, usually with the addition of carbon paper to produce at least one copy. He would then make corrections by hand and take the papers to a typist who was able to decipher his handwriting. The typist used at least two sheets of carbon paper, and so thick binders of texts resulted. All this "technology" seems ridiculous today, but back then, it was a real factor in the calculation of the time required to complete certain stages of work.

Around midday, after his daily morning session, some breakfast, and a bath, Andrzej would start his "normal life." This was also the case on weekends and during holidays, which he completely gave up on during this period. Such a life was not easy because, at the same time, he led a rather social lifestyle, but in his own way, he liked living according to the maxim: *work hard, play harder*.

During the summer holidays, Professor Wakar was away from Warsaw, but of course, he did not stop working. Instead, he invited his colleagues to

visit. Andrzej visited the professor on several occasions at a special retreat of the Polish Academy of Sciences near Warsaw and in various guesthouses in Kołobrzeg and Wisła. On arrival, he read and discussed extracts from his work for several hours at a time. Thanks to these meetings, Andrzej was able to quickly complete both dissertations: his doctoral one within a year and his habilitation dissertation in less than two years.

## THE DEATH OF THE PROFESSOR

This important phase of Andrzej's life came to an end on August 25, 1966. On that day, a phone rang at his parents' apartment, where he lived. Professor Kazimierz Łaski, the university's vice rector, was on the line. Andrzej learned that Professor Wakar had died suddenly of heart failure during a holiday in Wisła, and his body was in a hospital in Cieszyn. Łaski asked Andrzej to travel to Cieszyn together with Professor Wakar's widow to handle all the formalities needed to transport the body to Warsaw. He was provided with an old Warszawa vehicle – the university's property – and the assistance of a driver.

During this journey, Andrzej realized that he did not genuinely know one of the most important people in his life. Urszula Libura, Andrzej's colleague at the department, must have felt the same. This is how she described the professor in her book published in the 1980s:

■ *It will probably never become possible to answer the question of whether practicing science was truly his main goal in life or whether there was some painful resignation behind this decision. Was he more of a pragmatist or an idealist? Did his political beliefs qualify him to be treated as a democrat, socialist, or communist? Or perhaps he was politically ambivalent, and therein lay the source of the apparent failures he suffered when he became involved in the heat of major historical conflicts.*

On hearing the news of the professor's death, Andrzej had a sense of a painful end, but he had to act, so he contacted Mrs. Wakar and the hospital in Cieszyn. At the time, this bordered on the miraculous, as long-distance phone calls were handled manually and often necessitated a wait of several hours. He found out what documents would be necessary and arranged with

the driver to leave the following morning. Stefan Kwiatkowski, Andrzej's reliable friend from the university, also decided to join him. The trip proved extremely stressful, with the professor's wife retelling the story of her life during the journey.

On their arrival in Cieszyn, they found out that they needed documents different from the ones listed to them the previous day. They also discovered that the town of Wisła was a terrible choice for people suffering from health conditions, and the professor should never have gone there at all. They only managed to deal with the formalities thanks to Stefan Kwiatkowski's incredible negotiating skills. The funeral took place several days later in the Orthodox cemetery in the Wola district of Warsaw, with a beautiful service held in the Orthodox church. Andrzej was too preoccupied to pay attention to the nuances of human behavior, but certain absences seemed telling, and the tension was palpable. Both Poland and the university were facing dangerous times.

## A PAINFUL KNOCKOUT

Immediately after the professor's death and in accordance with his suggestions, Andrzej decided to accelerate the matter of his habilitation. Unfortunately, it took about two years to publish a book from the time of manuscript submission. In his opinion, the wait was too long. Intuitively, he felt that he should hurry. This was when he received assistance from his "Społem" friends.

The cooperative publishing house of "Społem" agreed to publish the book within several months. The Faculty Council appointed four "heavy-weight" reviewers: Professor Eugeniusz Garbacik, head of the Department of Economics of Commodity Turnover and dean of the Faculty of Trade at the Krakow University of Economics, known for his criticism of Wakar's service trade theory; Professor Zbigniew Zakrzewski, dean of the Faculty of Trade and former rector of the Poznań Academy of Economics; Professor Władysław Markiewicz, sociologist, director of the Institute of Sociology at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the Western Institute in Poznań, whom Andrzej befriended in later years and met regularly until his death; and Professor Jan Szczepański, director of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences, regarded after Ossowski's

death as the most eminent Polish sociologist, president of the International Sociological Association.

Their reviews arrived in the spring of 1967, and all four were unequivocally positive. The habilitation oral exam scheduled to take place in front of the faculty's own council did not seem particularly threatening, so Andrzej and his fiancée Alicja were already making plans for their first holiday together in years. What came next was a very rude awakening. In a secret ballot, the Faculty's Council flatly refused to allow Andrzej to take his habilitation oral exam. The reason was allegedly his young age (he was 26), but being politically neutral, he was deemed an unsuitable candidate for a docent at the Political Economy Department – considered by the authorities as “ideologically sensitive” – where he was still employed after the death of Aleksy Wakar.

## A FRENCH SPECIALIST IN AGRICULTURE

Feeling defeated, Andrzej did not really know how to pick himself up. Fortunately, France came to the rescue. While dwelling on his misfortune, he met Joseph Le Bihan, a French scientist who was wandering the halls of the Warsaw School of Economics. Le Bihan worked for the Institut Agronomique in Paris and was carrying out a research program on supply systems dedicated to small-scale farming. He came up with a comparative study in which he included Poland among others. Thus, he arrived at the university with the hope of conducting the Polish section of his research. Unfortunately, no one was willing or able to speak with him, as the Frenchman spoke only French. Eventually, someone referred him to Andrzej. Andrzej had little knowledge of supply systems in Polish agriculture, but there were plenty of research resources available. Le Bihan did not have much money for research, but he did have a small amount. He offered Andrzej a three-month trip to France in return for an incredibly modest, almost starvation-level grant and guaranteed his accommodation in a dormitory at Paris' Cité Universitaire in the Maison des Industries Agricoles et Alimentaires in exchange for written consultations. This was not a red carpet unrolled before the youngest doctor of science in Poland – he succeeded in his efforts a little over one year later – but he was not in a position to pick and choose.

He decided to leave very quickly and without being sure if and when he would appear in Warsaw again. It was a private trip. Andrzej got his passport and visa based on a fake private invitation from one of his mother's Russian friends, the wife of a respectable and reliable member of the French *bourgeoisie*. Before his departure, he ordered himself two suits, which came in useful in France. He also sourced the necessary literature on the supply of agriculture. With all these possessions and a few well-hidden banknotes, he landed at Paris–Le Bourget Airport, which at the time resembled Warsaw's Okęcie Airport.

## THE ROBBERY

On his arrival in Paris, immediately after he went through passport control and collected his luggage, Andrzej bumped into an acquaintance from Warsaw. A regular guest of nightclubs, she had obtained the “right” passport through marriage and was traveling freely around Europe. She knew his nickname from school and called out loudly: “Cosmos!” This made him smile. They gave each other a warm hug, and a little while later, Andrzej realized that his passport had been stolen. Such a passport with a French visa valid for several months fetched quite a high price on the black market.

A sleepy police officer, to whom he reported the theft of his passport and presented a serious-looking international driver's license with a photograph, industriously wrote out the relevant theft report and got rid of the intruder. The French police caught the person using this passport only a year or so later and sent the document back to Poland. The case was closed with no negative consequences, which meant that he could obtain a passport for future trips.

Andrzej was at a loss as to what he was supposed to do without his passport. Ultimately, he decided to go ahead with his original plan. Unfortunately, an evil chance seldom comes alone. Joseph Le Bihan probably had not received the letter announcing Andrzej's arrival, and he was out of his office. The phone of Henryk Wroński, whom he had met several years previously during his first stay in Paris, was also silent. Having no alternative, Andrzej checked into the cheapest hotel he could find on Boulevard Arago, not far from Wroński's apartment, and there he waited for a change of fortune.

## STUDYING KHRUSHCHEV'S REFORM

Professor Henryk Wroński was the first to make contact. He offered Koźmiński a small “gig” for the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. Andrzej was to prepare an analysis of the reform of the so-called *sovnarkhoses* introduced by Khrushchev into the Soviet economy, which meant granting certain economic independence to the Soviet republics. The West saw this as a move in the right direction of decentralization. To complete this task, Andrzej had to spend a lot of time in the library of the École des Sciences Politiques (the famous Sciences Po), well-stocked with Soviet literature. To have free access to libraries, academic canteens, and various discounts, he put his pride in his pocket, and using his driving license and documents from the Institut Agronomique, he got himself a student card. In the process, he discovered that an international driving license with a photograph inspires respect.

Wroński, a former student of Professors Lipiński and Leon Koźmiński, immediately offered Andrzej scientific cooperation. He asked Andrzej to read a paper at the seminar of his boss, Professor André Piatier. Several other professors were also to attend. It was a test of sorts and, as it later turned out, Andrzej succeeded in passing it. He spent much time at Henryk's apartment on Boulevard Arago and at his country house in Forges. He met his wife Teresa, an economist employed by the Bank of France, and his son Mark (later a colonel in the French Army) – and, of course, their various domestic helpers and nannies.

## AT THE JESUITS: SCHOLARS OF MARXISM

While in France, Andrzej came into contact with a group of French Jesuits, whose name – Action Populaire – referred to liberation theology. The group resided in a spacious villa in Vanves near Paris, which served as a creative refuge of sorts. The one to invite him was Professor Henri Chambre, an economist and former cavalry officer, and an old acquaintance of his father. The entire Vanves Center focused on the study of Marxism as well as socialist societies and economies. Chambre wrote more than a dozen books on the subject. In Vanves, Andrzej met the General of the French Jesuits, and later

of the whole order, Jean-Yves Calvez, one of the most eminent French intellectuals of the period and author of an extensive and most insightful analysis of Marx and Marxist thought. The Jesuits wanted to understand the dynamics of the system and sought potential areas for a debate with the Marxists.

Not being a Marxist, Andrzej disappointed them a little, but he had similar intentions: to get to know his opponent. Each invitation to Vanves entailed the preparation of a speech lasting about half an hour, followed by prayer and a very modest meal. During these visits, he spoke about the evolution of socialist economies and the dynamic attitudes of the young generation. After the meal, there was a debate over coffee on the large garden terrace, which lasted at least an hour. The debates were lively and extremely interesting. Through them, Andrzej learned about the Christian viewpoint on world affairs behind the Iron Curtain.

## FIFTY YEARS PREVIOUSLY

Thanks to the contacts made during his first visit to France, which mostly involved his father's friends, Andrzej received invitations to give various paid lectures during this visit as well. This is how he arrived at the *École Supérieure de Commerce Paris (ESCP)*, which was then located in the Paris Chamber of Commerce next to the stock exchange. This oldest business school in Europe and the world – and today one of the highest-ranked – later became a strategic partner of Kozminski University. In 2017, exactly fifty years after that first visit to the university, the ESCP awarded Andrzej Koźmiński an honorary doctorate. The occasion featured a magnificent ceremony held in the huge *Palais des Congrès* auditorium in the center of Paris, attended by more than a thousand ESCP graduates and numerous guests, such as Professor Tomasz Młynarski, the Polish ambassador in Paris, and Andrzej's colleagues from Warsaw. In a short laudation, Professor Léon Laulusa, dean for International Relations at the ESCP, spoke about the academic achievements of the recipient of the honorary doctorate in management and the achievements of Kozminski University, founded in 1993 by Professor Andrzej Koźmiński.

On December 8, 2017, Andrzej Krzysztof Koźmiński received an honorary doctorate from the ESCP together with three other representatives

of European science. They were Sir Paul Curran, President of the City University of London and a renowned researcher from the European Space Agency and NASA; Íñigo Méndez de Vigo, Minister for Education, Culture, and Sport of Spain; and Gerard van Schaik, Honorary President of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD).

On this occasion, Andrzej Koźmiński gave a celebratory dinner in a restaurant sailing down the Seine, providing everyone with stunning views of Paris. His friends and colleagues from Kozminski University presented him with commemorative cuff links engraved with the date and an image of a five-petalled rose, which made a reference to the Poraj coat of arms used by his ancestors. The beautiful and moving ceremony ended with an informal outing to a Parisian restaurant to enjoy excellent steaks with fries and delicious wine. Their tour of the Parisian food scene was a resounding success. Andrzej's guests were delighted despite having to queue for almost half an hour in the cold to get a table, as these were the rules in this particular restaurant, which did not accept reservations. Only after the event did he realize that the ceremony took place exactly fifty years after his first guest lecture at the ESCP.

In 1967, Nina Markiewicz-Lagneau was collaborating with the Institut des Mathématiques et Économiques Appliquées, run by the famous French economist François Perroux. She was a colleague of Andrzej from his sociology studies. In France, she had a brilliant academic career, which culminated with the most prestigious professorship at Collège de France. Thanks to her recommendations, Andrzej had two of his articles published by the prestigious ISEA academic press and obtained a small commission for a study on Poland. This was followed by orders from the Académie des Sciences Commerciales. Previous contacts with experts in trade brought in financial means that supplemented the exceptionally modest salary he received from Joseph Le Bihan. The problem was liquidity: Andrzej received all these commissions with a delay of several weeks. Although he had an account with Crédit Lyonnais, which he had set up for himself using his driving license, it was empty most of the time. August proved to be the worst month: everyone had departed on holiday, Paris remained deserted, and life in the capital came to a standstill. Worse, with everyone gone, Andrzej was unable to invite himself in for dinner anywhere.



## A SURVIVAL SCHOOL

Several days after Andrzej's arrival in Paris, Joseph Le Bihan finally showed up. Staying true to his promise, he accommodated his Polish guest at the Maison des Industries Agricoles et Alimentaires (Agricultural and Food Industries Student Dormitory), located in the student complex on Boulevard Jourdan. A double student room was not an optimal solution, but no other option existed at the time. However, this type of accommodation also had its advantages. On moving in, Andrzej met the previous occupant of his part of the room, an Irishman returning home after a month's stay in Paris. The man cheerfully informed him about a veritable fortune he was leaving behind. Indeed, on peering under the bed, Andrzej discovered one hundred and twenty empty one-liter bottles which once held the cheapest wine, which the French referred to contemptuously as *pinard*. This treasure trove was not one to sniff at, as four empty bottles were worth a full one. Moreover, the wine proved much better than the Soviet wine he used to drink at the U Fukiera restaurant. Given the short duration of his stay, the Irishman's productivity deserved serious recognition.

He shared a room with a very tall Chinese man from Hong Kong, John Zee, whose passport listed his nationality as Chinese citizen, British subject. Andrzej gradually got used to the fact that he had no passport. Despite frequent inspections and even police manhunts aimed at identifying "illegals" in Paris, he learned to get around safely. The answer was an ironed suit, a shirt with a tie, clean shoes, and the conservative *Le Figaro* read rather ostentatiously. He was never inspected, even in situations where the police surrounded a café and approached all the tables.

John Zee, an extremely capable student, studied chemistry. He got his master's degree in three years rather than five. After graduation, he found employment at a Canadian university. He was a proud owner of what was probably the loudest alarm clock in Paris. Every day at six a.m., the whole dormitory floor would be on its feet when John, an ardent Catholic, was getting up to attend mass. John's roommate was not overly fond of the alarm clock, as he no longer had to get up so early, having already written his habilitation dissertation. However, John was a really good Christian, and when he noticed Andrzej's meager rations, he would cook for both of them, happily sharing his food. Like

a Pavlov's dog, Andrzej eagerly awaited the distinctive sound of Zee's moped arriving at the dormitory. This is how he survived August. In September, the overdue payments came in, and he was able to invite John to several restaurants of John's choosing, which obviously all served Chinese food.

Andrzej's Parisian life was getting increasingly easier. By the end of the summer holidays, the money for the work he had done began to flow into his bank account, and, most importantly, he received a permanent post and decent salary at the CNRS as a researcher and associate of Henryk Wroński. What helped Andrzej to get this post was his study on *sovnarkhoses*, namely the abolition of industry ministries in the Soviet Union and the empowerment of local authorities to make economic decisions. The country established more than one hundred of these entities, which were local economic councils. In terms of the direct market calculation conducted in the USSR, this was an absurdity, as these decisions resulted in the disruption of input–output networks and supply lines, ruining the material balance of the entire national economy.

In his study prepared for Wroński, Andrzej explained why this reform was abandoned already in 1963. He pointed out the enormous difficulties in replacing the direct market calculation while maintaining the core features of a socialist economy and the continuity of production processes. In doing so, he confirmed the hypothesis that *sovnarkhoses* were one of the major causes of Khrushchev's downfall. It was this particular analysis that helped Andrzej to secure a full-time position at the CNRS. He already had several publications in French under his belt and had also received the recommendation of Professor André Piatier, Eugeniusz Zaleski, and Jean Marczewski. Also, the names of those he considered his masters, namely Kalecki, Lipiński, Ossowski, and Kotarbiński, made a difference. These names were first-class! The competition proved fierce, as working at the CNRS was the dream of every young French scientist. He signed a contract, passed a medical examination, and was on his way to a French professorship. And then... his father arrived in Paris.

## RETURN TO POLAND

Leon Koźmiński came to Paris with some sort of a delegation. He met with his son and told him sternly that he should quit his job at the CNRS, return

to Poland, and fight for his scientific advancement. Why? Because he had a duty to serve his homeland instead of hiding, running away, and risking gradual *déracinement* – uprooting. During a long nighttime walk through the streets of Paris in September 1967, Leon told his son that uprooted human beings work only for themselves; they have no homeland to serve, no homeland which should provide them with strength, inspiration, and support. Such people resign themselves to loneliness and alienation, namely *déracinement*. Studies of entire generations of emigrants seem to confirm this diagnosis. In the end, Andrzej decided against becoming uprooted and chose to fulfill his duty.

With his first two CNRS paychecks, he bought a used Volkswagen Beetle and packed up his belongings. The purchase of the car was a highly entertaining process. Andrzej responded to an ad by a German woman who came to France in her Volkswagen as a student but then married a Frenchman and decided to sell her “maiden” car. She worked at INSEAD, teaching German, and insisted that Andrzej pay a lower price for the car than originally agreed. Eventually, they struck a deal, and Andrzej invited her and her friends to dinner at a Chinese restaurant on Rue Monsieur le Prince, where his father had once dined as a Sorbonne doctoral student.

Upon his return to Poland, Andrzej received his grandfather’s family signet ring from his father. Leon never wore it himself but clearly wanted to symbolically seal his son’s return to Poland. At first, Andrzej wore the ring in defiance of communism and later out of sheer sentiment. From that moment on, he no longer had doubts about who he was and where he belonged, although there many opportunities and temptations still awaited him in his life.

A practical problem remained: how to leave France after three months’ residence without any documents and while being employed at a French state institution? At the Office for Foreigners on Quais des Orfèvres, an official threw up his hands in amazement and announced an investigation. Fortunately, Leon Koźmiński had some high-ranking friends from before the war and gave his son an “emergency” phone number to call. The solution worked, and Andrzej was allowed to leave France without any negative consequences. They even offered him a *carte de séjour*, entitling him to permanent residency, but he declined, wanting to complete all the formalities as soon as possible and leave. Afterward, he traveled to France many times and never had any problems with his visa. Then there was the Polish border. Fortunately, the

Polish People's Republic had far more trouble with those who wanted to leave the country than with those who wanted to enter it. Therefore, it was relatively easy to obtain a consular passport issued on a single sheet of paper. Before he could get his newly purchased car on the road, he also needed a German visa.

A visit to the German consulate provided Andrzej with some company for the trip. Two young ladies from Warsaw who had also come to apply for a visa asked if he was going to Warsaw by car and whether they could accompany him. He agreed, as he hoped for company and assistance, announcing his departure at four in the morning from outside his dormitory at the Cité Universitaire. This early departure time stemmed from the rookie driver's fear of the heavy morning traffic in Paris. The ladies must have been determined because they turned up on time. The journey went fairly smoothly, although the female passengers were probably beginning to guess that this was Andrzej's first trip as a driver. On the way, they made a ceremonial drive-by past Place Stanislas in Nancy, remembering the Polish King Stanisław Leszczyński, whom the city still reveres. Forced to relinquish his Polish crown, Leszczyński became Duke of Lorraine and Bar, contributing to Nancy's remarkable rise.

As they approached the German border, they discovered that the ladies had a different border crossing point, namely the "Bridge of Europe," entered into their visa. They agreed that if the women succeeded in crossing the border, they would join him on the German side in the border town of Offenburg. Andrzej was to leave a slip of paper behind his car's windshield wiper containing information about the hotel where he was staying while the car itself was to wait outside the train station. The hotel was pleasant and had a good restaurant. Late at night, a bang and bright lights awoke Andrzej. Outside the window stood a huge American armored personnel carrier from which his female traveling companions were just disembarking. The soldiers looked very sad to see them go. A moment later came a knock on his door. Polish women are real troopers.

The following night proved almost as exciting. They made plans to stop in the East German town of Gotha, famous for the *Almanach de Gotha*, listing European high aristocracy families. They found the hotel marked on the map, but there must have been some celebrations taking place inside, as finding even one sober person was beyond the bounds of possibility. A drunk reception employee handed them the room key without asking any ques-

tions. The restaurant gave them food and drinks without asking for payment. In the morning, the whole hotel was sleeping so soundly that despite their genuine attempts, the traveling party found it impossible to pay for the night. They concluded that the German Democratic Republic must have quietly surpassed the Soviet Union, successfully implementing communism well ahead of its time.

## THE SECOND ATTEMPT

Likely to the surprise of his colleagues, Andrzej reported for his first classes at the Warsaw School of Economics on time. And thus, his battle for habilitation began. He filed an appeal against the Faculty Council's decision with the office of Minister Eugenia Krasowska, who was responsible for higher education on behalf of the Communist Party. The answer came relatively quickly, only several months later. In accordance with the law in force at the time, the minister revoked the Faculty Council's resolution and referred the case for reconsideration to the Faculty of Economics and Sociology of the University of Lodz. Minister Krasowska also reportedly stripped the department of its right to award postdoctoral degrees for one year. Was it a possibility that someone important stood up for Andrzej Koźmiński? He had no knowledge about such an option, but the university's employees certainly thought so. This did not win him any friends at his alma mater. Meanwhile, at the University of Lodz, the dean, Professor Władysław Welfe – whom Andrzej would see regularly many years later at meetings of the Polish Academy of Sciences – ordered minor additions to the documentation and put the matter to a vote of the Faculty Council, which admitted Koźmiński to the oral exam. The exam was set for the Council's last sitting in the academic year, which was in July. As Andrzej remembered later:

■ *During the period of my direct collaboration with Professor Wakar, I was so focused on my tasks that I did not look around me, and I failed to pay attention to the networks operating at the university. On my return from France, when I decided to fight for my position, this situation had to change. I was genuinely taken aback by the departure of Docent Janusz Zieliński from the department, as he was widely regarded as the most out-*

*standing of Wakar's students and his most likely successor. Zieliński transferred to the Political Economy Department at the Faculty of Production Economics, headed by Professor Maksymilian Pohorille, and co-authored the book titled Political Economy of Socialism, which Pohorille edited. I do not know the reasons for this transfer and do not wish to speculate on it. Undoubtedly, however, his move introduced an atmosphere of uncertainty and danger.*

## SECURITY SERVICE AT THE UNIVERSITY

At this time, the ominous scenario of 1968 was unfolding. The events followed a unique course at the Warsaw School of Economics, which probably also stemmed from its physical proximity to the Ministry of the Interior and associated institutions. The relations between the security services and university staff were almost ostentatious in nature.

Every day, a “guardian” sent by the Ministry of the Interior would turn up at the staff club dressed in a dark suit, white shirt, and tie, and wearing dark glasses – Rakowiecka Street’s very own James Bond! Several academics who saw no reason to conceal their identities joined him at his table. The group, whose composition never altered, performed an overview of the current situation. Every now and then, an additional individual would arrive with a specific problem or question. And so, it went on for several hours, every day, and in front of everyone. Interestingly, when many years later, journalist Bronisław Wildstein published the list of secret collaborators of the security services, it mentioned none of the “overt” collaborators or the university’s official “guardian.”

There were also those who boasted about their links with the communist secret services. Andrzej remembers an incident where someone called the Citizens’ Militia during some sort of brawl in a bar. When the patrol arrived, one of his colleagues flashed his Ministry of the Interior card and brutally told them to get out. The patrol meekly obeyed. The whole brawl was a scene instigated to show off one’s prowess and capabilities. In such an environment, everyone knew exactly what they could say and to whom. The unaware were warned of informers by placing a hand curled into a trumpet near one’s ear with fingers fluttering. This meant: “Careful, people are listening!”

## A PURGE IN SCIENCE

In such an atmosphere, the “Egg” club became deserted. Professors such as Jakub Litwin, Ignacy Sachs, Kazimierz Łaski, Jerzy Ostafin, Marcin Kula, Jurek Osiatyński, and many, many others disappeared. Andrzej was also on this proscription list on a charge of participating in various demonstrations. Luckily, his department colleague who commanded respect among the “Red Guards” came to his rescue. The man used the very Polish argument that Andrzej’s presence at the demonstration had followed some serious drinking party, which caused him “not to know what he was doing because, as you know, he likes to drink.” His family’s landed gentry roots were supposed to protect him from accusations of having links to Zionism. Was this the truth, or just a story? Who can tell? But that is how things were back then.

After the March 1968 purges, the Warsaw School of Economics welcomed new faculty members promoted on the wave of the 1968 Polish political crisis, as well as students and student leaders. At the time, the most disgraceful attack was made on the Nobel Prize nominee, Professor Michał Kalecki, and his colleagues. To this day, Andrzej is unable to forget that event, which had the atmosphere of public lynching.

It was the late autumn of 1968. The location was the auditorium on the fourth floor of the university’s main building. There was the silent, pale Kalecki, flanked by Łaski and Osiatyński, and a whole procession of raving half-wits, including those from the Higher School of Social Sciences at the Central Committee of the Communist Party, hurling accusations of revisionism, cosmopolitanism, and service to foreign, hostile forces. They were all delighted to be able to act with impunity, kicking someone who normally remained on intellectual heights inaccessible to them, so they reveled in demonstrating their sadistic joy. Among them was his disciple, future Minister of Science, Higher Education, and Technology. After this event, Kalecki never visited the university again. He locked himself away at home, became ill, and died in 1970, most likely from distress. Indeed, Kalecki was publicly hounded down and sentenced to civil death. “I cannot forgive myself for being a passive witness of this monstrous spectacle,” Andrzej confessed years later.

The Polish political crisis of 1968 inflicted damage to Polish science and its international standing comparable to that suffered by the scientific

community during the Second World War. For many scholars, this was a period of difficult choices. They had to decide whether to teach Polish youth and advance Polish science or take up arms against the system. Two childhood friends, Kuba Karpiński and Andrzej Koźmiński, embarked on diverging paths at the time. Knowing the communists, Andrzej was aware that the opposition would eliminate him from formal academic life sooner rather than later and force him to emigrate or operate in the underground. This was the path that Kuba chose intentionally. He was exceptionally steadfast and the bravest of them all. After his arrest, during the investigation, he did not reveal any names, never saying a word. The world never got the chance to read the amazing sociological publications by Professor Jakub Karpiński, while Polish universities never had the opportunity to welcome an esteemed group of his doctoral students. Their friend and master, Stefan Nowak, described the situation as follows in a conversation with Andrzej: “Communism fell, but what happened to Professor Karpiński will never be rectified.”

Andrzej chose the path of “organic work,” perhaps because he felt bound by the promise he had made to his father.

## SUCCESS IN ŁÓDŹ

The habilitation oral exam at the University of Lodz went well, although the whole event was so stressful that Andrzej remembers very little. He has remained indebted to the Faculty of Economics and Sociology at the University of Lodz for the hospitality provided and for extending a helping hand. This was not only the last Faculty Council meeting of the academic year but also the last of several exams taking place that day. It started at around three o'clock in the afternoon, after six hours of deliberation in the heat, and lasted for about three hours. Andrzej travelled to Łódź alone. After leaving the university grounds, he wandered around restaurants and bars while waiting for the train. It was not until the autumn of 1968 that he went to collect his diploma. The habilitation process marked a bitter victory, so he did not see it as an opportunity to celebrate.

At the Warsaw School of Economics, he was told that, despite his habilitation, he could not count on a post of a docent in the Department of Political



Economy. This was because he was politically neutral, and the department had a reputation of an “ideological” unit. He eventually became part of the Department of Organization and Management Theory headed by Professor Jerzy Kurnal, who was once his father’s assistant. This marked the end of Andrzej’s adventure with Professor Wakar’s Polish School of Economics, which ceased to exist anyway after the professor’s death.



# INTRODUCTION TO MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

The Department of Organization and Management Theory at the Faculty of Internal Trade, headed by Professor Jerzy Kurnal, gave Andrzej a pleasant welcome. The professor's right-hand man, Stefan Kwiatkowski, was Andrzej's close friend. There was also Bogdan Wawrzyniak, with whom he had been friends since the beginning of his work at the Warsaw School of Economics. The department also comprised his younger colleagues: Majka Romanowska, Marian Dobrzyński, and Zbyszek Dworzecki. Witold Kieżun, Ph.D., was a regular guest at the department's scientific meetings. Although much older than Andrzej, Kieżun was his student in some sense. When defending his doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Professor Jerzy Kurnal, Kieżun was very afraid of the doctoral exam in economics he was supposed to take with Professor Aleksy Wakar. And it was not in Kieżun's nature to be afraid. Andrzej undertook tutoring him and quizzed him several times in his parents' apartment on Rakowiecka Street. The exam went brilliantly, and Wakar was delighted. Afterwards, Kieżun invited his friends from Kurnal's seminar to a sumptuous dinner at Hotel Saski, but all this was in the old Wakar days.

## BETWEEN DISCIPLINES

Andrzej did not intend to permanently play the role of an exiled "Wakar follower." He decided to take organizational and management issues seriously and be a "good citizen" of the environment that took him in. Above all, he realized – just like Molière's Monsieur Jourdain, who did not know that he was speaking prose all his life – that he had always practiced management

science, albeit without being fully aware of that. The category in question quite easily encompassed his master's thesis on company directors completed at the Warsaw School of Economics, his master's thesis in sociology on the social determinants of labor productivity, his doctorate on the humanization of work, and even that luckless habilitation, which one would describe today as dedicated to customer relations.

Academic bureaucracies dislike people moving between disciplines. Andrzej used surprise to his advantage, which is probably why no one successfully attacked him for disregarding the various scientific silos labeled by bureaucrats. Such an accusation indeed hit others, including one of Andrzej's doctoral students – was it economics or sociology? – but thankfully, to no success. These deliberations led to reflections of great significance to his further scientific path.

First, he realized the utter futility of setting boundaries in science and defining the identity of disciplines within the social sciences. Ruminations on what is and what is not economics, management science, or sociology resemble the age-old dispute about the number of angels that can dance on the head of a pin. It all comes down to money and business. Still, institutional structures form around these various disciplines, such as university faculties, departments, institutes, scientific societies, journals, annual conferences, and publishing houses. They require funding, entrenchment, and defense. Above all, however, scientific careers develop within these structures, pursued in specific environments and according to set rules. The act of knocking over these interdisciplinary fences would threaten the entire industry dedicated to academic careers. The idea is to make it as comfortable as possible for the participants, especially those higher up the academic hierarchy. Meanwhile, a genuine solution to any nontrivial practical program necessitates a simultaneous recourse to different scientific disciplines and their research instruments.

Second, he understood that his dual formation, previous scientific work, and temperament condemned him to permanently reside in a “no man's land,” in the area between disciplines, utilizing various theories and research methods borrowed from the already well-established fields. Such is the field occupied by the science of organization and management, which draws abundantly on the contributions made by economics, sociology, psychology, and political science, as well as quantitative and even technical sciences. Moreover, it is a practical discipline subject to the pressures of practical management prob-

lems and dysfunctions which require resorting to the achievements of various areas. Therefore, it transpired that management science might actually be Andrzej's proper specialization, even though he was pushed toward it by fate, against his will, and in rather dramatic circumstances.

Third, especially in Europe and Poland, management lacked solid institutional establishment and had a relatively low level of legitimacy. Even in the curricula of Europe's leading business colleges akin to the Warsaw School of Economics – German *Handelshochschulen* or the French *écoles de commerce* – one would look in vain for the science of organization and management before and just after the war. Back then, universities taught strictly practical subjects: merchandising, accounting, organization and techniques of trade, and commercial law. The more ambitious schools “spiced up” such curricula with general subjects, including economic history, sometimes sociology, and above all, economics, considered to be the “queen of all science.” It was not until the late 1950s and early 1960s that the science of organization and management in the curriculum of the Warsaw School of Economics branched out from the organization and techniques of trade taught by Professor Leon Koźmiński and from the organization and techniques of foreign trade taught by Professor Jan Zieleniewski.

At the time, this new discipline did not garner much prestige and respect. Therefore, to practice the organization and management science with all due seriousness, one had to think about a more robust institutional base. There was also a sizeable research gap that needed filling. All in all, there were certainly opportunities for improvement. Interestingly, this underdevelopment of organization and management science at Polish universities did not stem from a lack of access to world science. After the Polish October 1956, new English-language books on the subject were translated and published very quickly. Other works were made available in libraries, especially in the library of the Central Management Development Institute – regularly supplied with the latest publications on management science under an agreement with the International Labour Office in Geneva and the Ford Foundation, concluded during Gomułka's thaw. Thus, Poland was by no means cut off from the world; the People's Republic of Poland simply showed no real demand for management practice. Management in Poland at the time observed its own real socialist laws, and these had little to do with rational management. Participants in various management courses and training workshops eagerly listened to

docent Koźmiński's stories about international management theories and practices, but these seemed inconceivable tales that were pleasant to listen to yet distant from everyday life. Such genuine demand was still to come.

## THE FIRST DOCTORAL STUDENT AND FRIEND

These three reflections accompanied Andrzej throughout the 1969/1970 academic year, which he spent at the Department of Organization and Management Theory. He taught students using the textbook written by Professor Jerzy Kurnal and participated in seminars and meetings. Andrzej also took part in the department's joint research project on bureaucracy. The publication came out several years later, in 1972. While working at the department, Koźmiński promoted his first doctoral student: the unforgettable Andrzej Zawisłak, who successfully defended his dissertation before the Council of the Faculty of Internal Trade. The contrarian Zawisłak approached the issue of efficiency in management in the way opposite to the praxeological school of efficient action that dominated Polish science at the time. He dedicated his doctoral dissertation to the constraints on the rationality of decision-making and discussed their typology more extensively in his book prepared on the basis of his doctorate.

Supervising Zawisłak's doctoral dissertation marked the beginning of the most important friendship and scientific collaboration in Andrzej's life. Later, Zawisłak was everywhere his adviser went – he began working at the Management Institute of the University of Warsaw, at the Department of System Analysis. Together, they wrote the book *Certainty and Game* and more publications, including one in the form of a conversation. Although this particular book was not a success, it gave the authors much satisfaction. Later, Andrzej repeated the experiment of writing down an oral exchange on two more occasions: with sociology Professor Piotr Sztompka and economy Professor Grzegorz Kołodko.

He cooperated with Zawisłak for almost twenty years. Together, they wrote articles, conducted research, attended conferences, and led an intensive social life – they were inseparable. Andrzej Zawisłak remained unmatched in terms of his courage, original thinking, wit, ability to react quickly, erudition, and the breadth of horizons. He had an “interdisciplinary nature” and was an exceptionally gifted writer, as evidenced by his articles

published in the *Przegląd Techniczny* weekly and *Życie i Nowoczesność*. They also met socially. Andrzej even became a godfather to Zawiślak's son Paweł, born on the day of the historic mass officiated by the Polish Pope, John Paul II, which took place on Zwycięstwa Square in Warsaw in 1979. Today, Paweł is an assistant professor at the Management Department of Kozminski University, having defended his doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Professor Andrzej Koźmiński.

Their scientific cooperation ceased after Zawiślak entered politics in 1989, first as a member of parliament and later as the Minister of Industry in the government of Prime Minister Jan K. Bielecki. In later years, there were always some obstacles to reestablishing their collaboration. Their meetings became infrequent. Professor Zawiślak got himself entangled in a conflict connected to one of the doctoral dissertations he supervised. He seemed to disregard the matter, but deep down, the whole thing affected him acutely. With great interest, Andrzej read Professor Zawiślak's last controversial book inspired by quantum physics. He even attended a meeting with the author at the Bookseller's Club in Warsaw's Old Town Market Place. Several days before his death, Professor Zawiślak called Andrzej with a proposal to discuss a new project. As Andrzej was about to leave on some exotic holiday with his wife, they promised to meet immediately on Andrzej's return. News about the sudden death of his friend put an end to these plans – instead of going on holiday, Andrzej found himself at the cemetery.

Not everything in life can be planned, although Andrzej has spent all his life in a hurry with an hour-by-hour schedule of all his lectures and meetings. He notes down all these items in a traditional paper calendar he keeps in the inner pocket of his suit jacket. Maybe that is why he never made it to many such postponed meetings, which later turned out to have been the last ones. At the end of the 1980s, on Boulevard Saint-Michel in Paris, Andrzej was lucky to bump into Nina Lagneau, by then a professor at Collège de France – as the second woman after Maria Skłodowska-Curie! She seemed somehow out of sorts, repeatedly inviting Andrzej to visit her. Unfortunately, he had to get back to Orléans to deliver a lecture, so they made an appointment for one of the following weeks. Several days later, news reached him about her tragic death.

Don Cushman, Sara King, and Rowland Baughman, his wonderful friends from the time he worked in Connecticut, all retired to Palm Springs in Florida and kept inviting him over. Finding himself once in New York on the occasion

of an AACSB conference, he finally made plans to see them. Unfortunately, he then caught a bad cold and had to stay in bed for several days instead of flying to Florida. Afterwards, he flew to Chicago to deal with some university business at Saint Paul University and returned to Poland. Several months later, he found out about the death of Rowland and, later, also of Don. When people hurry, they often make bad choices. Professor Zawisłak used to laugh at the small pieces of paper on which Andrzej noted down tasks to complete together with their deadlines, calling him a “calendar slave.” Well, he was right.

## EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF TRADE

Aleksy Wakar’s last work, which remained unknown during his lifetime, dealt with the management of foreign trade enterprises. The author used a novel conceptual and analytical apparatus drawn from cybernetics. Andrzej decided to follow this path. He derived particular inspiration from two works: one written by Marian Mazur about the theory of self-contained systems and Oskar Lange’s *Whole and Parts in the Light of Cybernetics*. This inspiration led him to write a short book, *Zarządzanie systemowe* (Systems Management), in 1970 – the first foray into more serious research of organizations as systems and management as a control system. The book was well received, had two editions, and was translated into the Czech language.

Thanks to this publication, Andrzej found employment as a consultant at the Institute of Internal Trade, which allowed him to put together his own research team. He was in charge of the Laboratory for the Study of Social Working Conditions in Trade, which comprised a group of young researchers. Thanks to the support of the then-director of the institute, Professor Roman Głowacki, he even had funds to conduct empirical research and process the results. The team focused on subjects such as professional stabilization of various groups of trade employees, professional qualifications and methods of their assessment, as well as approaches and preferences of trade employees and consumers. The results of these studies appeared with a slight delay in a collective work, *Socjologia handlu* (Sociology of Trade), edited by Andrzej Koźmiński and Adam Sarapata.

These were the first attempts to build management concepts on empirical foundations rather than using the speculative method. Within a relatively



short time, Andrzej was able to achieve a lot together with his colleagues, most likely because he inspired them with Professor Wakar's methods of managing scientific teams. Unfortunately, after Andrzej came back from a year's stay in the USA, the project did not resurrect.

## THE WORKERS' DEFENSE COMMITTEE

The December of 1970 brought violent strikes and protests triggered by price rises. Taking place mostly in northern Poland, these tragic events did not bring significant changes to the universities, especially those in Warsaw, which were still coming to terms with the fallout of the 1968 Polish political crisis. The academic community of sociologists suffered great losses through the emigration of many scholars, such as Zygmunt Bauman, Bronisław Baczko, Maria Hirszowicz, and Aleksander Matejko.

Andrzej found the events of March 1968 genuinely traumatic. Although the witch hunt slowed a little over time, it became evident that the working class perception of history diverged greatly from that of academic communities. There was no agreement or alliance between workers and intellectuals. This situation turned out to be a vital lesson for the opposition, one that people had to learn very quickly. Such was the opinion of sociologists, namely Kuba Karpiński, Jacek Tarkowski, and Jadwiga Staniszkis, who came into open conflict with the authorities due to the events of March 1968. Several years had to pass before others drew conclusions from their analyses. The 1970 Polish protests the Baltic coastal cities primarily constituted a workers' tragedy in which intellectual circles were not personally or directly involved, maybe except students supporting the striking workers in Gdańsk. However, they provided an opportunity for deeper reflection, which became apparent in the context of the future strikes in Radom and the Ursus factory in June 1976. That year, in the apartment of Professor Edward Lipiński, a neighbor of the Koźmiński family, the Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) came into existence. It went on to become a famous organization that stood in opposition to the communist authorities.

People often compare the Polish political crisis of 1968 to the events that took place in France the same year. Andrzej Koźmiński believes that apart from the collective psychology of youthful rebellion, both crises had little in

common with each other. French students objected to a caste-based, insular society in which young people's success in life was determined by their family's social and financial position and where career paths remained ritualized and predictable. Such traditional determinants were in conflict with the logic of a competitive and globalizing world. The sociologist Michel Crozier provides an in-depth analysis of these events, among others, in his work titled *The Stalled Society*. Andrzej Koźmiński had many French students attending his lectures at American universities. In a way, they were "refugees" fleeing various obstacles prevalent in their homeland, especially under François Mitterrand's socialist government. By emigrating, they sought their own place in the "country of unlimited possibilities." They often became successful entrepreneurs, managers, and intellectuals. The long list of French Nobel laureates in economics employed at American universities is very telling. Poles, however, revolted against insufficient civil liberties, the nonexistent rule of law, the country's separation from the West, and its turning toward the East. Poles protested against an inefficient economy and a lower standard of living than in the "old" Europe. After more than half a century, the causes of youth rebellions remain very similar in both countries.

## THE FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

The year 1970 gave Andrzej a particularly valuable gift: a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship (Senior Fulbright Fellowship) at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh for a full academic year. He chose Carnegie Mellon precisely because of his fascination with the systemic approach and systems analysis. He gained the support of the department's head, the university authorities, the relevant state authorities, and the ministry, passed the language exam at the embassy, and was accepted by the chosen American university.

At Carnegie Mellon, the academic year begins in August. After a short holiday spent with his fiancée at Lake Wigry in the beautiful Suwałki Lakeland, Andrzej made his way to Pittsburgh. The taxi driver who drove him from the airport, situated a long way from the city, spitefully dropped him off in front of the most expensive of the local abodes, Webster Hall, after Andrzej had asked for an inexpensive hotel. Fortunately, the place was not far from the university. As a Fulbright scholar, he was under the protection

of the Department of State, and Americans found that fact quite impressive. However, he noticed a palpable sense of resentment toward Poles after the shameful 1968 political crisis in Poland. The events received wide coverage in America, especially in Jewish communities.

The Fulbright Foundation paid Andrzej a very decent scholarship, transferred into an account set up in fifteen minutes at Mellon Bank, but all the living arrangements were down to him personally. As his accommodation, Andrzej chose the Mudge Graduate House located in the converted former residence of a coal magnate. A beautifully maintained park surrounded this stunning mansion, and the room was spacious and comfortable. Andrzej shared his little kitchenette with a friendly man from Turkey. The kitchenette did not really seem necessary though, as downstairs there was an excellent and inexpensive canteen serving three plentiful meals a day, with a wide selection of dishes. There was also a large living room with a TV and access to a terrace and garden. The scholarship covered all these amenities. With an excellent base for work, Andrzej also made plans to take numerous excursions in the second half of his stay in America.

These years marked the heyday of Carnegie Mellon, which was in the process of transforming itself into one of the leading research universities in America and the world. The president was Richard Cyert, known for his behavioral theory of the firm (written with James G. March), formerly dean of the business school called the Graduate School of Industrial Administration (GSIA). Under his leadership, the university's research budget doubled almost year on year.

President Cyert welcomed Andrzej during a brief meeting, which made it clear that his main focus was the GSIA – a small elite unit offering a two-year full-time MBA (Master of Business Administration) program and a doctoral program. While implementing a growing number of research assignments, the GSIA often collaborated with the Faculty of Psychology. Approximately 50 to 60 people were admitted each year. The group of new students starting their studies in the autumn of 1970 had only one woman, a Latina. The doctoral program, in turn, had many foreigners, mostly Europeans: Germans, French, Italians, and Brits. Andrzej happily participated in the social life of this friendly bunch of people. Apart from him, the group comprised another Fulbright scholar, the Hungarian Ernő Zalai, an econometrician from what then was Karl Marx University and presently is Corvinus University of

Budapest. One reason they became friends was that the Hungarian was fluent in Polish, which he had learned to read the works of Polish economists: Lange, Kalecki, and Lipiński.

At the Mudge Graduate House, there was another Polish speaker: an exile from Wrocław after the events of 1956, a mathematician, and an outstanding pupil of the world-famous scientist, Professor Hugo Steinhaus. He was completely unable to find his way in America because he spoke very little English and found learning it quite challenging. He was known for solving complex problems for the research section of the Physics Department. Delighted to be able to chat with someone in Polish, he always sat at the table where Andrzej and Ernő ate their meals. He missed Wrocław and carried photographs and letters from his homeland on his person. Communist Poland did this scholar and itself terrible, mindless injustice. His analytical mind was unable to answer the question: why did this happen?

Another one of Andrzej's Mudge Graduate House acquaintances was Frank, who emigrated from Israel as a way of protesting against what he believed was Israel's racist and discriminatory policies against Palestinians. He often spoke and wrote about this matter. Unfortunately, in retaliation, Jewish circles in America ostracized Frank, preventing him from finding a job he needed to support his studies. A colleague advised him to speak to a rabbi to explain his views. This solution seemed to have worked, as Frank got a job, and the boycott stopped. He was also able to attend synagogue services as a member of the Jewish community.

## MODERN MANAGEMENT

There was a time when Carnegie Mellon enjoyed the reputation of “the world capital of operations research,” which stood for the mathematical modeling of business processes and their optimization. When Andrzej arrived at the GSIA, this enormous potential in quantitative methods was enhanced by knowledge relating to general systems theory, management processes, psychology, and sociology, as well as increasingly sophisticated applications of computational technology, such as simulations. The result was an interdisciplinary scientific mix with a powerful impact that proved unique on a global scale. What happened there shaped management science and its practical applications for decades to come.

First of all, the behavioral theory of the firm demonstrated that firms “behave” based on various conflicting aspirations and coalitions rather than act like mechanical optimizers. Second, Herbert A. Simon’s 1978 Nobel Prize-winning theory of bounded rationality proposed a realistic decision-making model, which satisfied both individuals and groups, in place of an unrealistic optimization model. This concept opened up a new area of interdisciplinary research, especially one involving psychologists, into genuine decision-making processes and simulation attempts by computer systems, including artificial intelligence. Third, operations research on specific problems gave way to holistic management information systems (MIS), combining algorithms, heuristics, data acquisition and storage, and information processing systems, which used both technological solutions and human potential. Such an integrated approach was already at that time opening the floodgates to the automation of certain management processes, at least those that permitted description by means of increasingly complex algorithms. These developments found their fullest expression in the work of Jay Forrester of MIT, whom Andrzej met during one of his several study tours, which took place in the latter part of his visit to the USA.

As a Senior Fulbright Scholar, he was able to independently determine his research program, provided that his base was the GSIA at Carnegie Mellon University. As he had expressed an interest in systems analysis and management systems design when applying for the scholarship, his academic adviser became Charles Kriebel, who straddled theory and practice. Kriebel was at the university two days a week, running seminars, attending consultations, and coordinating the research program. Reportedly, he also worked as a CIA adviser on information systems, with the Agency being the world’s top user of computers with the biggest computing power. In a seminar, he said once that the CIA knew everything and had all the necessary information; it just did not know where that information was stored and how to find it quickly. Therefore, the most pressing and complex problem was information retrieval. This observation is still valid today.

Kriebel taught Andrzej a lot in systems analysis and design. On his return to Poland, Andrzej used this knowledge in several publications and, most notably, in his teaching. Systems analysis became his main scientific specialization for many years to come. Andrzej’s textbook on systems analysis of organizations had two editions in 1976 and 1978 and was translated into

Hungarian. Systems analysis and its application in the economy treated as a social and economic system became Andrzej's groundwork for his academic advancement in the form of a professorial book. He wrote its first version while still at Carnegie Mellon.

## MEETINGS WITH HERBERT SIMON

While in Pittsburgh, Andrzej enjoyed attending seminars on human problem-solving taught by Herbert Simon. Simon's method of analyzing organizations had a significant impact on Andrzej and shaped him as a researcher. He followed the achievements of this future winner of the Turing Prize (1975) and Nobel Prize (1978) with great interest, especially Simon's experiments with artificial intelligence. Simon's starting point was decision theories. During one of his visits to the scholar's office, Andrzej noticed a book by the eminent Polish psychologist Józef Koziński, *Psychological Decision Theory*, whose Polish version lay on the desk. The American professor explained that he was trying to refresh his Polish in order to read it. Perhaps this Simon had some links to the family of a prewar Warsaw restaurateur? Andrzej heard about the best prewar restaurant, Simon & Stecki on Krakowskie Przedmieście, from his father during their strolls through the ruined capital after the war. Simon undoubtedly had some Polish roots, but he would consider it tactless if the Polish scholarship holder continued to pursue this topic. Although Andrzej did not have a close working relationship with Simon, he regularly attended his seminars, read everything he wrote, and considered Simon one of his masters.

Research into decision-making processes led Simon to engage in machine simulation attempts using computers. This is how the Chess Player system was developed. Simon believed that the system could win almost all chess games, even against outstanding players, but that it was unable to beat a grandmaster. This belief served as the basis of his distinction between masters and craftsmen – a highly inspiring concept. Unfortunately, in 1997, IBM's Deep Blue computer defeated grandmaster Garry Kasparov.

During one of the experiments, Andrzej observed Simon having a dialogue with the system. The scholar asked for the justification of the machine's subsequent moves on the chessboard, and when it came to the move that

ended the winning game, the system said it had made this decision in order to win. “And why did you want to win?” pressed Simon. “Because you told me so,” the machine replied on a small brown screen connected to the IBM System/360. In 1971, this event seemed like crossing a previously impenetrable border. Today, this boundary seems old-fashioned as science has constantly pushed it forward. In the 1990s, an acquaintance of Andrzej’s, Konrad Fijałkowski, headed a research program at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute – one of America’s leading technical universities – with a surprising name, “personality of automatons.” Fijałkowski was one of Poland’s most eminent computer scientists and a respected science fiction author. The United States Department of Defense later took over his project and kept it secret. We are currently getting used to the thought of the potential autonomization of technical systems, although the possibility frightens many. These are the beliefs of Elon Musk, while AI-based systems such as ChatGPT are becoming equal players in the market and even in scientific research.

## SOCCER PLAYER

At Ernő’s insistence, Andrzej joined the university’s European football team, which the Americans disdainfully called “soccer” and which they regarded at the time as a game for women, reserving the term “football” exclusively for American football. The team consisted only of foreigners hailing from England, Italy, Turkey, Germany, Hungary, and Poland. They played at the university’s stadium to completely empty stands. However, the team existed formally, and the university’s president even gave them a small donation to cover an away match against Penn State University. They lost the match honorably despite their fierce battle in which Ernő broke his collarbone, but the overall experience was very positive.

After their training and several matches (against Pitt University and Duquesne), the football players would go to the nearby Craig Street Inn pub. In addition to the elegant living area at Mudge Graduate House, the pub was their main social meeting point. Regularly spending time with members of the American working class, after some time, the group won the locals’ acceptance. This meant the ability to find a place at a table while enjoying a chat, a drink, and a friendly attitude. In places attended by people with limited

financial resources, customers tend to place a banknote on the bar in front of them. The barman continues to pour them drinks for as long as the banknote allows. To continue drinking, the customer needs another banknote. But if you were among “your own,” sometimes you could make five dollars last all night. Craig Street Inn was always full and jolly at the weekends.

At that time, Pittsburgh still enjoyed its reputation as “The Iron City” and boasted well-developed services to the metallurgy sector: transport, logistics, industrial construction, and equipment manufacturing. The Craig Street Inn’s clientele came mainly from this background, although some regulars came from the world of academia, with the Pittsburgh University campus located right next door.

The most striking feature of the American working class of this period was optimism. They all believed that they were living in the best country in the world, where the “American dream” was truly coming to life, and that any foreigner who managed to get to America was bound to stay there. Their favorite topic of conversation were successful individuals, and that meant those who got a promotion, earned a good salary, or ran a successful business. Achievements often induced comments, not with envy but as a source of inspiration. Andrzej enjoyed spending time at Craig Street Inn mostly because of this sense of optimism.

When he visited the place in the 1980s and 1990s, the atmosphere was completely different – an unmistakable whiff of sadness hung in the air. Steel mills kept closing one by one. Pittsburgh was going through a painful, although ultimately successful, process of transforming itself into a high-tech city. In the winter of 1980, Andrzej traveled to Pittsburgh’s Duquesne University as a visiting professor. Just before Christmas, the city steel mills laid off more than ten thousand workers. At the same time, the newspapers made it clear that US Steel was hiring Japanese experts to modernize and restructure its plants. Japan proved highly successful in rebuilding its own steel industry after the Second World War. American bombs had destroyed almost seventy percent of its potential. The Japanese began the reconstruction process by blowing up the remaining thirty percent, securing their country’s undisputed position as the industry’s technological leader for many years to come. Fortunately, the Japanese did not have to blow up much of Pittsburgh in the 1980s. The ghost steel mills are still present in the landscape.



## A BUSINESS SCHOOL RALLY

As Fulbright scholars can freely determine their program, Andrzej decided to use the second part of his visit to tour all the major business schools in the USA. He became familiar with their profiles, operating and funding mechanisms, curricula, teaching methods, staff selection solutions, and student recruitment rules. These were generally very businesslike and professional meetings. Only the University of Chicago received him somewhat more warmly as a compatriot of Oskar Lange, giving him access to the professor's carefully preserved office at the Department of Economics. In the 1960s and the 1970s, Lange was one of the most quoted economists in the world, and for many years to come, numerous economists from Poland still basked in the warmth of his fame.

All the while, Andrzej benefited from the assistance provided by the Department of State, specifically the invaluable Mrs. Lovecky, who arranged contacts and funded bus travel expenses, making him an experienced user of the then-reliable Greyhound company. He stayed with friends or in cheap accommodation like the YMCA hostels. In this way, he visited Harvard, MIT, Chicago, NYU, Berkeley, Stanford, and UCLA. On his return from the States, he spent a few more months traveling around Europe and visited the Cranfield School of Management in the United Kingdom and INSEAD near Paris, already at his own expense. These visits gave him a reasonably complete picture of management education on both sides of the pond.

In those years, Europe was only seeing the very beginnings of MBA courses, and refused to officially recognize the obtained title as a degree. Incidentally, this is still the case in Poland today, only no one pays attention to it, and MBA programs continue to enjoy unflagging success. Europeans began to emulate the Americans. At the time, INSEAD was one small building surrounded by a forest, built thanks to the efforts of Olivier Giscard d'Estaing, brother of the French president. The institute had close links with Harvard, whose curriculum it followed practically word for word. Cranfield, also modeled on the American schools, was built on the site of a decommissioned air base. The book *Making Managers* by Charles Handy and his colleagues contains a solid description of the origins of modern management education. As proven later, Poland was not as far behind in this area of education as it might have seemed at first.

## THE MBA PROFILE

By looking at business school campuses, Andrzej Koźmiński was able to draw a number of conclusions that proved immensely useful in his future work.

He realized that the cornerstone of management education are the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs, although schools do not always officially recognize them as such. These are usually two-year programs, initially offered exclusively on a full-time basis, and then adapted to the needs and capabilities of those employed full-time in lower management positions. In fact, universities customize these programs for large corporations.

An MBA graduate is an “organization person” predestined for rapid advancement within corporate structures. Attending a full-time MBA program presents a serious and risky investment. It requires a career break, as candidates must have several years of managerial experience at middle management levels for admission. There is also the matter of considerable tuition fees – in the early 1970s, the best universities already charged tens of thousands of dollars – and the necessity to have enough financial resources to cover living expenses at costly university centers.

However, a wage increase obtained thanks to the MBA degree ensured a quick return on such an investment. The risks outlined above made FEM-BA (Fully Employed MBA) programs – completed on a part-time or evening basis or even extramurally – quite popular, especially in Europe. However, the market value of such a diploma remains lower.

Management education is a brand-name product. The value of a degree on the labor market directly correlates with the reputation of the issuing university. Reputation, in turn, depends on the significance of the research conducted at the university and under its name (citations), and on the presence of eminent scholars among the staff. The second factor that determines the prestige of a management school are its links with the business world. These can take the form of patronage which sometimes entails enormous contributions for university expansion and other purposes, including research or training programs, employment of graduates, and participation in the university's life. Very often, business schools are named after their most generous sponsors, a good example being the Anderson Graduate School of Management at UCLA, named after the Los Angeles real estate mogul.

Educational products sold by reputable business schools are generally extremely expensive and high-margin. As a result, business schools and management departments of American universities tend to have the best funding and the biggest financial resources, often occupying the most luxurious buildings funded by their patrons.

Their curricula offer functional disciplines, such as production, marketing, finance, and human resources management, as well as problem-oriented, integrative capstone courses: company policy, strategy, community relations, and leadership. Students can also choose typical “tool” courses, such as statistics, mathematics, accounting, and computer science, as well as general development courses, which include psychology, sociology, and economics. By and large, these are highly eclectic and interdisciplinary curricula. Research programs implemented by business schools can have either a narrow focus or an interdisciplinary character and relate, for example, to leadership or team functioning. The drive to attract “celebrity lecturers” and undertake viral topics is also evident. They impact the interdisciplinary teaching and research environment and prevent the creation of enclosed groups. When Andrzej met Mason Haire, a well-known organizational psychologist from MIT, the professor ended the meeting after some time, explaining that he had to prepare for class. He mentioned that as part of the “mixing of specializations,” he was assigned a class in finance.

## DINNER WITH MCKINSEY

In addition to his individual tour of American business schools, Andrzej had many opportunities for interesting and inspiring meetings while in the USA. The Department of State opened all doors, although not always as wide as Andrzej would have hoped. One of his requests concerned a potential visit to McKinsey, the best-known consulting group. They accepted the request in a rather perverse way. At the company’s headquarters, a lively and corpulent older gentleman welcomed Andrzej and handed him a business card with the impressive business title of vice president. Only when he got a better knowledge of American business did he realize that larger companies issued hundreds of such business cards. Some of these go to people who specialize

in getting rid of unwanted visitors. And this was clearly what his host was aiming to achieve.

After handing Andrzej some colorful leaflets and explaining that it was too late to have any conversations with relevant employees, he took him to dinner at a good restaurant in Upper Manhattan. There, in the company of Jack Daniel's, the Polish scholarship holder listened to several stories about McKinsey's achievements. Remembering the open-door policy of Gierek's government, Andrzej asked if McKinsey would be interested in doing business in Poland. The response he received from his tipsy interlocutor was surprising: "We never get involved in hopeless cases." Indeed, the golden rule of consulting is to undertake the treatment of only those who are healthy. This rule proved valid several years later when British consultants set off to restructure of the gigantic Polish Ursus plant on behalf of the communist government. They made this decision after Poland purchased the license for Massey Ferguson tractors. The project was a complete disaster. The consultants suggested flattening the organizational structure and decreasing the number of deputy directors from eleven to two. After protracted and difficult deliberations, the Central Committee of the Communist Party agreed to the proposal. The remaining nine "distinguished comrades" received advisory roles, keeping their former salaries. They also made every effort to send the consultants back over the English Channel with their tails between their legs. This was a classic example of a parasitic game which Koźmiński described with Zawiślak in their book *Certainty and Game*.

Professor Jean Boddewyn of NYU, editor of the journal *International Studies of Management & Organization* – in which Andrzej had published his article, translated from French, on the role of the manager in a socialist economy – invited him to lecture in New York and offered him a place on the editorial team of this periodical. This opportunity allowed Andrzej to become acquainted with the origins of American research into international management. Practically until the mid-1970s, American management science was almost entirely inward-looking, focused on domestic theories. In later years, American universities would invite Andrzej to teach a course on international and comparative management.

Sociologist Tom Burns, whom Andrzej had met while still a student in Warsaw, invited him to give a guest lecture at the University of New Hampshire. There he met Walter Buckley, one of the few sociologists to use a systemic ap-

proach. He was also a jazz musician, and this allowed him to develop a broader reflection on the role of art in science and management. Andrzej still enjoyed writing poetry from time to time, but mostly, he did it for writing's sake. Understandably, his contacts with the artistic community became sporadic.

## THE PORTRAIT OF AN ANCESTRESS

Andrzej's aunt Helunia lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, while her daughter Hania lived nearby in Winthrop Harbor, Illinois, with her husband and children. The Koźmiński family last said goodbye to Aunt Helunia and Hania during the Warsaw Uprising, on leaving the apartment on Naruszewicza Street where they had all lived together during the German occupation. After the fall of the uprising, the two women found themselves in Germany with Helunia's sister, who had met and married a German officer while staying in the Vilnius Region during the First World War. This particular aunt from Germany gave Andrzej an unusual memento. On leaving Poland as an unmarried young woman with a substantial dowry, she took many miscellaneous items with her to Germany. Among them was a portrait of her eighteenth-century ancestress, Countess Benisławska. Her claim to fame in the Eastern Borderlands were her "raids" of her neighbors' estates, stealing their land alongside their cattle. Reportedly, she had twenty-two children, eight of whom survived. Benisławska wrote and published religious poems. Her portrait's author was an itinerant painter of the type that traveled round most manor houses in Poland, so the picture has no special artistic value. After her sister's death, Aunt Helunia inherited the painting.

The portrait of the countess used to hang in Milwaukee in the family's living room, but after her mother's death, Hania decided to give it to Andrzej. When flying from Chicago to Warsaw via Paris, she put the painting in the hold tied with string and wrapped in paper. Unsurprisingly, the package never got to Warsaw. At that time, Andrzej knew some customs officers at the airport, as the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Management ran a course for them. Thanks to these personal contacts, the damaged painting was finally located in a dustbin at an airport in Paris. After successful retrieval and extensive renovation, the portrait was hung in the living room of Alicja and Andrzej Koźmiński as a one-of-a-kind heirloom from days gone by.



ONCE CONSIDERED LOST, THE PORTRAIT OF THE BAROQUE POETESS, KONSTANCJA BENISŁAWSKA, TRAVELED HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD BEFORE ENDING UP IN THE KOŹMIŃSKI FAMILY'S WARSAW HOME.

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To everyone's surprise, it turned out to be the only portrait – previously thought lost – of the celebrated Enlightenment poet Konstancja Benisławska, whose image the wider public knows only from a woodcut that is a copy of this painting. The writer was born on January 6, 1747 into a family of Polonized Livonian nobility bearing the surname Ryck. At the age of twenty-eight, already the wife of a Livonian court official, Piotr Benisławski, she published a mature volume of mystical poetry entitled *Songs Sung to Oneself*. Aunt Helunia of Milwaukee inherited the poet's good looks, bearing a striking resemblance to her eighteenth-century ancestor.

## ROARING PONTIAC

During a visit to his aunt, Andrzej confided in her husband Zbig that he needed a car for his trip around the States. Zbig generously offered him a huge 500-horsepower Pontiac Bonneville which had been rusting away in his backyard for nearly two years. Andrzej fitted the car with a new battery, spark plugs, and “newer” but still used tires, and proudly set off for Pittsburgh. Somewhere halfway to his destination, possibly in Indiana, the Pontiac lost its entire exhaust system: both mufflers and the exhaust pipe. The car began to emit sounds resembling those made by a jet engine. Making the most of American freedom, Andrzej made it all the way to his home in Pittsburgh.

With the assistance of his friends who were skilled in DIY and had access to a garage and the right equipment, the vehicle gained a whole new exhaust system bought from the Sears department store. Unfortunately, as Zbig had parked the car outside for a long time, its electrical system proved to be capricious: every so often, the vehicle would stall suddenly, remaining unresponsive to any stimuli. And this is exactly what happened at the San Francisco airport, where Andrzej was delivering his friend who had studied sociology with him at the University of Warsaw. Witek Morawski was returning home together with his family and lots of luggage after a year spent in Berkeley on a scholarship. Upon making a quick stop in an unauthorized place to offload the luggage, the car came to a complete standstill. As many as four police officers rushed at Andrzej, threatening astronomical fines. Fortunately, the airport had a battery truck, which helped to jump-start the

unresponsive Pontiac. The car shook and came back to life. The police officers looked amused and decided not to issue a fine, probably assuming that the owner of such a vehicle registered in Wisconsin would be unlikely to pay a hefty fine issued in California.

When asked for advice on how to prepare the car for a journey across the continent to Wisconsin, a mechanic from Berkeley replied: “Just get yourself a new car.” A classic example of professional American advice. Andrzej promised to send the mechanic a postcard from Milwaukee, which he did. After completing the trip across the States, Andrzej parked the Pontiac in front of his aunt’s house, and no one ever managed to move it again; the car had to be towed away for scrap. But it left Andrzej with the best possible memories.

## A JOURNEY ACROSS AMERICA

The use of the Pontiac allowed Andrzej and his Hungarian friends to embark on a trip of a lifetime across the States. The academic year at Carnegie Mellon ended in May with Employer’s Day, a job fair for MBA graduates. Almost all leading US corporations were present, and graduates often received several invitations to interviews. Although Carnegie Mellon had a high ranking in the job market, it was still a buyer’s market, with corporations dictating the terms of employment.

Immediately after the official end of the academic year, Ernő and his wife Ildi joined Andrzej and his trusted Pontiac on a three-month journey across America. The Hungarian authorities allowed Ildi to join her husband on the condition of leaving their little daughter in Budapest as a hostage. Together, they traveled a total of thirty thousand miles from Niagara to Key West in Florida, from Montana to San Diego, and from New York to California. They visited all the major national parks, from Yellowstone to the Grand Canyon and from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to New Mexico. To accomplish their plan, they enlisted the help of the invaluable Mrs. Lovecky, who provided them with wonderful host families along the way. Being able to learn about countries through direct contact with the locals is the best way to immerse yourself in a different culture. With this mantra in mind, they spent their nights in spacious middle-class American homes equipped with guest rooms complete with en-suite bathrooms. Gala dinners, sometimes barbe-



cues, excursions, and even offshore fishing trips in Florida were held in their honor. This was an America that was confident, open, and kind. A nation ready to help others and act as a world leader.

A lovely young lady in Houston, Texas, arrived to meet them in a pink Cadillac convertible with air conditioning going full blast despite the open roof. This cavalier attitude to natural resources seemed astounding, but these were times of cheap fuel and electricity. Squares and buildings were all well-lit, and newspaper advertisements announced: "Electricity is penny cheap." In places with no host families waiting for them, the traveling party used the services of the cheapest Motel 6 chain and took advantage of the hospitality of their friends and acquaintances. During this road trip, Andrzej stayed for a few weeks in the Californian city of Berkeley, sleeping on a guest couch in the apartment of Professor Witek Morawski, one of his university friends.

## A SOCIOLOGIST'S OBSERVATIONS

Berkeley was still reeling from the 1960s Berkeley protests. Bearded men smoked cannabis and continued to protest on Telegraph Street. In short, political sociology dominated the street. By contrast, Stanford had a much more professional atmosphere. The business school offered a traditional curriculum, but frequent trips to San Francisco provided a sense of ease. The first colorful pride parades took place in the city. Andrzej remembers the service of a friendly young man at a petrol station in Berkeley. He had a Berkeley doctorate in physics and just lost his job due to some research grant ending. He saw nothing unusual in working at a petrol station while waiting for a new job. This was quite impressive, especially when compared to the European mentality and its rigid hierarchy of occupations and professions.

America exuded diversity. The differences in living standards were colossal. Driving through rural Kentucky, Andrzej considered the Polish countryside as prosperous and well-maintained. Traversing the highway on the west side of Florida, he saw Black American families living in car wrecks and hungry-looking children. On arriving at a remote motel one evening, he saw a sign advising "Whites only." It took them several hours to find some other accommodation.

When looking for the Hungarian embassy in Washington, D.C., Andrzej got lost and drove into the “wrong neighborhood,” which was less than two miles from the White House. The place was terrifying: ruined houses, boarded-up windows, drunkards and drug users lying in the street, and car wrecks everywhere. A police car caught up with them immediately, and the officers very politely yet firmly advised the lost travelers to leave the area. Joe Tropea, a sociologist working on street crime at George Washington University, where Andrzej was later a visiting professor, once took him to a school in a black ghetto, also in Washington. The buildings were derelict, but the headmaster’s welcome was even more shocking. He admitted that he needed a new staff member because only yesterday, one of the students had shot a teacher. Was he hoping that Andrzej would say yes?

However, nice surprises happened too. One day in Texas, a policeman stopped them and, without asking them anything – presumably just by looking at the limousine – directed them to a side road. Thus, they found themselves at the Salvation Army’s charity picnic. A group of ladies in uniform sang psalms while standing on a raised platform, and right next to them, the organizers served a hearty meal consisting of hamburgers grilled on-site, hot dogs, fries, and a variety of salads. Endless top-ups of coffee and fizzy drinks were also available. Visitors to the picnic received food parcels. Several stalls were giving away clothes, both second-hand and new. Ernő bagged himself a pair of brand-new jeans. Passengers of cars similar to theirs were all enjoying themselves sitting at picnic tables. This was how a resourceful America cleansed its conscience.

## AMERICA WITHOUT END

This impressive road trip across America allowed Andrzej to get to know it a little better, as if he was sensing that the country would become his second home for some years to come. When he worked at UCLA and constantly flew to and from Europe, he sometimes heard passport control employees say: “Welcome home, Professor.” “It was nice, but it never occurred to me to settle in the States. I still had something to do in Poland,” Andrzej recalls with a smile of satisfaction because, after all, he fully succeeded in doing what he was supposed to do.

Despite spending a total of more than seven years in the USA and visiting almost every state except Alaska and Colorado, he never succeeded in fully understanding America. The country is simply too diverse and complex. A friend from New York once said that there is everything in America, cannibals too, only no reporter has visited them yet.

America has a unique ability to get into and out of trouble: from the changing fortunes of the War of Independence, through the bloodiest war of the nineteenth century – the American Civil War, the Vietnam tragedy, 9/11 and its aftermath, to the storming of the Capitol at the end of Trump’s bizarre first presidency and inauguration of the second one. The successive choruses of believers in America’s demise always fell silent in the end. Will such a situation continue without end? This enormous human, intellectual, and institutional capital operating under conditions of freedom and democracy can certainly cope when confronted with authoritarianism and populism, as it has done many times before. Andrzej has long been rooting for America and has no plans to stop. When, in May 1971, he received a sailing permit in accordance with the law at the time, namely permission to leave the United States after an extended stay, he hoped to return there again. And his hope materialized many times over.

## THROUGH EUROPE IN A FIAT

Having flown to London from Chicago, Andrzej embarked on the longest and most wonderful holiday of his life. Waiting for him in the UK capital were his fiancée Alicja, Norbert Świtaj, who was his friend from the Warsaw School of Economics and an excellent hunter and driver, and Alicja’s sister Jola, who lived in England. Norbert brought Andrzej’s car, a Fiat 124, all the way from Warsaw. They rented a room in one of the Edwardian terraced houses, of which there are thousands, and set about exploring London – its sights, museums, and famous locations. Andrzej did not feel as comfortable in London as he did in Paris or Rome, perhaps because of the “heavy” architecture, although he always liked everything British: fashion, movies, theater, pubs, humor, and the feeling of patriotism – “right or wrong, my country!” Those used to speaking American English find it hard to understand people representing the less educated classes. In England, language is a particularly clear indicator of the social class to which one belongs.

On their tour of business schools, which included Cranfield, Oxford, and Cambridge, they drove around the English countryside, which charmed them with its unique tranquility, order, and the feeling of “coziness.” It proved impossible to meet anyone at Oxford and Cambridge due to the holidays, but both temples of knowledge and the best university traditions left an indelible impression on the visitors. They also visited Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon. Andrzej had long planned to marry Alicja abroad, but after a few visits to the Registrar’s Office, they concluded that English requirements were too complex, so they decided to try their luck in France.

They crossed the English Channel by ferry and arrived in Paris late at night. There, they parked the car somewhere on the hill of Montmartre with a wonderful view of the *ville lumière* and then drove to Les Halles de Paris to enjoy the legendary onion soup. The famous fresh food market, which Andrzej remembered well from his previous visits, was under demolition. Only a few eateries remained on the outskirts of a huge construction site. The place was not the same anymore. At that point, Andrzej realized that Europe was changing faster than America, which by then had already completed a period of great transformation.

In France, Andrzej acted as a guide for the whole team – around Paris, the châteaux of the Loire Valley, Mont Saint-Michel, the Normandy coast, and the reasonably priced and reliable Parisian restaurants. Their travel plans also took them to Fontainebleau near Paris to see INSEAD, a new business school that later evolved into a completely original – though certainly not French – university and one of the best business schools in the world. Currently, INSEAD is fully internationalized and has a second campus in Singapore and a third one in Abu Dhabi.

Andrzej and Alicja managed to implement their matrimonial plans, but only partially, as it proved later. It took a short walk from the Polish Academy of Sciences building on Rue Lamandé, where they stayed, to the mayor’s office, and they even found one French witness – a policeman on duty, who gladly accepted an invitation to the wedding party improvised in the local bar. Unfortunately, after returning to Poland, they discovered that they had to repeat the whole ceremony. To recognize the French wedding, the state required signing the documents once again at a Polish Registry Office.



ALICJA KOŹMIŃSKA.

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## ALICJA

In the end, they got married in 1972, but they had been together since 1965. Professor Koźmiński explains:

■ *This is not the place for such confessions, but Alicja is certainly the most important person in my life. Without demanding anything in return, she provided me with the conditions in which I could work and develop. I have never met anyone so completely devoid of selfishness. Alicja has always taken care of others: her own and my parents, and her sisters – in particular Ewa, whom she looked after during a serious illness and whose passing was a blow from which she has never completely recovered. Alicja has always made me feel that I am the most important to her. She took a break from her mathematics studies at the University of Warsaw to help her*

*younger sisters. All her life she worked at Polish Radio as a supervisor overseeing the broadcast: the order of the programs, the preparation of tapes, and the announcers' work. She was popular and well-liked. However, this circle kept on getting smaller with people retiring and later passing away. Alicja feels very emotional when that happens, so I sometimes refrain from informing her of such news. Until she got her first car, I used to pick her up from Mysliwiecka or Malczewskiego Streets. Before she switched to more highly regarded makes, she had as many as five Fiats 126p in succession. She was on duty at the oddest of times: "dawns," "nights," and "days." She liked her work and her colleagues. The radio had a thriving social life, in which I also participated to some extent. We were always together at all events, trips, and holidays. I find it simply unbelievable that we have been together for sixty years already!*

## ACROSS EUROPE

From France, the traveling party headed for Germany for a tour of the Rhineland and the German temple of knowledge – Heidelberg. The 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division of the United States Army, the main force protecting Europe from the Soviet invasion, was stationed close to the city. The Germans understood this situation and extended a kind welcome to speakers of English with an American accent. The situation proved similar in West Berlin.

From Germany, they made their way to Italy via the Swiss Alps. Regrettably, the Italian car was struggling throughout this demanding section of the journey. Oil started leaking from the rear axle, the bearings seized, and the car began emitting a sound similar to an alarm siren. Regardless, they made the brave decision to attack the Furka Pass. They drove slowly, and just before they entered the Pass, it got dark, and rain started to fall. At that very moment, they came across one of those highly exclusive Swiss mountain hotels. With slight apprehension and mindful of their budgetary constraints, they asked about accommodation. The receptionist, wearing an immaculate uniform, advised them that the hotel had no vacancies that night, but that he could offer them accommodation in a disused nineteenth-century former hotel building next door for forty percent of the price. This was a wonderful proposal, regardless of its financial aspect. The party found themselves in

the middle of the nineteenth century. The rooms came complete with porcelain bowls and chamber pots. They slept in starched sheets under feather duvets. A breakfast of coffee, croissant, and jam was served on china and silverware. The waiters all looked incredibly stylish in their impeccable black uniforms. After such a welcome rest and with the aid of sunshine, the Fiat finally traversed the Furka Pass and, in the hope of a speedy repair, made its way back to its homeland of Turin.

In August, the whole of Turin was on holiday as the Fiat factory shut for the summer. It took much effort to locate a mechanic somewhere on the outskirts willing to undertake the repair. To make sure the waiting time for the car did not get too expensive, they stopped at a campsite. Several days later, they set off for Rome with their new rear axle. Still keeping their budget in mind, they chose a hotel in the suburbs. The location seemed just right, as the hotel was near the highway and only about twelve miles from the center of Rome. There was also plenty of space, as the hotel stood completely empty. When asked about the duration of their stay, they answered seven days. The receptionist wrote down seven hours and issued the keys.

The situation became clear the following day. Somewhere around eleven o'clock in the morning, the first cars with Roman registration plates began to park outside the hotel. Each car seemed to carry a couple consisting of a young, pretty girl and an older, rotund gentleman. The return to the car was always quick and efficient. The record-breaking couple stayed at the hotel for seventeen minutes, as verified by Alicja's sister Jola. Traffic culminated at lunchtime and in the early afternoon. Business died down in the evenings, so the staff played cards in the reception. The hotel was comfortable and reasonably priced, and the hotel employees liked the Poles, previously never hosting guests of this type. The traveling party even received a substantial discount on their final bill. Andrzej and his friends stayed there throughout the visit to Rome, during which Andrzej served as a guide. They explored the Eternal City and its surroundings at quite an intensive pace but still found time to relax on the then-still-clean beaches of Ostia, Anzio, and Fiumicino.

Rome is famous for its predatory wild cats, which nest in the ancient ruins of Forum Romanum or Largo di Torre Argentina. These felines regularly fight among themselves over food discarded by tourists. In Forum Romanum, a giant one-eyed tomcat attacked Alicja, who was wearing a bright yellow raincoat, which must have angered the animal. They had to chase it

away and retreat to a safer location. The world is not an idyll, and threats come from directions people expect the least.

## RETURN TO THE WARSAW SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

The academic year was fast approaching. The time came to end the journey around Europe and return home. They traveled to Austria via the mountainous Alto Adige region, called South Tyrol by the Austrians, where Italian and German both serve as official languages. During the First World War, the region saw the bloody battles described by Hemingway in *A Farewell to Arms*. The area was also home to the best Italian wines and delicious grappa. There was little time or money left for Vienna, so they visited only the essentials, failing to feel awed after everything they had seen in London, Paris, and Rome. It is not difficult to feel crushed in the capital of the Habsburg Empire – just like in Saint Petersburg, a city with a three-hundred-years-long history of the Romanovs' and later Stalin's rule. In Vienna, they put Jola on a train to London and set off for Poland.

Throughout the year, nothing had changed at the Warsaw School of Economics. Andrzej's colleagues gave him a warm welcome, and the regular teaching grind began. Each department had to hold one sixty- or thirty-hour lecture course in Organization and Management Theory. By this time, Andrzej had Americanized his lectures as much as possible and noticed their increased popularity with students. Among his active listeners, a skinny young man stood out: Krzysztof Oblój, who would later become his doctoral student and professor of management. There were also some students completing their master's degree.

With the support of his department colleagues, Koźmiński proposed launching a full master's program in management studies at the university. The rector appointed a committee on the matter, which was a bad sign. The committee included another economist, who represented the University Committee of the Communist Party: Professor Dymitr Sokołow. Once Professor Wakar's assistant and a frequent visitor in his home, he was also the last husband of Wakar's widow, Loka Wakarowa. A less positive sign, however, was the chairman: Professor Paweł Sulmicki, an econometric economist and author of popular works on input–output networks. Professor Sulmicki was decidedly ill-disposed toward the idea of organization and



management science. Each subsequent meeting of the committee started with a thirty-minute lecture on the nature of organization and management. The professor always concluded that the most important element of an organization was the wall that separated it from the outside world. Sometimes, a dog was added for good measure as a guardian of the organization's separateness. To clarify the function of management, he invariably mentioned a guard or caretaker who opened and closed a gate in the wall. The lecture ended with a rhetorical question: is something like this worth pursuing scientifically?

Other members of the committee, including the idea's originator, enthusiastically presented proposals for a full master in management program, but at the next meeting, there was the wall, the dog, and the caretaker all over again. The committee made no recommendations, and the situation failed to change. Andrzej realized that the Warsaw School of Economics would never become a Polish Harvard and that if he wanted to pursue his dream of a business school, he would need to look elsewhere.

Foreign trips undertaken by scholars during the communist era entailed the threat of invigilation and requests to deliver reports to the authorities. What was the situation regarding Professor Koźmiński's frequent travels, especially his one-year stay in America? In his own words:

■ *People sometimes ask about the reports that one had to submit upon returning from abroad, which allegedly became source material for the secret services. Any reasonably well-informed person knew at the time that such a report should simply repeat what was already known to the authorities from the invitation and other documents, and, of course, not a word more was necessary. The rule was that the less knowledge the authorities had, the better. I have always disliked writing reports, so I avoided this responsibility like the plague. The head of the foreign department was a former student of mine, so I tended to forget about the report, and he was too polite to ask.*

## THE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

Andrzej did not have to look long to find a new place for teaching management, just like in the USA. Professor Jerzy Więckowski, a participant in

Wakar's seminars, suggested that Koźmiński move to the University of Warsaw to the interdepartmental Institute of Management that was being set up there. The studies and research program were *in statu nascendi* and certainly intended as interdisciplinary. The Institute was an initiative of the rector, Professor Zygmunt Rybicki. Andrzej agreed and so ended his cooperation with the Warsaw School of Economics, which had begun on the memorable May 9, 1945. Surprisingly, Professor Leon Koźmiński supported his son's decision.

# THE FIRST MANAGEMENT FACULTY IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

The year 1972 saw the establishment of the first management school in the Eastern Bloc: the Institute of Management and later the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw. Officially, it was an initiative of a group of academics who saw the need to promote knowledge on management, personnel training, and associated research in Poland. The group included Professor Zygmunt Rybicki, the university's rector, Professor Jerzy Więckowski, the first dean of the Faculty of Management, and Professor Kazimierz Ryc, who held the position of dean from 1999 to 2005. In 1977, the Institute of Management transformed into a faculty.

It would be hard to imagine a better place for someone who had spent a year observing American management science and researching how the best business schools in the world operate while thinking about ways of implementing similar solutions on Polish soil. Andrzej Koźmiński gladly welcomed the offer to head the Department of System Analysis at the Institute. He was able to employ his first doctoral student, Andrzej Zawiślak, as an assistant professor, and another assistant, Maciej Ramus, who later became his doctoral student too.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF MANAGEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

The pioneers of the Institute of Management included: Kazimierz Ryc, a macroeconomist, Roman Głowacki, one of the first representatives of marketing

science in Poland, Zbigniew Pietrasiński, an outstanding psychologist, and Władysław Radzikowski, a specialist in quantitative methods. Witold Kieżun of the praxeology school represented the science of organization and management. This was the best and the most complete interdisciplinary mix that Poland could afford at the time.

The Institute of Management proved to be a completely new and unusual creation within the esteemed University of Warsaw, mostly because it operated outside the faculty structure. The Institute immediately attracted media attention, earning a disparaging definition as a “school of directors.” Jerzy Więckowski explained that he was training middle management for socialist enterprises, but the “school of directors” tag stuck for a long time.

Parting from the Warsaw School of Economics proved more difficult than Andrzej had expected. First, he had to persuade the rector to agree to his transfer to the University of Warsaw and only succeeded on the second or third attempt. Moreover, he could not leave his departmental colleagues with extra classes without a tutor, so for the entire academic year of 1972/1973, he also lectured full-time at the Warsaw School of Economics, where he completed a master’s seminar. The most difficult thing to adjust to mentally was the severance of the institutional connection with the university, which had always been his home and a place with which the entire Koźmiński family felt emotionally connected. Had it not been for the complications with his habilitation and the disgraceful events of 1968, it remains unclear whether he would have decided to make such a change, especially as he never lost his sentimental attachment to the university.

## THE STUDIO AT CHŁODNA STREET

Around that time, Andrzej finally moved away from his parents and into a studio at 11 Chłodna Street. There, he first lived alone and, on his return from America, together with his wife. The accommodation was located right next to the beautiful Church of Saint Andrew the Apostle, which miraculously survived the war. The place was tiny, and the kitchen had no windows. Fortunately, the studio was built in compliance with somewhat relaxed Gomułka standards, as it had a bathroom. Located on the second floor, it overlooked

a paved area of the courtyard with several benches where, in better weather, mums and children would relax.

From time to time, the apartment hosted parties for a dozen or so people, provided that some of the guests entertained themselves inside the bathroom. The area's main inhabitants were members of the intelligentsia, which meant a thriving social life. There was still no shortage of parking spaces, as few people owned cars back then, which is perhaps why the better makes of cars aroused antagonism. In a fit of jealousy, someone scratched the body of a brand-new Italian Fiat 124, to the owner's despair. Still, an indisputable advantage of the studio was its close proximity to the Institute of Management. Andrzej was able to walk to work, although he did so very rarely, as he was always in a hurry and planning to visit many places in the course of the day.

## VIEWS FROM THE MANSARD ROOM

The Institute of Management at the University of Warsaw was located on Długa Street and shared some premises with the Faculty of Economic Sciences, which enjoyed the privilege of seniority. A small mansard room on the fourth floor was set aside for the Department of System Analysis. There, for the first time, Andrzej felt that this was his place on earth, where he would pursue his objectives and dreams. He already knew exactly what he wanted to do. His goal was to create a school in the dual sense of the word. On the one hand, this would be a scientific facility with its own coherent research program and, on the other hand, an institution in the form of a modern, globally oriented business school.

In the setting of the modest mansard room, these dreams might have seemed unrealistic and even a little ridiculous. However, Andrzej has consistently pursued this essentially straightforward agenda throughout his life and has succeeded in achieving all his hopes and expectations, even exceeding them. The mansard room on Długa Street was an important stopover on this journey.

The University of Warsaw did not favor the Institute of Management. Other staff members were biased against it due to the conflict with Rector Rybicki and the young age of the discipline. Economists, led by those quan-

titatively inclined, expressed doubt about whether management had any relevance in the context of the macroeconomic parameters determining the behavior of economic agents; those representing the Warsaw School of Economics held similar views. Sociologists, on the other hand, especially those left-of-center, interpreted management as an instrument of manipulation and oppression. All this played out in the shadow of fierce competition for limited resources and political conflict that was growing in strength in the 1970s. The Institute, and later the Faculty of Management, ended at the bottom of the university roster as the youngest in the group.

Nonetheless, at the time, only the University of Warsaw had the clout to establish the first business school in the socialist bloc and to enable its development to the point of faculty status. Although some externally induced perturbations remained, the Institute of Management eventually transformed into the full-fledged Faculty of Management. Professor Jerzy Więckowski served as the faculty's first dean in accordance with the law at the time. In 1977, Andrzej Koźmiński became associate dean for student affairs. The faculty also received its own building, and it mattered little that the place was a nondescript prefabricated structure built at the end of the 1970s and located on Szturmowa Street in Warsaw's Mokotów district, far away from the city center. This was a demonstration of strength by a university that had grown out of diversity and tolerance.

## THE YOUNGEST PROFESSOR

As head of the department, Andrzej Koźmiński focused on the most pressing tasks. He and his colleagues needed to prepare classes, which included lectures and seminars on the core subject of systems analysis, and a textbook. The first edition of Andrzej's textbook *Systems Analysis of the Organization*, which he wrote after completing his Fulbright scholarship, was published in 1976 by PWE. Until that time, lecturers had used translations of foreign books available in Poland, such as Stafford Beer's work *Cybernetics and Management*.

The ambition of Andrzej and his colleagues was to create a scientific environment focused on an interdisciplinary systemic approach to organization and management at the Department of System Analysis. The weekly seminars brought together doctoral students, promising students of senior

years, and staff members. After graduation, they were all hired by the University of Warsaw and began working on their doctoral dissertations under the guidance of Andrzej, who tried to reconstruct what he knew from Professor Wakar's seminars, namely his own scientific school of thought.

The Department of System Analysis was supposed to serve as a springboard for solid yet fast-paced academic careers. And indeed, in quite a brief period of three to four years, four doctoral students succeeded in defending their dissertations. Furthermore, Andrzej Zawislak obtained his habilitation. This gave their supervisor an open road to professorship. He polished up a book he had started in the States titled *Management: Systems Analysis of Processes and Structures*, whose publication in 1974 formed the basis of his professorship program. Two years later, during a ceremony at the Belvedere Presidential Complex, Andrzej K. Koźmiński received his nomination as associate professor from the hands of Professor Henryk Jabłoński, who was then president of the State Council. Beef Stroganoff and vodka were served after the ceremony.

Andrzej was thirty-five at the time, and eight years had passed since he received his habilitation in Łódź. His position as the youngest doctor, docent, and professor gave him certain privileges in the form of popularity and media attention. Already as a professor at the University of Warsaw, he began publishing popular texts in the press. This enabled Andrzej to keep in touch with the practical side of things and increased his recognition in economic and scientific circles, although his colleagues were not overly excited for him. Access to the media has always been a matter of envy in this particular environment.

Professor Wakar's School taught Andrzej that what holds scientific schools together are collective publications, jointly prepared and discussed by the entire team. The work on such a volume takes several years and usually requires reaching out to a larger group of external collaborators. The Department of System Analysis enabled the creation of three such publications under the scientific editorship of Professor Andrzej Koźmiński:

- *Decisions: Systems Analysis of the Organization*, PWN, 1979,
- *Contemporary Theories of Organization*, PWN, 1983,
- *Contemporary Theories of Management*, PWN, 1985.

## A SCIENTIFIC SCHOOL OF THOUGHT?

The publications were crucial to strengthening the team's standing in academia and helped develop effective forms of collaboration. The community of scholars acerbically referred to them as written in "Kozmiński style." Some were annoyed that almost everyone on the team, including Kozmiński himself, smoked traditional pipes – to their horror, even during lectures! The attitude toward them remained quite dismissive. At the same time, it was evident that the group constituted a fairly uniform intellectual formation. One could then speak of Kozmiński's scientific school of thought under the strong influence of American concepts.

However, it was impossible to avoid naming the authors of individual texts, and, above all, the team failed to develop a general theory that it could consider a coherent and robust theoretical basis for their research and analysis which simultaneously would expand and modify that theory. The systemic approach was, at best, recognized as a method and language of scientific analysis. Therefore, the team achieved only partial success in terms of creating a scientific school of thought.

## THE ORGANIZATIONAL GAME THEORY

At the start of 1980, Professor Witold Kieżun decided to go abroad for an extended period and left Andrzej Kozmiński in charge of his Department of Organization Theory. In turn, Zawislak inherited the Department of System Analysis from Andrzej. Previously, Andrzej worked with Zawislak on a new model that would explain the functioning of organizations under different situational conditions. Observing the Polish reality of the 1970s, they wanted to challenge the belief they deemed naive: that organizations must behave rationally and strive for maximum efficiency. Their joint effort culminated in the concept of the organizational game. The theory analyses organizations as hierarchical systems of a controlled game during which different actors and groups of actors pursue their interests, often "outplaying" each other and the organizations as a whole. Both productive and parasitic games become possible. The latter often prevail, which leads to inefficiencies. In this way, the two scholars argued that "organizations are stupid because people are smart."



Andrzej Zawiaślak described this theory using his favorite saying: “Just like Mary Stuart, beautiful but ill-fated.” When working on the concept, they were not yet familiar with Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg’s book *L’acteur et le système* (*Actors and Systems*), published in French in 1977, nor with the American works developing game theory in organizations, written by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik, among others. This situation hindered the introduction of what was perhaps the most complete concept by Polish authors onto the international scientific market. Only one empirically-based article comparing the course of parasitic games in Polish industry and American public structures appeared, written by Koźmiński together with Joe Tropea when he was a visiting professor at George Washington University in 1977–1978.

The year 1979, when they published their book *Certainty and Game*, marked possibly the worst moment for presenting new concepts in social sciences in Poland, because “Gierek’s era” was coming to its sorry end. Some were busy predicting the future, which was about to generate some real surprises, while others were solving increasingly difficult everyday problems. Nobody had the time or patience for a “grand theory.”

Scientific circles in Poland found the idea of an organizational game completely undesirable. Some felt offended that the system of managing the socialist economy was accused of being irrational. Others reckoned that management, in general, was not subject to the rules of predictable rationality and that the overthrow of communism would not simply precede a “kingdom of rationality.” Therefore, the theory’s authors faced heavy criticism from all sides. They responded with a short introduction to the second edition of the book in 1982, which captures both their attitude and the atmosphere of those years:

■ *We dedicate the second edition of this book to those who necessitated writing it in a meandering Aesopian language, and to those who found inspiration for it everywhere else but in the reality of the Polish People’s Republic of the 1970s! All of them made the authors experience moments of genuine satisfaction... We express our gratitude to them for the book’s writing and reception in an atmosphere that allowed us to feel affiliated, even though quite remotely, with the great Jonathan Swift. Although this atmosphere seems to belong to the past, something of it will remain. We will be left with envious stupidity. And fools, Voltaire says, are in the world for*

*our enjoyment, after all. For the enjoyment they provided us with, we keep them in grateful memory without mentioning them by name.*

Written at the height of the “Solidarity carnival,” the introduction is optimistic and feisty. When published under martial law, introduced in Poland on December 13, 1981, the text assumed a completely different tone. The introduction also explains why the “Kozłowski style” was not to the liking of the scientific community, not to mention the political circles, which read almost nothing due to their complete occupation with the “power game.” This is how things were back then and how they are today.

## RESEARCH IN THE INDUSTRY

The organizational game theory required empirical verification. That said, it was not an easy task to conduct any type of serious research independent of the authorities during real socialism and later martial law. The situation called for extraordinary measures. At the start of the 1970s, Andrzej’s friend Janek Kramarczuk became the director of the Institute for Management in Mechanical Industry (Orgmasz). Kramarczuk organized an extremely ambitious doctoral program in which Krzysztof Obłój participated for a while before he formally joined the research team of the Department of System Analysis at the University of Warsaw.

Andrzej Kozłowski became chair of the scientific council for one of the most important research and development programs carried out in this particularly demanding area. Together with his team, he was able to conduct an in-depth study of several major innovation projects. This was a unique opportunity, as social researchers generally had no access to these kinds of entities and processes – often hidden behind requirements of confidentiality greatly favored by bureaucrats and authoritarian governments. As is well-known, the confidentiality clause usually serves to conceal inefficiency, wastefulness, and many variants of pathology. This proved true also for the entities analyzed by Andrzej’s team.

The innovation processes taking place in the Polish industry – or not taking place due to blocking – form a series of games that see a clash of particular interests of groups and individuals equipped with the formal capa-

bilities to influence decision-making. The productive and/or parasitic game model best describes and explains these processes and even makes it possible to predict their course. Comparative studies conducted in the States have demonstrated that similar mechanisms plague publicly funded organizations and ventures, for example, in the justice system or education. This situation indicates the considerable exploratory potential of the organizational game theory. The necessary validation came from studies of permanently underperforming organizations conducted at UCLA by Marshall W. Meyer and Lynne Zucker.

## CONSULTING

In the 1970s, Andrzej had an interesting consulting experience in the Polish reality. He was invited to meet one of the most important people in Poland: the president of the Polish Housing Cooperative Association, otherwise known as the “lord of apartments,” and future minister of construction and ambassador to Libya, Stanisław Kukuryka. During a conversation over French brandy, whose presence affirmed the meeting’s significance, Kukuryka asked Koźmiński to select experts and lead a team that would diagnose the Association’s management system and propose new solutions. Kukuryka had a considerable budget that would cover the team members’ salaries and running costs, and he also discreetly promised to deal with Koźmiński’s application to swap his tiny studio for a larger apartment.

Andrzej succeeded in inviting several eminent professionals to join the team, including the best specialist in cooperative law at the time, Professor Wiesław Chrzanowski, who later became a politician, Andrzej Zawislak, as well as several financiers and accountants specializing in housing. The Housing Cooperative Association was practically a monopolist in the key area of housing construction in Poland. During that period, the state completed around three hundred thousand new apartments each year, which today seems completely unattainable. Even though Gierek’s blocks of flats were famous for their legendary defects and poor quality, ridiculed in all Polish comedies, at least the authorities made effort to build them.

For more than a year, team members met regularly on Saturdays in the Cooperative’s conference room. Their work resulted in a comprehensive

report analyzing the industry's main pathologies, such as excessive centralization, bureaucratization, and corruption. Koźmiński and Zawiślak performed some field research on these topics, including in Poznań and Lublin. The team proposed a number of changes divided into phases. When the work was ready, Andrzej once again went to see the Cooperative's president. This time, Kukuryka offered him genuine French cognac. Then, he asked for all copies of the report and immediately locked them in a safe. All the team's bills were paid, and in 1976 Koźmiński moved with his wife into a three-room apartment on Dzika Street in "Warsaw's Manhattan," as the location was pretentiously called. Kukuryka himself was their neighbor, alongside many notables from the world of culture, science, and the media.

Andrzej found out later that their report never saw the light of day. Rumors and legends surrounded their work, while the president used "expert opinions" as an excuse to introduce changes to the Cooperative's structure, leading to the elimination of all his opponents. Having learned from this experience, Andrzej later refused an offer to advise the FSO car factory in Żerań. He already had a car, after all.

## DINNER WITH KOSYGIN'S GRANDDAUGHTER

Andrzej had slightly different but equally depressing experiences linked to consulting for the shipping industry. It all began at the Comecon Management Conference, which took place in 1975 in Yerevan. The Polish delegation included members such as Janek Kramarczuk, the then president of the Institute of Organization and Management in Mechanical Industry. Andrzej remembers this trip as highly entertaining. Everyone was taking photos outside the famous Radio Yerevan broadcasting station, known for featuring in a series of political jokes. There was no end to the banquets. The attending guests delivered punchlines to countless Radio Yerevan jokes, which always started with the listeners' questions. He remembered those concerning a "bright future": "Will there be money in communism? – Exclusively!"; "Are there more good or clever people in the Communist Party? – Good, of course. Goodness is much easier to fake than cleverness!"

As customary in the Soviet Union, the tables formed a horseshoe, with the presidium sitting at the head table, where waiters served better food and

drinks. Great care was taken to ensure that no one of lower rank sat at these tables, but on one occasion, Andrzej and Kramarczuk turned up slightly late for the conference's closing banquet. They walked in with a confident stride, elegantly dressed, fragrant, and slightly inebriated. Unfamiliar with the list of international guests, the security pointed them straight to the seats of honor based on their appearance and behavior. Armenia's First Secretary of the Communist Party and heads of national delegations were already at the table. The head of Polish delegation, Minister Bronisław Ostapczuk, was sitting with a sour expression on his face, not far from the most important person in the group: Dzhermen Gvishiani, director of the International Institute of Management in Moscow and privately the son-in-law of Alexei Kosygin, the then Premier of the Soviet Union. His companion was a good-looking, elegant young woman standing out from this group. Andrzej and Kramarczuk proceeded to entertain her with conversation, which she clearly enjoyed. They arranged to meet the next day. However, this displeased Gvishiani, who sent the secretary of the Communist Party of Armenia with a big bottle of cognac to talk to the two flirts. Still, the plan came to nothing as the secretary seemed to have gotten drunk first and disappeared somewhere soon after. In the end, Gvishiani left the banquet, taking the young woman with him. They left Yerevan the following day. As it later turned out, this was Gvishiani's daughter and Kosygin's beloved granddaughter. To some degree, both men came very close to the upper echelons of the Soviet elite.

The situation with Gvishiani during the banquet did not escape the attention of the other revelers, including the director of the Association of Shipbuilding Industry, an entity with more than sixty thousand workers employed at several shipyards. After a brief conversation, the director asked them if they would be willing to perform some confidential counseling for him.

## A MISSION ON THE COAST

To get a better view of the situation, Andrzej and Kramarczuk traveled to Gdańsk. The daily bread – and the curse – of the Polish shipbuilding industry were huge contracts for the supply of an entire series of primitive bulk carriers to the Soviet Union, which prevented the shipyards from pursuing more interesting and more profitable orders from the Western markets. With the

Soviet shipyards working exclusively for the navy, it was the Poles who were building the Soviet merchant fleet. The design and research facilities were enormous and very well-equipped, also with top-of-the-line computers. Almost two thousand first-rate engineers educated at Polish universities – such as the Gdańsk University of Technology with its excellent Shipbuilding Faculty – had very little to do.

The annual final procurement inspections conducted by Soviet committees required enormous mobilization from the Polish manufacturer, which had to organize banquets, alcohol, and gifts, such as suits, shirts, watches, and electronic devices. Then, there was the demand for the local prostitutes, known as *mewy* (seagulls), reluctant to entertain this particular type of clientele. The worst part, however, was the warranty inspections. The vessels that the Russians brought back to Gdańsk after a year's use were stripped of everything: furniture, bathroom fittings including toilet bowls, galleys, and especially expensive electronic equipment, which the Poles had to buy with foreign currency. When compared with such expenses and problems, banquets and gifts seemed a minor detail.

Regardless of these customs, the situation of total dependence on one client is a textbook disadvantage that should have ended as soon as possible. The existing circumstances provided no opportunities for technological development and led to the squandering of the considerable research and development potential of the Polish shipbuilding industry.

As advisers of the Association of Shipbuilding Industry's director, Andrzej and Kramarczuk embarked upon their new project with great enthusiasm. They suggested that the Polish shipbuilding industry should gradually, without irritating the Russians, move toward higher value-added products: research and exploration vessels, automated container ships, gas carriers, and high-speed vessels. There was a demand for such ships, and Polish shipyards were able to design, build, and deliver them on time. The Polish shipbuilding industry enjoyed a good reputation among shipowners. To solve the problem of steel shortage, they proposed to buy hulls from Romania, Bulgaria, or Algeria and tow them to Gdańsk. Polish shipyards even succeeded in concluding the first few profitable contracts.

However, this displeased the Soviet comrades, who exploited the Polish shipbuilding industry as an important addition to their own shipyards working exclusively for the navy. Their influence caused the director to resign. Not

even having a direct phone line to Comrade Gierek saved his neck, and his subsequent career is telling. Having lost his post as director of an association employing sixty thousand workers, he faced a humiliating demotion to head of a yacht shipyard with several hundred employees manufacturing shoddy boats from plywood. After just two years, the shipyard began producing luxury yachts for Western customers and became the most profitable and the smallest shipyard in the association. With Poles unable to forgive other people's successes, the ill-fated director once again found himself out of work, sacked by yet another secretary of the Communist Party. He then became manager of the Słupsk shoe factory, famous for the fact that even barefoot citizens rejected its products. The outcome was predictable. The new manager established collaborations with Italian manufacturers and began producing footwear for them according to Italian designs and under Italian brands. People lined up in front of Polish shops to get hold of the "end of series." Then came Solidarity, and the manager was dismissed "for communism" because he was obviously a party member. Not one to die down, he pursued his career in the private shoe industry, where he achieved considerable success.

## THE START OF THE COLLECTION

The new, larger apartment on Dzika Street needed furnishing. The Koźmińskis traveled to Środa Śląska, where they bought the ghosts of three beautiful armchairs, a sofa, a table, and several chairs. A carpenter then worked on them for several months with stunning results. Decorating the apartment in line with his personal taste, Andrzej discovered his passion for collecting. The first to spark this interest was his parents' neighbor, Professor Edward Lipiński, and his grandfather, who gave ten-year-old Andrzej his first painting for a future collection. This tiny oil painting depicted a sleigh pulled by a reindeer. Bought in Szczecin, it was most likely a German artwork.

Before moving to Dzika Street, Andrzej acquired a larger lithograph by Józef Brandt, *An Encounter in the Steppe*, which currently hangs in the rectorate building of Kozminski University, several eighteenth-century English and French engravings, and a French landscape. This started his art collection, which Andrzej and his wife continued to expand in the decades to come. Buying only things they liked, they never treated artworks as an



EDWARD DWURNIK'S PAINTING KOZMIŃSKI'S WARSAW  
PAINTED FOR ANDRZEJ KOZMIŃSKI'S SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.



“investment” or an object of further trade. Their modestly sized home no longer has room for more art. Having got used to these paintings, sculptures, and clocks, they never sold anything either. Their preferences lie in paintings from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They have succeeded in putting together a sizeable collection of Wlastimil Hofman’s works, which range from his youthful attempts to the works created in the town of Szklarska Poręba, where Hofman spent his last years.

For his seventieth birthday, Andrzej received a beautiful painting by Juliusz Kossak from his wife, another work by the artist in his collection alongside two watercolors inherited from his parents. The university presented Andrzej with Edward Dwurnik’s painting *Koźmiński’s Warsaw*, dedicated to Andrzej and depicting several images from his life. The collection also includes several works by Polish painters from *École de Paris*: a mysterious portrait by Mela Muter, a landscape by Jean Peské, and an artwork by a Russian impressionist active in Paris under the French name Lanciere. Visitors to the Koźmińskis’ home will also see a plethora of other artworks amassed over the years. Despite their insignificant material value, the family regards these objects as priceless reminders of various precious moments which create a homely atmosphere. There is a beautiful English quarter-striking longcase clock which Andrzej bought from Professor Józef Pajestka. Several years of negotiations ended shortly before the professor’s death when he concluded: “I pass my favorite clock into good hands.” Alicja Koźmińska took out a loan at work to purchase a gorgeous modern tapestry designed by Magdalena Abakanowicz. Andrzej bought a French clock in Directoire style in Paris at a *marché aux puces*. Although such flea markets are full of forgeries, one can sometimes find real rarities too.

Andrzej spotted the sculpture of a horse standing on one leg in the Slovenian city of Ljubljana, full of antique shops. Unfortunately, that day, his companion was a Russian he had met by chance. Like all newly rich Russians, he suffered from excess liquidity and was buying indiscriminately. Andrzej immediately fell in love with the horse sculpture and tried his best to position his body so that the Russian would not have it in his line of vision. He succeeded. After escorting the Russian to the hotel, he ran back to buy the horse. By that time, the store’s owner had wandered off to get lunch, so Andrzej had to track him down first to strike a bargain. Then, he needed to find a cashpoint, because the seller obviously wanted cash. The lucky buyer also had to go through the airport security and convince its vigilant members

that the sculpture contained no bomb. Today, Professor Koźmiński recalls: “To this day, I regret that, for fear of transport problems, I did not buy a large Baroque sculpture that I saw in Lisbon in the 1980s. Most of my colleagues did not share my interests and emotions; neither did my parents, who, after two successive calamities, never became attached to objects.”

Andrzej’s passion for cars, in turn, dates back to his childhood. In the first few years after the war, when Professor Lipiński was the president of the National Development Bank, Andrzej used to admire his *demokratka*, a type of black Chevrolet used by communist officials after 1945. Following the well-trodden path in Polish politics, the communist authorities first took care of their own transport needs by getting hold of some American vehicles. For a young boy from a town that had burned down during the war, such a car was among the “seven wonders of the world,” and he always looked forward to these rare moments when Professor Lipiński’s driver would let him ride inside the Chevrolet from under his house to the street. However, the time came when he, too, could fulfill his automotive dream. This is his story:

■ *I have always wanted a classic car but lacked the time and money to pursue this dream. It was only at the beginning of this century that I bought a 1959 Mercedes-Benz 190SL two-seater convertible in the States, complete but in need of a general overhaul. I did so on the advice of my good friend Władek Cygan, a Toyota and Lexus dealer and a renowned collector of classic cars. Unfortunately, Władek died of cancer shortly after I made this purchase, so engineer Maciej Rzepecki from Jabłonna completed the renovation. He did the work perfectly. And thus began my Mercedes road trips. I used to set them up and continue to do so with my closest colleague and driver, Henryk Buliński. My wife and I drove this Mercedes three times to the beautiful Villa Curina in Tuscany, located about twelve miles from Siena, just outside the beautiful town of Castelnuovo Berardenga. We stayed at a small guesthouse in a converted Renaissance villa, which we used as a departure point to carefully explore the whole of Tuscany. Together with Henryk, I took part in rallies in both Italy and France, the Champagne Rally being one of them, and in numerous events in Poland intended for classic car enthusiasts. I grew to like this community. Henryk helps me look after the car and every year, we use it to discover yet another section of Poland. Regrettably, I never became an owner of a classic car*

*collection, and I think this will not change. I once saw an American on television who had amassed a complete collection of three hundred and seventy-eight Pontiacs inside two airplane hangars. They included all the models manufactured between 1929 and 2010. Here is an example to follow, I thought to myself, slightly envious but not resentful.*

## LECTURES ABROAD

In the second half of the 1970s, Andrzej began to lecture regularly at American universities as a visiting professor. He spent a semester at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh in 1976 and 1980 and a summer semester at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., in 1977 and 1979. Such visits provided him with continued and direct access to the latest scientific publications – which arrived in Poland with some delay – and, most importantly, to public and scientific debate. Crucially, this was a time of transition toward neoliberal economics and politics. As it became apparent later, this shift proved crucial for Poland’s transformation.

Andrzej also had to follow the American style of teaching, so different from the traditional lecture format that reigned in Poland. Naturally, he attempted to popularize this new model of academic teaching in his homeland. Using his American contacts, Andrzej also made sure that each of his postdoctoral fellows spent at least one semester at an American university. Surprisingly, such stays in the USA were possible even in the difficult 1980s, during martial law. Andrzej Zawisłak, Robert Rządca, Krzysztof Obłój, Włodzimierz Piotrowski, Maciej Ramus, and many others completed such placements, some of them several times. The entire team at the Department of System Analysis was decidedly “Americanized.”

Andrzej’s collaboration with Duquesne began on the personal initiative of Professor Blair Kolasa, the School of Business’s dean from 1970 to 1984. Kolasa came from a distinguished family of activists with Polish roots who completed American doctorates and had many academic achievements. His father earned his doctorate at Harvard. Such academic advancements remain unique among the traditional Polish American community. Unfortunately, the Polish Alliance College in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, founded by his father, no longer exists.

Blair established collaboration with the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw for purely patriotic reasons. As part of this scheme, almost every year, a professor from Poland would spend a semester or two in Pittsburgh, while meetings, seminars, and study visits by colleagues from Duquesne took place in Poland. For his efforts during the most difficult years of the 1980s, Kolasa received an honorary doctorate from the University of Warsaw in 1985. This was particularly significant at a time when relations between the Polish government and the Reagan administration remained strained. Kolasa came to Poland in the 1990s and for several years served as vice rector of the well-known private business school WSB NLU in Nowy Sącz, whose rector, Professor Krzysztof Pawłowski, was among the pioneers of private higher education in Poland. Although Kolasa died in the States, he left his heart in Poland.

The Duquesne lectures ultimately convinced Andrzej that narrow specializations make no sense in management and related sciences, especially in academic teaching. He was prepared to give lectures on the basics of management and organizational behavior, but on arrival in Pittsburgh, the dean approached him with two pieces of news: one bad and one good. The bad news was that the professor of marketing had died, and the good news was that he was to teach a class on this subject in his stead – at both basic and advanced levels. Andrzej proceeded to spend a considerable amount of time on studying the works written by the American marketing guru, the legendary Professor Philip Kotler, and other authors specializing in this field. Fortunately, as a graduate of the Faculty of Internal Trade at the Warsaw School of Economics, he was well equipped to teach marketing, and these horizons would expand significantly with the knowledge of modern marketing which shaped companies' competitive strategy.

The lectures went well, and the students received them well too. Interestingly, they rated marketing classes higher than those in management! Perhaps this stemmed from the more thorough and longer preparations. It served to confirm the thesis that the level of knowledge and research engagement do not determine the quality of teaching, and that there is nothing more important than teaching skills and the use of appropriate tools. The latter include not only textbooks, but also case studies, computer games, use of the Internet, and artificial intelligence.

This was Andrzej's first exposure to a formal system of evaluating classes and professors by students, introduced in Poland with a delay of several decades. Andrzej also received two other pieces of valuable advice from Dean Kolasa. First, one should not tell jokes during lectures, as Poles habitually do, because the sense of humor in the States is culturally conditioned. Someone may always feel offended or humiliated and write a complaint, which will put the university's federal funding in jeopardy, with the wisecracking lecturer fired just in case. Second, Kolasa advised Andrzej that his office door should always stay open and that he should admit students, especially female students, two at a time. Such measures prevented the possibility of blackmail with allegations of harassment.

Andrzej took this advice deeply to heart and always followed it during his subsequent career as a visiting professor at American universities. As a result, he avoided problems that marred many professors in America, Polish or otherwise. One lecturer recounted how he had once inadvertently invited a female student into his office and closed the door. She told him immediately that unless she received a passing grade, she would start yelling, tear her blouse, and accuse him of sexual misconduct. With seconds to decide, he understandably gave the student a pass. Although one finds it sad to admit, he was probably right in his choice. He did not stand a chance, and the stakes in the game were too high: his reputation in the American academic and intellectual market. These were the early 1970s – half a century before the #MeToo movement.

## IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Andrzej's friend, sociologist Joe Tropea, was the driving force behind Andrzej's extended visits to George Washington University and its collaboration with the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw. Andrzej lived with him in Springfield, Virginia, drove a car borrowed from him, and shared an office with him in a small house on G Street, which held the Department of Sociology. Andrzej used to travel to Washington to work at the summer school, where he had one lecture on organizational behavior at the Business School and one on the dynamics of communist societies at the Department

of Sociology. With temperatures often exceeding ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit, Andrzej had to accept the heat, because the auditoriums were not yet air-conditioned, and neither was the car – an “oldie but goodie” Ford Capri. Moreover, Joe was frugal, as befitted a father of three, and only turned on the air conditioning at home when the temperature inside exceeded one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, the family would sit on the porch while sipping something cold. This gave everyone a good opportunity to chat and socialize.

When living in Springfield, Andrzej became part of the local community, which shared various responsibilities between its members. On a couple of occasions, his task was to drive the neighbors’ children to the swimming pool. He would take a huge station wagon belonging to Carol, Joe’s wife, load seven or eight children inside, and drive them to their swimming classes. He felt a bit apprehensive, as he had to make sure not to lose the kids. To this end, he used bribery, carrying with him various treats.

When Carol and the children were away at their summer house in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, Joe would take Andrzej to see the “hillbilly bars” around Washington. These were places of entertainment for regular folk who lived in the mountainous area near the capital. This was where country music reigned supreme, and guests enjoyed their bourbon with a “beer back.” Joe, of course, did not introduce himself there as a professor at George Washington University. You had to know how to behave, look, and talk. Many of these people served in the army, and although they lived meagerly, they were proud of their country. They considered America to be the best nation in the world, where everything was possible and everyone could succeed. Andrzej was quickly getting used to this American mentality, and he admired it at the time. Many years later, in 2021, he saw people with an astonishingly similar appearance to the “hillbilly bar” regulars of his youth among those storming the Capitol. It seemed they began to feel like orphans of the American dream.

## GETTING GRANTS

The George Washington University School of Business had a culture that differed entirely from the “laid-back” Department of Sociology. The dean was Norma Loeser, a retired US Air Force colonel and a veteran of the

Second World War. She was the first woman appointed as dean of a business school at a key American university. Professor Phillip D. Grub, with whom Andrzej had begun working while still in Poland in the early 1970s, persuaded him to teach one of the first international management classes at GWU. For undertaking these lectures, he received a special diploma from the rector. Military and federal administration officials dominated among the students. One of them turned out to be Washington's chief of the National Guard, who organized a special visit to Arlington Cemetery and the Capitol for the whole group and its lecturer at the end of the semester.

International management soon became one of Professor Koźmiński's academic specializations. It was also for this reason that George Washington University delegated him to the Congress of the International Association of Management in Las Vegas. This trip provided an excellent opportunity to meet many eminent researchers such as Stefan Robock, Simcha Ronen, and Manek Kirpalani from India, who later visited Poland on numerous occasions to give lectures as a visiting professor both at the Faculty of Management of the University of Warsaw and at Kozminski University.

Together with Joe Tropea, they conducted research on parasitic games, especially "parasitic reciprocity" in large organizations, and tried to win grants for this research. Regrettably, they were not successful, and Andrzej wondered about the reason for their failure. One block away from GWU's Department of Sociology stood the impressive, if not very tall, office building of the National Science Foundation (NSF). Interestingly, Washington, D.C. has building height restrictions set by Congress. Andrzej occasionally dropped by NSF for lunch, so he got to know some of the people who worked there.

During these visits, Andrzej conducted small private research on the criteria for awarding grants using the peer review system. One interviewee described the typical reviewers' course of action as follows: they start with the bibliography, searching for their names. If their names are missing, they write a brief negative review, which tends to put an end to the grant application. If the reviewers find their own names in the list, they start reading and looking for opinions on their work. If the opinions are positive and the authors of the grant application propose to obtain additional research material, a positive assessment follows, which highly increases the chances of obtaining the grant. If, however, the opinions on the reviewers' work are

negative, the reviewers need to work a little harder to justify their own opinion recommending a rejection of the grant. Thus, the chances of funding any original research idea not rooted in the existing literature are close to zero. Only famous scientists, preferably Nobel laureates, can achieve such a feat.

The interviewee looked reluctantly at the application, which had no chance of obtaining funds, cracking a smile with poorly disguised pity as she read. Not only was the proposal original but also unpleasant in its assessment of large corporations. On top of that, the submitter was a Pole who gave the affiliation of the University of Warsaw. No chance! To this day, nothing has changed in this respect. What is more, the peer review system rules scientific careers completely and indivisibly. Nowadays, young scholars know how to play this game, so they keep the email addresses of American universities where they completed internships or scholarships for as long as they can. As of 1978, the Polish scholar was somewhat puzzled by such an approach.

## GIEREK'S PROSPERITY

It remains astonishing that Poland so seriously pursued research and scientific work in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The first half of the 1970s marked a time of relative prosperity in the country. It was also a period when Poland started opening its doors to the West by importing technology and selected consumer goods into increasingly better-stocked shops. There was also a heightened use of Western loans and a trend for business and private trips aimed at working illegally in the USA and Western Europe. Dollars and German marks appeared in quasi-legal circulation, and Polish banks started opening foreign exchange accounts for ordinary citizens. Poland also began to produce Fiat 126, a "car for the masses." The average waiting time for an apartment dropped to six years. A feeling of optimism was in the air. Poland gained on importance as a country. The quoted statistics, some more reliable than others, described Poland as the tenth economy in the world. President Jimmy Carter received Edward Gierek, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, with the honors usually given to heads of state. Against this backdrop, a joke circulated about Leonid Brezhnev's meeting with Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet foreign minister: "Gromyko informs Brezhnev that



Carter gave Gierek a gold watch. 'Impossible, let me see it,' says Brezhnev, grabbing Gromyko's hand."

The propaganda of success broadcast on Polish television was genuinely justified for a while. People began to believe in a brighter future. Within economic and management sciences, the Americans proceeded to implement a remarkable project in Poland, a part of which were various scholarships, such as Fulbright, Ford, Eisenhower, and Rockefeller. The project bodies chose the academics deemed promising and sent them for molding at leading American universities. Andrzej Koźmiński was one of the first beneficiaries. Other scholarship recipients included future ministers in free Poland: Leszek Balcerowicz, Grzegorz Kołodko, Dariusz Rosati, Mirosław Gronicki, Marek Belka, and Andrzej Zawisłak. These people later became responsible for the shape of Poland's transformation. Professor Andrzej Korboński, who was a member of qualifying teams for these scholarships on behalf of the Americans, said that they had reached an unwritten agreement with the Polish authorities on the selection of candidates. There was to be one candidate recommended by the Poles and one candidate chosen by the Americans based on merit.

The University of Warsaw was also engaged in extensive cooperation with Soviet universities, especially with the enormous Lomonosov Moscow State University. Although it did not teach management in those years, the Moscow university had a large Faculty of Economics. On one occasion, Andrzej took advantage of a holiday exchange intended for academics and traveled to the Soviet Union together with his wife. Their hosts were the trade unionists of the Lomonosov University. They spent a few days sightseeing in Moscow, living in accommodation on the main campus designated for international students. With some money from royalties for the works published in people's democracies and thanks to a small bribe given to the doorman, Andrzej was able to take Alicja to dinner at the legendary Metropol Hotel. Dripping with luxury reminiscent of Tsarist times, the hotel's restaurant served exquisite caviar blinis and grilled sturgeon. Their company was diverse and fascinating: foreigners, undercover agents, Soviet celebrities, and "speculators" allowed to operate because they supplied high-ranking comrades. The older generation worshipped Stalin and showed intoxication with Brezhnev's "prosperity."

## RUSSIAN HOLIDAYS

For a proper holiday, Andrzej and Alicja traveled to Gurzuf near Sochi. The place was absolutely stunning, with hidden coves and a spectacular view of the Black Sea. Small black pigs roamed the wild beaches. Although they had owners, the pigs could look for additional nourishment out in the open. An enterprising citizen prepared and served excellent shashliks on the beach, which allowed customers to appreciate the tasty flavor of the animals with which people shared the seashore. The place where they stayed, however, was rightly called the “Gulag,” as the tiny wooden camping houses lacked any amenities. To make matters worse, women and men had separate accommodation in line with socialist morality. On hearing about this, Alicja did not hesitate to shoutingly share her thoughts on the matter with the manager. He quickly relented, and the Koźmińskis were the only ones in the group to have an entire cabin to themselves. The manager must have concluded that since the woman was shouting so loudly, she must have had some strong backing “from above,” and it was advisable to listen to her – typical Soviet mentality. In authoritarian systems, *chinovniks* do not expect resistance, and therefore, putting it up can be effective. Russians, however, have remained unsure about such an approach.

With some amazement, the Koźmińskis discovered that Soviet scholars regarded a two-week stay “in the holiday Gulag” as an exceptional privilege and reward. One could apply for such a holiday only once every few years, and a positive opinion from a “social entity” was also necessary. In essence, a single voice of criticism sufficed to deprive the applicant of this privilege for an indefinite period. Therefore, everyone respected the “quiet time” at night, and once songs and music ended, the relations between the men’s and women’s cabins seemed in full compliance with the regulations. It was hardly surprising, as each cabin accommodated several strangers. Perhaps that is why the Russians write and sing about love so beautifully...

An attentive observer was able to notice all the cultural differences between the Polish and Russian intelligentsia within this group of people. These were the mid-1970s. Poland entered the second half of Gierek’s “decade of prosperity,” which offered foreign trips and “concessionary freedom.” The Soviet peers were friendly, cheerful, smiling, singing, and sincerely enjoying their dream holiday. They were willing to talk and discuss different matters,

provided the conversation did not stray to politics. When that happened, they would recite a prescribed response or mention something quietly on the sidelines. They read Polish color magazines, including the weekly *Polityka*, and watched Polish films. The Russians considered Poland a strange hybrid creation and a window to the West. A popular saying at the time stated that a Muscovite arriving in Warsaw thought they were in Paris, while a Parisian thought they had arrived in Moscow.

The canteen served large portions of tasty food but on a first come, first served basis, which necessitated haste once the dinner gong sounded. Furthermore, the location of the holiday camp prevented anyone from leaving the place voluntarily. All things considered, this Russian holiday was a two-week stay in a Soviet deluxe-category internment camp. The same Gulag rules applied, only the location and the climate were much more agreeable on the coast. This permits the following general conclusion about totalitarianism: everyone is kept inside the Gulag, only there are different categories of camps available, and the ability to move from one category to another depends on the authorities' decision, so obedience is a must. Yuri Trifonov's *The House on the Embankment*, a fashionable book in the 1970s, perfectly illustrates this comparison.

Another memorable episode reflecting the nature of the Polish–Soviet scientific cooperation involved a visit by Professor Ivan Piotrovich Kalinin to the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Management. The scholar had a respectful welcome, and after a long, boozy dinner, Andrzej invited him to his apartment for a cup of coffee. They sat down comfortably in the armchairs standing in the study, with the walls covered by bookshelves displaying various trinkets. Kalinin recalled his imprisonment in a lower-category Gulag camp and mentioned Katyn as an obvious NKVD crime. It would be fair to say that he became “highly eloquent.” As the professor chatted with Andrzej amicably, his gaze settled on a small object sitting on one of the shelves. The bronze bust carried a visible dedication in Russian: “from the Soviet Chekists.” Andrzej had received this gift from one of his friends who enjoyed shopping in antique stores and giving strange presents as a joke. It was the bust of Felix Dzerzhinsky, a Soviet revolutionary of Polish origin, master of the Red mass terror and first boss of the NKVD. On reading the words, the poor Kalinin first turned white and then began to tremble. Mumbling something, he rushed to the hallway, grabbed his coat, and quickly left. He reported to the

university authorities that he was ill and went back to Russia. This story is exceptionally sad and not very amusing. Andrzej attempted to contact him but to no avail. Deciding to say goodbye to Dzerzhinsky, he took the bust to Paris as a gift for his friend Claude Chapeau, who was also fond of bizarre objects. Dzerzhinsky ended up in Claude's toilet room next to the busts of Hitler and Stalin set against a background of Hitler's original orders. At last, the right man in the right place. Poland, on the other hand, began to witness some interesting events at that moment in time, and history picked up its course.

## THE DISRUPTED DECADE

The collision of awakened consumerist hopes among the Polish society of the 1970s with the economic crisis was painful and sudden. The turning point came in June 1976 in the form of strikes taking place in Lublin, Warsaw's Ursus district, and Radom, triggered by the government's announcement of an increase in retail prices of consumer goods. Faced with pressure, the authorities had to backtrack on price increases, which showed their weakness. At the same time, the government set in motion a machine of severe police repression. There were even several fatalities. With social calm destroyed, the conflict continued to exacerbate until it culminated in August 1980. Following the repressions of 1976, the people established the Workers' Defense Committee (KOR), which embodied the plans to initiate an alliance between workers and intellectuals. Despite KOR's invigilation and persecution by the authorities, the organization gradually won the position of a recognized opponent, and with time, even a partner of the authorities. This finally came to pass during the Round Table Talks in 1989. In this respect, Poland proved unique in the socialist camp.

The KOR meetings took place in the spacious, art-filled apartment of Professor Edward Lipiński, a neighbor of Andrzej's parents. With the host often turning up late, members of the opposition regularly congregated in the stairwell. Nina Koźmińska served them tea and entertained them with conversation until Professor Lipiński got to the third floor. He was surprisingly mobile until the age of 95. Andrzej frequently visited his apartment, where he met the leading activists of the anti-communist opposition and admired the host's impressive art collection. After Lipiński's death, Andrzej bought

a seventeenth-century bishop's chair upholstered with cordovan leather from this collection but unfortunately failed to negotiate with the professor's heirs the purchase of a painting by Polish painter Jacek Malczewski, which he had dreamed of.

On his ninety-fifth birthday, Professor Lipiński gave a lecture at the Faculty of Management. As this was still the time of martial law, he told Andrzej that he realized that, as dean, Andrzej was risking a lot by inviting him to the university, so he would try not to cause trouble. The auditorium was full; people had to stand. Lipiński delivered a forty-five-minute lecture titled "Marx and Management" from his memory while standing, later answering questions written on pieces of paper for the safety of the audience. One question was: "Do you know how Poland could improve its economy?" Lipiński flashed a cheeky grin and answered: "I know, but I will not tell."

Without a doubt, Lipiński was one of Poland's wisest economists, as proved by the title of one of his books: *Problems, Questions, Doubts*. Less clever individuals operate in certainties. In 1982, Andrzej received this book from its author with the following handwritten dedication: "To Professor Andrzej Koźmiński with appreciation for his pioneering work in management science and his achievements in organizing the teaching of this discipline. The quality of management determines the rationality, efficiency, and dynamism of the entire economy." At ninety-eight years old, Lipiński realized that he had lost his short-term memory and must have decided to die, because he stopped eating and drinking. The process took almost two weeks. Andrzej visited him in hospital. And this was where they parted.

With the passing of the 1970s, disrupted by strikes and the victory of Solidarity in 1980, everyone seriously involved in economics and management became aware that the "socialist economy" was suffering from an incurable, fatal disease of low productivity and poor innovation. Under such conditions, a considerable increase in investment financed by a foreign loan was bound to end in disaster. Whether and how to treat the disease formed the subject of an ongoing debate.

Janek Kramarczuk, the then head of the Planning Institute and one of the closest associates of Deputy Prime Minister Tadeusz Wrzaszczyk, responsible for the Polish economy, prepared a simple, illustrative diagram in 1978 with the assistance of analysts. The diagram depicted two curves set against a timeline – foreign currency earnings from exports and the cost of foreign

debt servicing. In 1979, the export earnings curve was below the debt servicing cost curve. In other words, Poland was losing its debt servicing capacity, not to mention the ability to pay principal installments. A beautiful diagram produced by a computer printer! “How many copies of this diagram do you have?” Wrzaszczyk asked. “Three,” Kramarczuk replied. “Please bring me all three. No one can see this.” “Should the Politburo not see it and look for a way out of the situation?” Kramarczuk inquired. “No, that would be the end of me and you, and nothing can be done anyway.”

Poland was steadily drifting toward 1980, a decisive moment in its history. The same happened and is still happening before other breakthroughs: the ruling elites consider any change too costly and so they await history’s judgment.

## SOLIDARITY

In May 1981, Professor Koźmiński became the first democratically elected dean of the University of Warsaw’s Faculty of Management. Although he had the support of Solidarity, he tried to avoid exacerbating the internal conflict in the department. Thus, he made a gentleman’s agreement with his rival, a man backed by the Communist Party: if one won, the other would become vice dean. Andrzej’s competitor proved to be a committed and loyal vice dean also during the difficult period of martial law. Grzegorz Domański, a lawyer and Andrzej’s double neighbor – in Warsaw and in his summer house on the Narew River – became vice dean for international relations, while Witold Bielecki served as vice dean for student affairs. Mirka Łukasiewicz-Kwiatkowska headed the administrative office. Witold and Mirka later turned into pillars of the International School of Management, the Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management, and finally, Kozminski University. They became Andrzej’s colleagues and close friends. The three have always been able to count on each other. It was their and Oktawian Koczuba’s assistance that helped Andrzej implement the crazy dream of his own school of business.

Despite the deteriorating situation in the market, rising tensions, and a clear radicalization of opinion, the dynamics of the August 1980 events surprised the authorities. When Solidarity came into existence, Andrzej’s parents were among the first to sign up to the union operating at the Warsaw

School of Economics. Andrzej did as well, of course, immediately becoming a delegate from the Faculty of Management to the University of Warsaw's University Committee. In his role, he participated in endless deliberations.

As dean, he also had to attend the turbulent, frequent, and lengthy meetings of the University's senate and had the privilege of working with the great rector of the time, Professor Henryk Samsonowicz. Andrzej was a witness to his removal. Samsonowicz adamantly refused the expulsion of academics and students from the university at the authorities' request. Despite all the differences of opinion and interests in the face of the prevailing threat, Samsonowicz managed to construct a unified stance of the community on fundamental issues.

The Communist Party tried to restrict and eradicate Solidarity at every opportunity. Polish society reacted violently: there was no end to strikes, riots, and protest marches. Dean Koźmiński knew that he was in for a challenging, if not *very* challenging, term. This was one of the reasons why, in the summer of 1981, he decided to go on a long, relaxing holiday with his wife. Claude invited them to his home in Corsica, but they proved unable to get passports. The endless lines at the passport office on Krucza Street had a discouraging effect. Leon Koźmiński advised them to travel to Yugoslavia, which required neither a passport nor a visa. And so started one of the best holidays of their lives.

They flew to Split, where they visited the magnificent Roman monuments from the time of emperor Diocletian, and then took a small boat to the island of Brač. They found accommodation in a wonderful old stone cottage, where they spent four weeks. Right next door was the Golden Horn beach, as well as picturesque, empty mountains, a wonderful jagged coastline, tiny taverns by the sea, and a large nudist beach. News from Poland came via Italian newspapers, available in the morning from the local shop, and from the Italian radio. After such a rest, Andrzej was ready to return to Warsaw and take up his post as dean.

At that time, Poland witnessed a huge debate on the need to reform its economy. The reform aimed at averting the impending economic catastrophe and providing necessary conditions for the country's stable development in the future. For this purpose, Professor Samsonowicz established the University of Warsaw's Expert Panel on Economic Reform. Andrzej Koźmiński became its chairman. The team's composition was interdisciplinary and

representative of the entire university community. The panel was diverse not only in terms of the disciplines represented but also its members' views and political affiliations. Andrzej saw pluralism and interdisciplinarity as absolute prerequisites for the success of the undertaking entrusted to him by the University of Warsaw's rector. One of the team's first publicized communications stated:

■ *Any reform must result from an agreement and cooperation between the government, Solidarity, and other viable forces. Unilateral actions of any party will surely lead to failure. Agreeing on individual stances on the matter is an essential political precondition for the reform's success. However, the reform's entrenchment depends on the political endorsement of its assumptions by the public through the rule of law and democratic procedures. A decisive role in this regard falls to the Polish parliament and other representative bodies, which should develop into entities that would make it possible to make public and agree on the stances of all relevant forces in the country.*

In January 1981, the government published the first version of the economic reform proposals. They were actually quite conservative and geared toward maintaining the dominance of state ownership and planned economy. The Faculty of Management of the University of Warsaw or, to be precise, a team headed by Professor Andrzej Koźmiński independently prepared a more detailed and radical proposal. Its suggestions included: the complete enfranchisement of state-owned enterprises by transforming them into what today we call companies of the State Treasury ruled by the Commercial Companies Code, the abandonment of planning by direction, and the restoration of all economic functions of money. At the start of the 1990s, another team, also headed by Andrzej Koźmiński, presented a similar expert opinion commissioned by the Polish Business Roundtable and its head at the time, Jan Wejchert. This particular study was even more comprehensive than the last one, as it encompassed the branch structure of the economy; it was also more radical, because it called for the economy's gradual privatization. Various strata of Polish society engaged in heated debates on the topic. People felt that real socialism was coming to an end and wanted to shape their destiny anew.



Such was the atmosphere of the “starry time” of the first Solidarity in 1980–1981, as named by the legendary democratic opposition activist Jacek Kuroń. Regrettably, on December 13, 1981, martial law put a brutal end to this carnival.

## MARTIAL LAW

The imposition of martial law in Poland on December 13, 1981 nearly found Andrzej in Germany. Together with Karol Sobczak, professor of law at the University of Warsaw, he accepted an invitation from the University of Bonn. Perhaps because of a Solidarity badge, the East German customs officials held them for several hours as “infected by Solidarity” and almost took apart Sobczak’s Zastava car. Andrzej was carrying some East German marks he received as royalties, which aroused further suspicion. He spent the money on a good meal as soon as they entered the German Democratic Republic and on a sensible, warm sweater he never came to wear.

On reaching Bonn, they both found it difficult to believe that such a small town was the capital of Europe’s biggest economic powerhouse. Andrzej enjoyed the slightly lethargic, cozy, yet down-to-earth atmosphere of the city. His host was the eminent management specialist, Professor Horst Albach. With Poland on everyone’s lips and on the front pages of all the newspapers, Andrzej’s lectures attracted crowds of students and generated heated discussions. The Poles also had some time to explore the Rhineland and to do shopping. Their list included items that were in short supply in Poland, such as washing powder, soap, toothpaste, canned food, and chocolate. However, the news coming from Poland was becoming increasingly alarming.

When they saw helicopters storming the Officers’ School of Firefighting in Warsaw on television, they concluded that a violent solution to the overall unrest was imminent. Unwilling to be cut off from their country and their loved ones, they decided to cut their stay short and return home immediately. They drove continuously, taking turns at the wheel. At the border between East Germany and Poland, they caused such amazement by their choice of destination that the border guards and customs officers did not even leave their booths to see what they had in the car. It was cold, slippery, and empty. Not a single car passed them between the border and Poznań. They arrived in Warsaw on December 12, at around four in the morning. After several

hours of sleep, Andrzej ran over to the university building and took a look around the city. His friends found his panic amusing, saying that nothing violent was about to happen – it was just the government’s usual tussle with Solidarity. The following day, he decided to get some sleep, and when he woke up around ten o’clock, the state had already announced martial law.

Andrzej set off for Krakowskie Przedmieście. Rector Samsonowicz closed the campus for fear of an invasion similar to that of 1968, in which students suffered attacks. Motortrucks stood across the university gates. The administrative office implemented shift work.

The first day of martial law introduced a new reality, with the dean regularly visited by a “guardian” representing the Ministry of the Interior. Andrzej kept him occupied by talking about his proposals for economic reform. An employee of the security services once told him: “You know, Professor, everyone considers your views unacceptable.” Andrzej always kept in mind this interesting observation. The “guardian” had one specific request: he wanted to obtain the list of Solidarity members who worked at the department. In return, he suggested the release of Mirka Łukasiewicz-Kwiatkowska’s husband from prison. Mirka’s husband worked at the State Aviation Works in Warsaw’s Służewiec district and was interned as an active member of Solidarity. The list never materialized, while Mirka’s husband was let out in time anyway. Fortunately, the security service representative was not too pushy and even gave the impression of a quite intelligent person.

The university authorities felt the burden of responsibility for the students. Witek Bielecki understood the students very well and enjoyed their full trust, never concealing his political sympathies and dislikes. On the one hand, they wanted to give the young people the opportunity to express their own opinions and, for this purpose, organized events and meetings inside the department, with the admission restricted to its members. On the other hand, they saw, even on television, that their students were particularly active in street demonstrations, at the time brutally suppressed by the Citizens’ Militia and the Motorized Reserves of the Citizens’ Militia. To protect them from repression, Andrzej entered an unusual alliance.

The secretary of the Communist Party’s organization at the Faculty of Management was the former minister, head of the Office of the Council of Ministers, Professor Bronisław Ostapczuk. The scientific community knew him well as co-author of a book on management he wrote together with

Witold Kieżun. Andrzej got along well with Ostapczuk ever since their trip to the Comecon Congress in Yerevan in 1978, dedicated to management. Ostapczuk headed a delegation comprising a dozen or so professors and economic activists. They flew via Moscow, where they waited for several hours to change planes. Ostapczuk stayed close to Andrzej, continuously expressing spontaneous dislike, not to say hatred, of the Soviet Union. He called Russians primitive barbarians and policemen of other “socialist countries” who were incapable of creating a modern state and an efficient economy. Perplexed, Andrzej asked Ostapczuk why he was telling him all this. “Because you are the only one here who will not denounce me,” he heard in reply.

After 1980, Ostapczuk left the Office of the Council of Ministers and, taking advantage of his habilitation, moved to the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw, where he became secretary of the Communist Party’s organization. During martial law, Andrzej hoped to receive some support from him, and fortunately, his hopes were not in vain. They found out that several senior officers of the Citizens’ Militia were studying management at the faculty extramurally. Ostapczuk invited a key officer from the municipal headquarters, asking him, in the dean’s presence: “It seems that you are enjoying your studies at our university, comrade colonel?” “Yes, I am,” came the answer. “Well, if you wish to continue enjoying yourself, make sure to release our students if you happen to detain them. Do we understand each other?” “Of course, comrade minister.”

In 1989, Ostapczuk emigrated to Germany with his wife. One day, he invited Andrzej to his office at the faculty and told him over a glass of cognac that a colonel from the Citizens’ Militia would be there in a matter of minutes to bring passports for him and his wife. They were leaving the following day and had no plans to return. “You should remember,” he added, “that Russians will not give up on Poland. Jaruzelski is entirely their man and there are many others like him also in the opposition. But I wish you success despite everything.” In the corridor, Andrzej walked past an officer wearing a grey uniform. For two years to follow, Andrzej received Christmas cards from Ostapczuk with no return address. The professor reportedly ran an office that wrote applications to the German authorities on behalf of emigrants from Poland.

A well-known political battleground was located at the university headquarters on Krakowskie Przedmieście. Andrzej used to spend a lot of time there. The event that shocked the academic community the most was the

dismissal of Rector Samsonowicz, who resolutely and repeatedly refused to vet his employees and expel students convicted of participating in demonstrations. The rector's dismissal triggered a wave of protests and demonstrations. The university's deans signed a formal protest. Working with Professor Samsonowicz was a veritable lesson in civil courage and academic dignity.

The group of deans who signed the protest against Samsonowicz's dismissal began regular informal meetings at the apartment of Professor Zbigniew Kwiatkowski, the dean of the Faculty of Biology. Kwiatkowski became the team's leader and main organizer, wholly deserving his informal title of the "dean of deans." Members of this group jointly prepared, discussed, and approved their actions before every senate meeting, as well as every meeting with the rector and the university authorities. They made it a rule not to meet directly with the representatives of the ministry or other authorities, and they all stayed true to their promise.

Meanwhile, the university was experiencing events that were putting its independence at risk. Janusz Grzelak, the dean of psychology, and Jerzy Szacki, the dean of sociology, were both suspended. Andrzej made some attempts at mediation together with the dean of physics, Professor Woronowicz, but without success. Moreover, the authorities interned three female deans: Jadwiga Puzynina, Hanna Świda-Ziemia, and Joanna Mantel-Niećko. Fortunately, efforts to free them proved successful. Andrzej became a member of the Senate Committee for Victims of Oppression, chaired by Dean Puzynina. For a while, Andrzej also worried about his own possible arrest, choosing to spend one or two nights at the vacant apartment of his neighbor, the famous violinist Wanda Wiłkomirska.

He did not become directly involved in the Solidarity underground. Instead, he focused on what could be done for science and scholars during this turbulent time. First and foremost, he aimed to prevent the university's cutoff from the West. Despite martial law, he was able to ensure that previously planned trips of junior academics to the USA went ahead. At the time, Krzysztof Obłój, Maciek Ramus, Jan Saykiewicz, and Włodek Piotrowski all went on placements. As Poland suspended all its contacts with the United States, Andrzej once again sought assistance in France, which invited him to give one guest lecture at the University of Orléans, entitled: "Are economic rights blocked?" His lecture had a high attendance of both academics and students. Afterwards, he received an invitation to deliver a course lecture

on planned economies and the changes that they were experiencing. This intensive course comprised two-hour lectures taking place two to three times a week, and it ended with an exam. The university obtained for him a French ministerial professorial appointment of the highest category and renewed these invitations annually in the spring from 1982 to 1989.

## BACK IN FRANCE

The ability to give lectures in France gave Andrzej the proverbial “breathing space.” He lived in his friend Claude’s medieval house, right next to a church that remembered the time of the Capetian dynasty. The house sat on the banks of the Loire River in the stunning village of La Chapelle-Saint-Mesmin, located about ten miles from Orléans. Andrzej’s wife Alicja visited him there on several occasions, and that was when they traveled to Paris by train, arriving at Gare d’Austerlitz one hour later. The French capital was Andrzej’s frequent destination. He stayed at the headquarters of the Polish Academy of Sciences on Rue Lamandé, headed by Andrzej Matczewski at the time. Matczewski made sure to give Andrzej a very warm welcome, with many excellent dinners and long conversations about the future of Poland.

Andrzej succeeded in renewing his contacts with French economists. One of them was Eugeniusz Zaleski, author of a fundamental work on Stalin’s five-year plans, which proved that none of them saw successful implementation. Andrzej received a copy of this book of more than a thousand pages with a dedication in Polish: “To Professor Andrzej Koźmiński with assurances of respect and affection,” dated November 23, 1987. Andrzej gave interviews to the press, appeared in public debates about the future of socialist economies, and published articles in French on the subject. He once attended a working breakfast with Mikhail Gorbachev’s chief economic adviser, Abel Aganbegyan. During the conversation, he realized that the Soviet reformers’ knowledge of the realities of modern market economies remained very limited. When discussing the introduction of the stock exchange, Aganbegyan was unsure who would set prices. Although the conversation took place through an interpreter, Andrzej understood the original discussion held in Russian. All in all, the French scientific community fascinated Andrzej. He also met regularly with his childhood friend Kuba Karpiński, who was in Paris at the time.

During his stay in Orléans, Andrzej met Professor Georges Gallais-Hamonno's doctoral student, the Portuguese economist José Martins Barata, who invited Andrzej to lecture at the University of Lisbon. This was a wonderful opportunity to visit Portugal in 1985, practically on the eve of its accession to the European Union. He was overwhelmed by the unique charm of Lisbon, a city rebuilt after the earthquake of 1755, full of wonderful sites that are best explored by tram. In the evening, the longing notes of the fado music enveloped the city. Andrzej did some traveling in Portugal, among others, to Barata's hometown of Castelo Branco. To his surprise, the roads proved to be in an even worse condition than those back home. The political scene featured numerous opponents of Portugal's accession to the European Union. One of the reasons was that the memory of the incredible 1974 Carnation Revolution was still fresh in the public's mind. During the event, an army led by young officers overthrew the post-Salazar dictatorship of Marcelo Caetano almost bloodlessly, opening the way for the construction of a modern democratic society. Andrzej found himself in Portugal when the nation was close to completing this journey. Visiting Portugal in later years, he was able to admire the amazing consequences of its EU accession. In Portugal, they seem at least as impressive as in Poland.

One of Andrzej's achievements was organizing several study visits by representatives of the Faculty of Management to France and subsequent revisits. Professor Georges Gallais-Hamonno, dean of the Faculty of Law, Economics, and Management, enjoyed visiting Poland with his wife despite the gloominess of the 1980s. Georges and Janine, who were ardent Catholics, highly appreciated the visit to the Jasna Góra Monastery in Częstochowa, specially arranged just for them. Andrzej accompanied them because the monastery occupies a special place in his heart. Jasna Góra is the quintessence of Catholic Poland with all its greatness and flaws.

Together with the University of Orléans, it was also possible to organize a conference on new perspectives in economic policy in Czarniejewo near Poznań. The conference featured a dozen prominent French scholars (Marie Lavigne, Michel Lelart, and André Grjebine) and several American representatives of the "New Left" in economics (John Alcorn and Paul Swanson). The Polish quarterly journal *Management Science Review* even prepared a special issue dedicated to this conference. Published in 1988, it was edited by Georges Gallais-Hamonno and Andrzej Koźmiński.

The lively collaboration with the University of Orléans ended in a rather unexpected way. One day in the late 1980s, while heading back home, Andrzej bumped into his friend from the Warsaw School of Economics at the airport in Paris. The friend had a responsible post at the embassy and was just waiting for someone to arrive from Warsaw. They enjoyed a cup of coffee together, and Andrzej flew home after receiving a copy of the French monthly *Entreprise*. Over the next several months, he noticed that his French colleagues contacted him less frequently and with less cordiality. Moreover, they never sent him another invitation to lecture in France. This fact did not worry him too much, because traveling to the United States was already a possibility. However, contact with Orléans became difficult during Andrzej's subsequent visits to France. He only solved the mystery many years later.

In addition to his diplomatic obligations, Andrzej's friend from the embassy fulfilled other "responsibilities," which resulted in members of the French counterespionage agency discreetly following the man. They made sure to take photographic evidence of their encounter. The French services began to inquire about Andrzej in Orléans. Although no further consequences ensued, this was enough for his French colleagues to break off practically all contact with him.

In the late 1980s, Andrzej had another indirect adventure, this time with the Polish secret police. It all started with an idea to apply for permission to work for international organizations. Several of his friends worked at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in Vienna, and they urged him to do the same. He even received a small test assignment. However, the Polish Security Service declined his application, and Andrzej remains grateful to them for this decision. Had he gotten a job in Vienna, his dream of his own school of business could not have come true.

## BACK TO THE STATES

In 1987, Professor Koźmiński's second term as dean came to an end. He left the faculty virtually without any losses to human resources and in a sufficiently good shape for the elections of the next dean to proceed smoothly. The winner was once again Professor Karol Sobczak, who had acted as dean before 1980. He won in compliance with all the applicable rules of democratic election.

Prior to that event, Andrzej returned to the States. The credit goes to Stefan Kwiatkowski, who had met Dean Patricia Sanders at some UN event. At Kwiatkowski's request, she sent Andrzej a one-semester invitation to the little-known Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), located in New Britain. Despite the name and appearance, the place had a strong Polish element. Although she hardly spoke Polish, Pat Sanders came from a Polish family in Chicago and felt a special affection for Poland, which she proved on numerous occasions. Actually, the town of New Britain should have been called New Poland: almost until the end of the twentieth century, its inhabitants were Polish emigrants who worked in local factories, such as Stanley Tools, Fafnir Bearing Co., and Colt.

CCSU sprouted from a local teachers' college and had big ambitions. Among others, the university decided to strengthen the business school, get the relevant accreditation for the curricula, and launch an MBA program. This required the hiring of several people with doctorates in business or economics and the internationalization of studies. Pat Sanders was a vice dean in charge of implementing this project and decided to reach out to the "old continent" for the necessary resources. This was how Andrzej found his way to New Britain, followed by Krzysztof Obłój, Witek Bielecki, and several other Polish scholars.

Crossing the Atlantic aboard the Soviet-made Ilyushin Il-62 proved quite nerve-racking on this occasion, because the machine recorded a failure while still in Poland, just before boarding. The passengers' apprehension was fully justified, as their journey took place shortly after a crash of the same airplane model in Kabaty Woods nature reserve near Warsaw on May 9, 1987. The passengers spent hours in a cramped waiting room at Okęcie Airport, while the mechanics were mending the aircraft. Despite the necessary repairs, the plane reached New York almost five hours late. Amazingly, Pat Sanders waited at the airport the whole time. She has always been reliable.

Pat found an apartment for Andrzej at the house of Helen Bianco, née Gwóźdź. The house was about a fifteen minutes' walk away from the university. Helen spoke an archaic, peasant version of Polish; embarrassed of the fact, she addressed her guests from Poland almost exclusively in English. Until her retirement, she worked at the Fafnir ball bearings plant, where her recently deceased husband had been a foreman and union activist. Her generation proved the last to experience the American "workers' paradise." Wages were high enough to support a family with four children. The house,



with its garden and swimming pool, was suitably spacious. In the driveway stood four cars and an RV for longer trips – all bought on convenient credit, of course. They had money in the bank, and even foreign trips were possible during retirement; Helen visited Poland with a group of pensioners. This “workers’ paradise” enjoyed protection by powerful trade unions. Helen had three brothers, four children, and countless nephews and nieces. Members of this close-knit family lived near each other. Every Sunday, they attended mass at the local church, taking Andrzej with them. One mass proceeded in Polish and afterwards, the Polish priest would talk at length with the worshippers. The family bought bread and cold cuts from a Polish shop. Andrzej had a high standing in this environment as a Pole from Poland who came not to do manual labor but to teach Americans at university!

In the second half of the 1980s and early 1990s, New Britain’s Polish community was already disintegrating. Latino Americans were replacing Poles in the local factories. The “workers’ paradise” was crumbling like a house of cards under the weight of globalization. Factories closed one by one, moved abroad or to southern states where costs were lower, or went bankrupt in confrontation with foreign competition. During Andrzej’s subsequent stay in New Britain, iconic American landmarks, such as Colt, followed shortly by Stanley Tools, collapsed spectacularly. Helen’s children could not even dream of the standard of living their parents had, maybe with the exception of her daughter, who graduated as a nurse and worked at a major hospital in Hartford. They had casual jobs in shops, bakeries, or car repair workshops, continuously asking their mother for money. Mentally unable to cope with their downgrading into the ranks of the precariat, they resorted to alcohol and drugs. A similar fate befell their peers from the working-class environment who no longer could function as members of the working class.

At CCSU, Andrzej made some important friendships with Rowland Baughman, Sara King, and her husband, Donald Cushman. All these friendships have stood the test of time.

## THE CUSHMAN’S GROUP

Thanks to his visits to CCSU between 1986 and 1988, Andrzej experienced one of the most fascinating intellectual adventures of his life: his active

participation in the Cushman Group, which stretched into the second half of the 1990s. Andrzej met Donald Cushman through his wife, Sara King, who taught at CCSU. Don was a professor of business communications at State University New York (SUNY) in Albany and a very active consultant working mainly for General Electric during Jack Welch's "revolution" period. A very charismatic individual, he gathered around him an international group of more than a dozen practitioners and scholars working on management issues in an environment of intensifying global competition.

This group came as close to the ancient Greek idea of a "philosophical school" as was possible in the twentieth century. Participation was completely informal and only at Don's invitation. The group brought together experts in the field of management: practitioners, researchers, and consultants – all culturally diverse and meeting on an English-speaking, American platform for debate. They held meetings in person in private homes and restaurants, which Sara and Don loved – they did not even eat breakfast at home. Each meeting had its own topic, text, and a rigorously observed order of talking. Don ran the debates with a firm hand, and the participants had to make concise and succinct statements. Once a year, they met for a multi-day conference in places such as Dubrovnik, Sydney, Honolulu, Catania, and the Polish village of Srebrna near Płock. Each conference resulted in a collective publication, issued by SUNY Press as part of the "SUNY Series in International Management." Together with Pat Sanders and Sara King, Andrzej was its co-editor.

The Cushman Group's achievements included in-depth studies on three of the hottest management concepts of the time: high-speed management, embracing the determinants for rapid adaptation to changing market conditions; continuous improvement, which captures the conditions for initiating and sustaining improvements; and transformational leadership, which enables a successful reconstruction of an organization amongst highly globalized competition. The Cushman Group lost some of its momentum following Sara and Don's retirement and their move to Florida. Then came the illness and death of the group's founder and leader. Don and Sara created an extraordinary atmosphere of selfless friendship, cooperation, and truth-seeking, just like in the Greek Peripatetic school of philosophy. Their efforts did not bring them fame or money, but something much more important: the debate among friends and the unrestrained exploration of new ideas and concepts. What remains is the memory and gratitude for this inspiring communal experience.



OLD MEN BY WLASTIMIL HOFMAN, AN ARTIST WELL REPRESENTED IN ANDRZEJ KOŹMIŃSKI'S COLLECTION.

## THE "EKSPERT" COOPERATIVE

Oktawian Koczuba was an assistant to Professor Jerzy Więckowski – director of the University of Warsaw's Institute of Management, and later the Faculty of Management's first dean. Oktawian excelled in teaching accounting and economic analysis, frequently acting on Więckowski's behalf, handling matters of varying degrees of importance. He was exceptionally open to others, always willing to collaborate and assist. As a result, he had a huge network of colleagues, acquaintances, and friends capable of achieving the seemingly impossible. Thanks to Oktawian, the Faculty of Management launched a viable commercial platform enabling cooperation with the business sector already in the early 1980s. True to its name, the "Ekspert" Organizational Consultancy Cooperative platform was formally a labor cooperative. It admitted faculty members who carried out consultancy or expert work for both state and cooperative enterprises. Their clients included Poland's largest tractor manufacturer Ursus and several large cooperatives. The platform's comprehensive offer covered legal, financial, accounting, organizational, and

social services. As a dean, Andrzej Koźmiński had access to a discretionary fund for special purposes. He spent this money on receiving foreign guests and establishing cooperation with them. First and foremost, however, people were earning real money by honestly practicing their profession at a socialist university in the early 1980s. This was incredible in itself!

In retrospect, the University of Warsaw evidently prevailed in the battle against Wojciech Jaruzelski's regime during martial law. It succeeded in sustaining the integrity of key academic institutions and even reinforced the belief in the need to preserve the autonomy and democratic system of university affairs. Paradoxically, martial law reinforced these values in the consciousness of the academic community, instilling in it the conviction that they must be defended against external threats. Over the long term, the university successfully safeguarded both employees and students from repression. This time, the process of defending the order existing at the university proved more effective than in 1968. Confronted with the University of Warsaw, the supporters of authoritarian forces failed in their endeavors. Such an outcome stems from the relative unity of the academic community, which this time refused to allow destructive internal conflicts. Another factor was the certain heterogeneity within the circles of power. Over the coming years, history proceeded to speak, having the ultimate say.

## THE LOST YEARS

The 1980s saw many discussions on the future of the Polish economy and Polish society, and therefore Poland's political model, which were to serve as a farewell to the remnants of martial law. Andrzej Koźmiński believed that the dark years of the decade and the period of relative "stabilization" after the formal lifting of martial law should encompass intensive intellectual work and a debate about the future, whose outline was looming on the horizon just as much as the regime's inevitable failure.

In 1982, Andrzej published his book *Po wielkim szoku* (After the Great Shock), quoted and discussed quite frequently at that time. The author attempted to outline the core dimensions of the debate on Poland's future: the transformation of social consciousness and civilizational changes, as well as the logic of improvements and fundamental changes that one could define as

reforms. In those years, Andrzej often published articles on these matters in the press. The year 1985 saw the release of another of Andrzej's books, titled *Gospodarka w punkcie zwrotnym* (The Economy at a Turning Point), which discussed business self-reliance and industrial policy.

Professor Stefan Kwiatkowski, Andrzej's friend from his studies at the Warsaw School of Economics, became president of the Scientific Society of Organization and Management (TNOiK) and appointed Andrzej as his deputy. His tasks included coordinating work on the future shape of economic reforms. The team mostly comprised other members of the Faculty of Management. Together with Professor Kazimierz Ryć, his two young colleagues, Marian Górski and Grzegorz Jędrzejczak, as well as sociologist Krzysztof Mrela, they tackled the issue of money reform. They even considered the solution of "double money" – "hard" convertible currency and "soft" non-convertible currency – known from history books (New Economic Policy).

These were all intellectual games that had real political consequences. At the end of the 1980s, Mieczysław Rakowski, the last Prime Minister of the Polish People's Republic, invited Andrzej Koźmiński to join the team of his voluntary advisers. Rakowski even made a personal phone call to that effect. Andrzej agreed, perhaps under the influence of jet lag, as he had flown in from the States only a few hours earlier. The team also included Dariusz Rosati and Jerzy Sablik, who headed the Accountants Association in Poland. Rakowski's government was reformist to such a degree that perhaps it might have even deserved the label "liquidationist" in relation to the "bankruptcy estate" that the Polish People's Republic constituted at the time. To this day, everyone remembers the famous Wilczek's Law, an unrivaled model of economic freedom, as well as the marketization of food and fuel prices. Fewer people know that the then Minister of Finance Andrzej Wróblewski negotiated an agreement with the International Monetary Fund, which, with some additions, soon saw the light as the Balcerowicz Plan.

Although Andrzej did not meet Rakowski in person, he prepared a memorandum proposing the marketization of retail prices. This meant the release of repressed inflation, which needed some control. Andrzej suggested a cap on the money supply and administrative measures in the form of temporary caps on prices and wages. As he received no response to his memo, Andrzej published the text as an article in the *Cooperative Banking Review*. In fact, knowing the Polish governmental administration, there was no certainty that

the memo had even reached the addressee. The eminent journalist Stefan Bratkowski embarked on a decisive polemic, opposing any pro-inflation measures. However, he remained unaware that repressed inflation results objectively from the long-term use of officially set prices and has to surface sooner or later if the economy is to undergo marketization. Still, the inflationary spiral must not be set in motion by the coupling of price and wage increases, for example, through the indexation of wages with the help of price increases. Such was the mechanism proposed by Solidarity during the Round Table Talks, ultimately enforced in the summer of 1989. Andrzej Koźmiński spoke out publicly against this proposal. It was perhaps because of this suicidal concept of “wage indexation” that he did not renew his Solidarity membership after 1989. Nonetheless, before the well-known Polish actress Joanna Szczepkowska beautifully announced on television in October 1989 that “communism has just ended in Poland,” the 1980s were obviously lost. Polish society lived in its own world and the authorities in theirs. And both worlds were phony.

Just before the elections of June 1989, Andrzej was in Paris at the invitation of the French Institute of International Affairs. The French could already sense Poland’s approaching change of power, but nobody was able to determine its scope, gravity, or scenario. At some reception at the embassy, Andrzej met Janusz Patorski, the then Deputy Prime Minister, who had specially flown in on a government plane. He said in confidence that he felt anxious about the Communist Party getting too many votes and about the “brotherly alliance parties” in the partially free elections, as that would have looked bad in the eyes of the world. Andrzej looked at him in horror while his interlocutor added that he was glad that Andrzej shared his concerns! Such was Poland’s one-way dialogue at the time.

“Totalitarian power goes blind before it dies. Always without fail. But I did not know that at the time,” Andrzej admits today.

Communism, or real socialism to some, was dying a painful death in Poland. At the time, together with Krzysztof Obłój and his team, Andrzej Koźmiński was finalizing a new theory of organization: the theory of organizational equilibrium, which significantly extended the earlier game concept developed with Zawisław. The theory relied on four dimensions of equilibrium: material, external, internal, and social, which was also external and internal. Each of these dimensions can receive appropriate sets of indicators

tailored to specific determinants. Such indicator systems began to emerge in the second half of the 1990s. Polish researchers described this completely original expansion of a company's behavioral theory in ten points:

1. The equilibrium has material and social, as well as external and internal dimensions.
2. Equilibrium criteria emerge during negotiation and bidding processes within the organization and between the organization and its environment.
3. Organizational equilibrium means aligning relationships within the organization and relationships with the environment so that these relationships meet the criteria of functional equilibrium. A minimum level of equilibrium is a prerequisite for the effective influence of the management center on the organization's elements. The four basic areas of equilibrium are dynamically interlinked.
4. Social imbalances primarily manifest in participants' reduced willingness to act for the organization's benefit and in weakened legitimacy of the organization and its actions within the environment.
5. Material imbalances manifest in the reduced economic efficiency of activities and, consequently, the environment's reduced material supplementation of the organization.
6. Imbalances inform management teams about the situation inside and around the organization. They provide the impetus to restore the equilibrium and redefine its criteria.
7. Management means undertaking activities to maintain and improve the equilibrium or redefine it. An organization's ability to function in a state of imbalance for an extended period depends on the size of the resources at its disposal, the potential for applying manipulation and coercion practices toward participants and the environment, and the potential for isolating the organization from environmental influences. An organization's ability to survive and grow depends on the management teams' ability to accurately set the equilibrium criteria and successfully pursue them.

This concept was to become the foundation and theoretical basis of the scientific school that Andrzej Koźmiński had always dreamed of. Unfortu-

nately, it, too, fell under the locomotive of history. It was June 1989 in Poland. Everyone was busy with something completely different at that time; no one read about or even noticed such things. The era of transformation was beginning. Our protagonist proved unlucky yet again: the situation resembled the developments surrounding the organizational game theory. The ghost of Mary Stuart, so often quoted by Andrzej Zawisłak in the past, reappeared: the concept turned out to be beautiful but ill-fated. The ghosts were making a comeback.



# THE CRAZY YEARS

In 1989, the era of Polish transformation began, triggering twenty years of Professor Koźmiński's vigorous activity. The diversity of its parallel paths and platforms was striking. Here are some of the most important:

- The University of Warsaw's forum and three crucial affiliations: Faculty of Management, Institute of Sociology, and International Management Center.
- American forum – primarily University of California, Los Angeles.
- Forum of the International School of Management and Kozminski University.
- European forum: lectures in Austria and France.
- Forum of international business school organizations – CEEMAN, EFMD, and AACSB.
- Business forum – supervisory boards.
- Fora for public and journalistic activity.

All this took place simultaneously, and the correlation between all these activities was not always apparent. Subsequent versions of Andrzej's textbooks came out with various co-authors, either from the University of Warsaw or Kozminski University. He published hundreds of scientific articles in several languages, often with the input of his international colleagues. These works filled a gap in the Polish market that was hungry for knowledge about management under competitive and free market conditions. Many of these became "teaching aids" for new university courses.

Professor Koźmiński recalls: "I was driving so fast that the landscape outside the windows was blurring. Everything that had happened in my previous

life was a type of preparation for this most important period.” Did he prove sufficiently prepared? He feels that he would have benefited from better interpersonal and networking skills, more in-depth knowledge of the law, and, especially at the beginning, more confidence in carrying out his leadership role during this extraordinary time. At the age of fifty, his dream of his own university started to come true, and this wonderful experience lasted another twenty years. It was certainly the most crucial period of his life.

## THE LANDMARK TEXTBOOK

The beginning of the transformation gave the Department of Organization and Management Theory at the University of Warsaw an extremely important task: to prepare a core management textbook “for the new times.” Andrzej asked Włodzimierz Piotrowski to become his co-editor. Furthermore, the team creating the textbook comprised some dozen people associated with the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw and later also with the Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management, which in 2008 changed its name to Kozminski University.

In addition to scientific editors, the team included some of Professor Koźmiński’s closest colleagues and his doctoral students. The first edition of the textbook came out in 1994, and reissues continue to appear. To this day, legends circulate about the size of the print run sold by the publisher, as it was a record number for a Polish academic textbook. No less than one hundred and twenty thousand copies, including reissues, have been sold. The book remains one of Professor Koźmiński’s most cited academic works, and still constitutes the only such comprehensive study of management prepared and published in Polish. It discusses fundamental aspects that are key to modern management: strategy formulation, planning, control, structuring, managing organizational behavior, managing social potential, project management, change management, and international management. Moreover, the book includes a systematic outline of the discipline’s century-long history.

Until the end of 1996, the work on successive chapter versions of the textbook *Zarządzanie. Teoria i praktyka* (Management: Theory and Practice) formed the thematic core of the discussions and debates of the entire team headed by Professor Koźmiński. This made it possible to refine the teaching,

the structure of lectures and practicals, as well as the unique oral examination formula used to this day.

In 2004, having already left the University of Warsaw, Andrzej wrote an addendum of sorts to this work, the book *Zarządzanie w warunkach niepewności. Podręcznik dla zaawansowanych* (Management in Conditions of Uncertainty: Advanced Guide). The publication introduced the category of “generalized uncertainty,” modifying the shape of the management function in all its dimensions. In the years that followed, such an approach dominated management discourse around the world, culminating in Nassim Taleb’s famous book *The Black Swan*, published in America in 2007. Andrzej’s study was also formally innovative, as it took on the form of a conversation between three imaginary characters: the craftsman, the technocrat, and the artist, the three of them representing the three “faces” of the manager. Continuously used in academic teaching, the book has had many reprints and is frequently cited.

The size and complexity of the author team of the textbook *Zarządzanie. Teoria i praktyka* made its subsequent upgrades increasingly difficult. That is why in 2007 Andrzej Koźmiński wrote a brand-new textbook on the basics of management in collaboration with his master’s degree student, doctoral student, and habilitation candidate, Dariusz Jemielniak. Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne published the work in 2008 as *Zarządzanie od podstaw* (Basics of Management). This time, the textbook covered more than a dozen topics: management and leadership, formalization, structure, resources and processes, external and internal equilibrium, employee motivation, financial management, information and knowledge, organizational culture, brand, image and marketing, change, development and strategy, innovation and entrepreneurship, values, and the organizational life cycle. The argument was based on contemporary best practices, often drawn from Polish companies, and referred to the new literature. Subsequent editions of this book and its more recent versions involved co-authors Dominika Latusek-Jurczak and Anna Pikos. Peter Lang published the English version in 2013, and the Moscow Academy of Economics and Law released the Russian edition in 2010. An English edition by Routledge is in the making to appear in 2025.

The print run of these new textbooks was not as impressive as that of the first one, which perfectly met the demand of the rapidly growing market of universities and departments offering management studies. As recently

as 2018, it was the second most popular university program after computer science, with nearly thirty thousand candidates applying for it every year in Poland! In 2022, management dropped to third place in terms of popularity; it was surpassed by psychology. After the COVID-19 pandemic, this turnaround is hardly surprising. If only because of the large number of students, this essential management textbook – labeled with the brand of Poland’s best-known professor in the field, Andrzej K. Koźmiński – had wide readership and produced a whole army of managers who assumed important positions and roles in the Polish economy at the time.

Drawing on his teaching experience at American universities, Professor Koźmiński also wrote a textbook on international management, but this publication quickly became outdated in Poland due to the pace and unique path of the internationalization process in Polish companies. Together with Professor Jemielniak and with contributions by authors from various scientific centers, they also prepared Poland’s first academic textbook on knowledge management.

To use the language of academic bureaucracy, a large publication output during the most hectic period of transformation required immense dedication from Andrzej Koźmiński. Managing the university often took more than ten hours a day during the week. Thus, he usually wrote the articles at weekends – a time solely devoted to research and writing. That is probably why he missed out on many things people usually do on weekends: sports, hobbies, meetings with the family, and trips out of town. He did, of course, try to interrupt this string of hectic activities by going on holiday. He and his wife used to go skiing in the winter, and as the years went by, they instead started traveling to exotic, warm countries, mostly out of prudence.

## THE FIRST MBA IN POLAND

From the June 1989 elections, it was clear that Poland was facing a systemic transformation toward capitalism and liberal democracy. These new times required a suitable model of managerial education. In popular opinion, the gold standard MBA degree expressed such a model to the fullest extent. Created in America, the MBA model spread first to universities in Europe and then around the world.

On the initiative of Professor Włodzimierz Siwiński, Rector of the University of Warsaw, the school established an interdepartmental International Management Center, reporting directly to the rector. The unit received several rooms in the center of Warsaw, in a university building that stood at 4 Nowy Świat, at the corner of Nowy Świat and Three Crosses Square. Its goal was to deliver MBA programs in collaboration with reputable foreign partners, using foreign funding sources where possible. Andrzej became the director of this unit.

Simultaneously, the same group of people, also under Andrzej's leadership but on the initiative of Oktawian Koczuba, began efforts to launch an MBA program by a private company geared toward educating and advancing managers: the International School of Management. The story of its creation is long and complex. It started in 1986–1987, when a group of colleagues from the Faculty of Management concluded that Poland would soon need an internationally recognized private school of business offering an MBA program. To some degree, the International School of Management was a continuation of the “Ekspert” Cooperative, a consulting firm that operated at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Management.

The founders of the International School of Management embarked on a several-years-long search for a business partner that would be willing and able to finance the construction of the school's infrastructure. All these attempts involved dozens of meetings, business lunches, dinners, and negotiation sessions; however, they all ultimately ended in failure. No one wanted to make a serious financial commitment and, above all, agree to academic leadership. The scholar's personal contacts with the homegrown “business sharks” of the early days of the economic transition were sometimes amusing but always absorbing, tiring, costly, and ultimately fruitless and altogether disheartening.

By the summer of 1989, they already knew that they could count only on themselves. In fact, Andrzej still holds this conviction close to his heart. In the United States, universities collect millions, some of them even hundreds of millions of dollars, as donations from businesses and wealthy alumni. To some extent, the world of business also funds business schools in Western Europe – the better and more reputable, the more generous the donations. In France, the sponsor's role belongs to the chambers of commerce associating local businesses; in Germany, these are major multinational corporations

and self-regulatory organizations, and England has business organizations. In Poland, there is no one.

Both initiatives to launch MBA degree courses ended in success. This was primarily thanks to the enthusiasm, creativity, and hard work of the entire team of founders. The scholars endured the immense pressure of teaching at several institutions simultaneously, as well as participating in constant meetings, debates, counseling, negotiations, research, and writing. Nobody passed on any opportunity. They were at the top of their game, believing in creating something important and lasting. In those years, there were more than twenty-four hours in the day and more than seven days in a week. Andrzej's annual trips to California to deliver lectures served as his holiday and escape from the superhuman effort and dedication required back at home. Spending one trimester at UCLA, Andrzej was able to lead a quiet and orderly life of an American professor.

## THE LEADERSHIP CAMP

After two years spent looking for a sponsor, the team took matters into their own hands and, in June 1989, signed the founding deed of the public liability company International School of Management. Thanks to Andrzej Zawisłak's contacts at the Kasprzak industrial plant, they received three rooms almost in the center of Warsaw, which they used as an office. Stefan Kwiatkowski, in turn, reached an agreement with the Union of Horticultural and Apicultural Cooperatives, which gave the team permission to run an MBA course at their training center in Teresin near Warsaw. The legendary first track of Poland's pioneer MBA program started as early as October 1989. Thus, the incredible adventure with American-style business education began in the dusty conference room of the Kasprzak plant in the presence of numerous officials, the deputy minister of education, and representatives of the British and American embassies.

The individual responsibilities were allocated as follows: Oktawian Koczuba – finance and logistics, Stefan Kwiatkowski – foreign relations, Robert Rządca – training and short courses offered by the International School of Management, and Krzysztof Oblój – the MBA program. Witold Bielecki became the program's director after Krzysztof Oblój left for the USA. And this

is how it stayed. The final form of the proprietary MBA program, launched in 1989, was Professor Bielecki's brainchild. After more than thirty years of uninterrupted functioning, the MBA program has had almost six thousand graduates who have played a key role in the development of Polish business in the 1990s and beyond. Andrzej Koźmiński's role at the International School of Management was that of company president and team leader.

Students of the first two tracks of the MBA program spent almost a full week in Teresin once a month over more than a year. The lecturers lived alongside the students. Thanks to the cooperation with the Copenhagen Business School and the British Know How Fund, dozens of foreign lecturers have taught at the school. The program's participants included mostly heads of Poland's largest state-owned enterprises who felt the need for further training in management under competitive and free market conditions. There were also private entrepreneurs who saw an opportunity to build new, market-relevant family businesses. The atmosphere at the school was magical, with no end to nighttime conversations. Piotr Waślicki was responsible for looking after the students' physical stamina. Meanwhile, the three rooms in Warsaw served as the office and a place for conducting heated debates and numerous "executive education" events, including courses for large financial institutions, banks, and companies, such as Pekao SA, ZREW, Ruch, and INCO-VERITAS. A series of training sessions conducted by the World Bank took place inside Pułtusk Castle, specially rented for the occasion.

## FOREIGN EXPERTS

During the first period of transformation in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Poland was the object of a peculiar crusade by Western management specialists, mainly American and British, funded by their respective governments and various foundations. Both international experts and their Polish colleagues treated this as an opportunity to make easy money. Foreign guests frequently resided in Warsaw's Marriott hotel, which earned them a joking title of "Marriott brigades." They assumed that no one in Poland had the slightest idea about modern management theory and practice in a market economy. Their frequent companions were interpreters, who proceeded to make impressive careers in the budding Polish business sector.

The members of the Faculty of Management, successfully growing their independent consultancy and training business, comprised people who completed American internships at top business schools and published in English. They did not fit the stereotype and thus found it difficult to get any commissions from these brigades and their principals. Instead, numerous assignments went to “enterprising” individuals who were setting up various peculiar institutions with names long consigned to oblivion. These unusual business entities aimed to transform the subsidies and grants, often quite considerable, into their own personal wealth. An additional weakness of Koźmiński’s group was its lack of political connections. One French-speaking “expert,” having consumed a sumptuous dinner paid for by his Polish host, declared by phone the following day that he could not provide the International School of Management with any financial assistance because “nobody backed Koźmiński and his team.” Andrzej still remembers the earful he gave to the French “expert” in French and regrets that no one recorded it at the time.

The exception was the small grant that the International School of Management received from the British Know How Fund. Bilateral agreements with foreign universities worked well; however, they required funding provided by the Poles. The International School of Management organized study trips to allow the students to get to know the Western world. Andrzej participated in two such expeditions out of sheer curiosity. One tour, organized by the Know How Fund, visited Britain’s top business schools, and the second trip was a visit to the American stock market organized by the American investment bank Goldman Sachs. While in the UK, the students visited Henley, Aston, Bradford, Cranfield – which Andrzej had seen ten years previously – Manchester, Glasgow, and, very briefly, London Business School. Provided with programs and teaching materials, the guests learned the recruitment rules, terms of employment, and relations with the business sector. Some time later, Kozminski University established good working relationships and even issued joint degrees with some of these universities, for example with Bradford. Today, Andrzej Koźmiński feels pleased to see Kozminski University in the *Financial Times* rankings systematically overtaking most of the British schools shown to the Poles thirty years ago as examples to follow.

During both study trips, Andrzej renewed his acquaintance with Professor Jerzy Dietl, who was also a participant. This initiated decades of cooperation and friendship. Jerzy Dietl became a member of the International



School of Management's Board of Trustees, which was soon to be established, and an external examiner at MBA courses. Eventually, in 2015, he received an honorary doctorate from Kozminski University in recognition of his tremendous achievements in marketing and social activities benefiting Polish capitalism.

It turned out that the organizer of the American study visit was George Washington University, Andrzej's former employer, and, personally, his old friend Joe Tropea, who had made a name for himself as an individual with exceptional knowledge of the Polish circles. This was the result of GWU's collaboration with the University of Warsaw in the 1970s, in which both played active roles.

Having a little bit of contact with American investment banking proved extremely interesting – especially the conversations with Mirosław Gronicki, Poland's top economic analyst and future minister of finance in Marek Belka's government, with whom Andrzej later collaborated on many occasions. Study trips also had a social significance, as the participants were all immensely fascinating. They included: Jan Czekaj, a professor at the Krakow University of Economics and later deputy minister of finance and member of the Monetary Policy Council; Andrzej Sopoćko from the Faculty of Management of the University of Warsaw, later president of the Polish Office of Competition and Consumer Protection; Jan K. Bielecki, who became prime minister in 1991; and Krzysztof Lis, Andrzej's colleague from the Department of Organization and Management Theory, later minister of privatization in the governments of Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Jan K. Bielecki.

## TWO PROGRAMS

The launch of the International Management Center of the University of Warsaw was as successful as that of the MBA program in Teresin, run by the International School of Management. The university's prestige made it relatively easy to attract valuable foreign partners for the project. First, it was the Rotterdam School of Management (part of Erasmus University) and then, for many years, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where Howard Thomas was the dean at the time. As his wife had Polish roots, the dean had always been fond of Polish scholars. The International Management Center

offered a dual degree from the University of Illinois and the University of Warsaw, which earned high value in the Polish market. Forty percent of all classes were taught by American lecturers initially funded by a Mellon Foundation grant and later by tuition fees. It would be no exaggeration to say that this very program introduced the American “gold standard” MBA program to Poland, becoming the point of reference for many followers and competitors.

The university premises on Nowy Świat required renovation and better equipment. What proved helpful in this situation was the synergy with the International School of Management, which established the International Foundation of Management, with Oktawian Koczuba as its president. The Foundation received two grants: from the Office for the Coordination of Staff Education and from the Mellon Foundation. This money enabled them to modernize the university premises on Nowy Świat, provide new furniture, and purchase IBM computers and printing equipment. In October 1991, the renovated premises of the International Management Center hosted the inauguration of the MBA program with the participation of the rector of the University of Warsaw, Andrzej K. Wróblewski, and Prime Minister Jan K. Bielecki, who had always attached great importance to management education. The message conveyed was unequivocally positive: the state and the university would be committed to management education and to providing it with support. Bielecki continues to keep his promise, having been a member of the International Corporate Advisory Board of Kozminski University for more than twenty years.

The inauguration of the MBA program at Nowy Świat included an amusing incident. Before the Prime Minister’s visit, pyrotechnicians with a dog inspected the premises. The inspection went without a hindrance, but the dog left a large trademark in the center of the room. The lady cleaning the premises firmly demanded – and rightly so – that the officers from the Government Protection Bureau clean up the mess, as it was their dog. They retorted that the dog belonged to the state and so it was the woman’s duty. This provoked an even more determined refusal and a threat not to let them out of the building along with the main culprit, the dog. Unfortunately, neither the dog nor the officers felt a sense of responsibility. Eventually, someone from the administrative staff took care of it, but the cleaning lady continued to mumble derogatory comments about the authorities long after the incident.

In mid-1991, the facilities at the disposal of the International School of Management deteriorated significantly. The Kasprzak plant found itself in serious trouble and took back its premises. Moreover, it was no longer possible to conduct MBA courses in Teresin. Ultimately, the school made a “personal union” of sorts with the International Management Center of the University of Warsaw. The International School of Management sublet several rooms at the same address, 4 Nowy Świat. The third MBA track already started the program at the Nowy Świat premises. In this way, two distinctly different MBA programs ran in the same place: an English-language one with a postgraduate certificate from the University of Warsaw and a diploma from the University of Illinois, expensive by Polish standards, and a much cheaper, Polish-language MBA program, which offered a diploma from the International School of Management. Both programs had a different clientele, although they shared many lecturers. Still, the two organizations were developing in symbiosis, avoiding any clear conflict of interest.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY

In the early 1990s, Warsaw did not have all those luxury office buildings that create the city center’s landscape today. Owning property was the hallmark of success for almost any business project. The International School of Management continued to develop its training and consultancy activities in its premises on Nowy Świat and in those belonging to clients or rented in the city.

For a long time, the founders pursued a fierce debate as to whether they should establish a full-scale higher education institution which would also offer mass undergraduate programs available in part-time mode. Those in opposition insisted on the elite, custom-made nature of their enterprise, which was developing and full of promise. Ultimately, the winning project, promoted most ardently by Andrzej Koźmiński and Oktawian Koczuba, was the proposal of a full-scale university. The latter joked that his daughter Magda was completing her secondary school final examinations, so he needed to open a university for her. Andrzej, in turn, recalled his conversations with his father, who always instilled in him that he should follow the lead of Rector Bolesław Miklaszewski, the founder of the Warsaw School of Economics.

Miklaszewski transformed an institution educating tradesmen – the so-called “Zieliński’s Courses” – into a full-scale university, which soon became one of Europe’s leading institutions of higher education. He used to say: “You will succeed!” – and he was right. The university was brought to life, and the spirit of the old Warsaw School of Economics was reborn in a new place and form. Still, many people kept calling them madmen at the time.

Together, they devised a lengthy and clumsy name: The Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management. On March 31, 1993, the Minister of National Education authorized the university’s launch and, in May, approved it to offer vocational studies in management and marketing. The university received number sixteen in the Register of Nonpublic Higher Education Institutions. Andrzej K. Koźmiński became its rector and remained in the post for eighteen years. Oktawian Koczuba became its overall director and Stefan Kwiatkowski served as chair of the Board of Trustees, created to oversee the university’s activities. They worked together as a team until Professor Koczuba’s sudden death in May 2001.

In the first crucial period, the university owed the most to Oktawian Koczuba. The first admitted group comprised one hundred and twenty students, with Magda Koczuba as one of them. The first inauguration of the academic year took place in a rented conference room on Rozbrat Street. The guest of honor was Lesław Paga, the newly appointed CEO of the Warsaw Stock Exchange, who arrived at the ceremony in a green Jaguar. In accordance with academic custom, Professor Krzysztof Obłój delivered the inaugural lecture. And this is how it all began...

Regrettably, Professor Leon Koźmiński did not live to see the university achieve genuine success. He died in June 1993. The patron must now be looking down and feeling a lot of pride.

## A PLACE OF THEIR OWN

In its first pioneering period, the newly established university used the University of Warsaw’s resources for a fee: practicals, seminars, and computer classes proceeded at the premises on Nowy Świat. Bigger lectures took place on Rozbrat Street in a rented conference room known as the auditorium. However, the functioning of the new private university threatened a conflict

of interest with the University of Warsaw. Somewhere along the line, Rector Wróblewski requested a review of the relationship between the Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management and the International Management Center of the University of Warsaw. Although Andrzej Koźmiński was lecturing at UCLA at that time, he flew to Warsaw to explain to the rector the entirely makeshift nature of the relationship and outline the different profiles of both sets of students. Above all, he promised that the Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management would move out within several months. After hearing this promise, the rector agreed to tolerate the cooperation, which made the matter of finding new premises extremely pressing. Nonetheless, promises must be kept even if this proves challenging or unfavorable. The observance of this rule is the foundation of reliable business relationships and reputation – one of the most valuable assets of any company.

What followed was a feverish search for the Academy's new premises. Andrzej and Oktawian proceeded to tour Warsaw and its environs in search of a suitable building, to no avail. The properties available were usually those left by bankrupt or failing state-owned enterprises, which were either too big or too small, their location was poor, or the terms were unacceptable. After all, they had to mind their very limited resources. Finally, their attention focused on state-owned electronic measurement instrument works that were undergoing liquidation. The buildings were spotted by Henryk Pisiński, a retired colonel employed as the administrative and economic head of the International School of Management and later of the university. Located at Warsaw's Praga Północ (59 Jagiellońska Street), the buildings previously served as a workplace for about six hundred employees. The premises had been unheated for two years and required major refurbishment, but the infrastructure was generally sound and the surface area adequate. The layout of the rooms permitted redesign. Although the location seemed peripheral at the time, it also showed considerable future potential. Today, this potential is clearly visible: reputable companies and administrative institutions surround the university, and no one complains about the location.

The ZOPAN Measurement Instrument Works, which owned the land and the facility, was gravely indebted and unable to pay or service its debt. The Academy succeeded in purchasing the company, along with its debts and assets, for a relatively small sum. After the purchase came arduous arrangement proceedings aimed at reaching an agreement with creditors.

On moving into its own premises, the Academy began to experience a string of successes and, thankfully, only temporary challenges.

## WITH A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The Academy's first Christmas Eve in their own building, which took place in December 1994, went down in history as the founding myth of what was to follow. Celebrations proceeded inside the only refurbished room on the third floor. All other rooms remained full of dirt, rubble, and bits of machinery, but the Christmas Eve dinner was delicious and plentiful, with some alcohol served as well. The celebrations were merry, and the room was neatly arranged. Approximately fifty people, among them lecturers and administrative staff, participated in the event. Rector Koźmiński gave a memorable toast in which he said that this would soon be the seat of the best business school in Central and Eastern Europe. Andrzej believed in what he was saying, as this was his plan all along. However, his words seemed amusing among all the rubble and caused general laughter. Few attendees took this toast seriously, but Oktawian was certainly among them.

As the party came to an end, Oktawian suggested that the two of them go somewhere quiet and talk. When they sat down in a pub, Oktawian told Andrzej that he had some bad news and some good news. The good news was that they had eventually reached an agreement with the company supplying hot water. In contrast to other creditors, willing to make concessions and happy to recover any amount, this municipal company conducted a very tough negotiation process. The bad news was that there was hardly any money left in the account and not enough money to pay staff wages before Christmas. Taking a loan was not an option as their credit standing remained poor, and the whole thing would have taken far too long. There was also nothing to sell. They were forced to take advantage of their personal connections. The very next day, Oktawian secured a private loan of two hundred thousand zlotys from a businessman he knew, which was an incredible achievement. The problem of loan repayment vanished quickly, as students paid their tuition fees for the second semester at the end of January.

Revenues from the sale of assets that once belonged to the Measurement Instruments Works also proved unexpectedly high. They sold everything

they could get their hands on: wire, sheet metal, electrical wiring, barbed wire, tools, machinery, and even the antique measuring instruments that the company once produced. The Polish Army bought the measuring equipment because it was compatible with their weaponry. The liquidated company's assets also included a sizeable amount of potassium cyanide. With the quantity sufficient to poison the entire district, they locked the compound away in a safe, with one of the two existing keys supervised by Andrzej and the other by Oktawian. Finding a trustworthy company willing and able to dispose of this "treasure" proved a real challenge. In the end, a state research institute agreed to undertake this task but in return for a considerable fee.

Through the employment of several young people on commission, the Academy was able to cover the purchase price of the Measurement Instruments Works almost in full solely from the sales of its former assets. The Academy had to quickly part with the plant's old socialist management, which still remained among the ruins. The loan taken out to cover the December wages was repaid at the end of January, with Oktawian throwing a wonderful party to mark the occasion. Such were the Academy's founders. They never gave up, always pushing forward and happy to enjoy their successes. They reveled in their daily life, as they were architects of their own fate – and of a home for thousands of students and for themselves.

## PARTING WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

As his Academy grew, Andrzej became increasingly aware of a growing conflict of interest due to his simultaneous employment at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Management, the International Management Center, the International School of Management, and the Leon Koźmiński Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management. After his father's death, it was evident that Professor Leon Koźmiński would become the Academy's patron.

Andrzej began his gradual evacuation from the University of Warsaw in 1996, when the structures of its Faculty of Management incorporated the International Management Center and its head became Professor Krzysztof Oblój – Andrzej's long-time collaborator, co-author of various publications, and his doctoral and postdoctoral student. In 1998, Andrzej moved from the Faculty of Management to the Institute of Sociology at the University of

Warsaw, which received him well. He derived considerable satisfaction from working with sociologists endowed with a unique type of social sensitivity that managers and management students lacked. Sociologists are proficient in empirical research methods, which have always fascinated Andrzej. He himself was quite keen on putting these methods to use.

However, it soon became apparent that reconciling his duties as a professor at the University of Warsaw with his job as a rector on Jagiellońska Street was simply unfeasible due to time restraints. That is why, in 2000, Andrzej ultimately parted ways with the University of Warsaw. He did so with regret but also with a feeling of gratitude, aiming to preserve the best relations with the university, both on a personal and institutional level. He succeeded in this endeavor. In 2022, the University of Warsaw Senate unanimously awarded Andrzej an honorary doctorate in a secret ballot. During his speech, Rector Alojzy Nowak, Andrzej Koźmiński's colleague from his time at the Faculty of Management, recalled a long list of Andrzej's contributions to the university and the Faculty of Management. The most frequently mentioned words were internationalization, the opening of Polish management science to the world, and support provided to scholars in obtaining foreign internships. "This is the crowning achievement of my scientific journey and the greatest honor I have ever received in my life. I feel gratitude and great respect toward the University," thanked Andrzej Koźmiński during the ceremony at the Casimir Palace, the seat of the University of Warsaw Senate.

## THE ANDERSON SCHOOL

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) was a major step up after the Central Connecticut State University, where Andrzej taught in the 1980s. In the 1990s, Andrzej accepted a placement as a visiting professor at UCLA's Anderson Graduate School of Management. Jeff Alexander, one of America's most eminent sociologists and head of the UCLA Department of Sociology, became interested in Andrzej's work on reforms in socialist bloc countries and the prospects for transformation during a conference held at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. He mentioned that, in view of the collapse of the communist system, the UCLA Anderson School of Business was looking for an expert on the matter.



A little while later, during another lecture tour in Connecticut, Andrzej Koźmiński was invited to Los Angeles for a day, where he met with the Department of Management and delivered a lecture followed by a rather lively discussion. There was even a dinner hosted by Hans Schollhammer, a specialist on international management and a good-natured German professor as if transplanted directly from nineteenth-century Heidelberg to California, where he had lived for forty years. The lecture must have provoked some deliberations, which went in the candidate's favor, as Andrzej soon received an invitation for his first trimester. He was to teach classes in international management and management in conditions of transformation. Students chose Andrzej's courses because the topics were fashionable, and the lecturer came from "over there." And that is how UCLA became another important affiliation and workplace for Professor Andrzej Koźmiński for many years to come.

During his time at UCLA, Andrzej met Professor José de la Torre, director of the federally-funded Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER), coordinating the Anderson School's internationalization. Like many American business schools, the Anderson School at the time was local, American, and quite poorly connected to international business. José was a Cuban who fought Fidel Castro during the Bay of Pigs Invasion, barely making it alive. He completed his doctoral degree at Harvard under Michael Porter and was invited to UCLA from INSEAD in France. His wife Marta, an art historian, was a curator at the famous Getty Museum in Los Angeles, a beautifully situated marvel of modern architecture. Paul Getty's generous endowment of some five billion dollars in the 1970s allowed the Museum to continue expanding its collection of art. Andrzej was a frequent guest at their home in Pacific Palisades, where the swimming pool was located above the living room because the house stood on a rock face. The two families used to meet regularly until José's death in 2022. One year before, the de la Torre couple visited Warsaw on the occasion of Kozminski University's emerging cooperation with the global MBA Consortium.

CIBER provided Andrzej with a small grant, which allowed him to prepare case studies of management transformation in postsocialist countries (Poland, Russia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic), an analytical text, and the first book in the American market on the changes in corporate management immediately after the fall of communism and after the collapse of the Soviet bloc. The book – entitled *Catching Up?* – served, and probably still serves, as

an educational resource in classes taught at American universities. The author himself also used the book for several years, making updates on an ongoing basis because the transformation realities changed at a very fast pace. However, *Catching Up?* failed to gain the same level of popularity as *Starting Over in Eastern Europe*, published two years later by Harvard Business School Press and preceded by an article in the *Harvard Business Review*, written by Simon Johnson and Gary Loveman, with an introduction by Jeffrey Sachs.

The publication of the Polish version of *Catching Up?* produced an amusing story. On seeing the translated text, Andrzej was unsure whether to laugh or cry. Almost every sentence needed correction, while some errors were quite hilarious. For example, the translator rendered the idiom “one horse town” word for word, which made the Polish sentence completely incomprehensible. While going through the text, Andrzej decided that many fragments of the book, including case studies, required an update. In consequence, he wrote a new book altogether, perhaps even better than the American original. Regrettably, the book proved less popular in Poland, as stories of transformation were happening on a daily basis, so nobody had the time or inclination to study them. The transformation process continued in Poland with full force, driven by people’s enthusiasm and, for the most part, intuition rather than established academic knowledge.

Andrzej’s annual visits to UCLA and the contacts he made there gave rise to two important research and writing projects. The first involved the distinguished organizational theorist and exceptionally brilliant researcher Mary Jo Hatch, who, similarly to Andrzej – and at the very same time – spent several years as a visiting professor at the Anderson School. In the 1990s, Andrzej and his doctoral student and colleague Monika Kostera were working on an analytical approach toward managerial and leadership roles, especially their spiritual and aesthetic dimensions. To do so, they used a theatrical metaphor. Together, they wrote several articles by exchanging emails between Los Angeles and Warsaw. In the end, they concluded that a more in-depth treatment of the topic required a co-author with broader international and, above all, American experience and strong sensitivity to the spiritual and aesthetic aspects of management.

Finding such an individual proved difficult until Mary Jo Hatch arrived at the first edition of the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism, which took place in Warsaw in 1997 at Kozminski University. After listening

to her lecture, they immediately offered her cooperation. She agreed. The three of them carefully analyzed thirty interviews with the heads of large multinational corporations published in the *Harvard Business Review* in the 1990s, and supplemented this material by adding Mary Jo's interview with Suzy Wetlaufer, the journal's editor at the time. The work on the book was time-consuming, and the team met in various places in Poland, such as the village of Wetlina in the Bieszczady Mountains or the village of Jabłonna. The work's conclusion appeared in its very title: *The Three Faces of Leadership: Manager, Artist, Priest*. Published by Blackwell only in 2005, the book achieved a degree of success: quite a few citations, several articles, and translations into Chinese and Polish.

A partner in another project initiated by Andrzej at UCLA was George S. Yip: a UCLA professor with a Harvard doctorate written under the supervision of Porter, later an Oxford professor, and most recently, before his retirement, dean of the Rotterdam School of Management. George had developed a model of total global strategy. Together, they decided to verify the degree to which this model applied to European postsocialist countries, such as Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Baltic states, Romania, Bulgaria, and Ukraine. They also wanted to assess these countries' potential within the global economy. The team invited to the project as many as sixteen eminent scholars and business practitioners hailing from the listed countries. On three occasions, they met at seminars conducted by Kozminski University in Warsaw to agree on the methodology and discuss the book's chapters. The project's weak point was the absence of a comprehensive text on Russia, as it proved impossible to invite someone from Russia to participate. Initially, a Gosplan employee from Moscow agreed to take part in the project, but after several meetings, he found himself unable to adapt to the accepted methodology of globalization research and very emotionally saw it as an attempt to "humiliate Russia." Such were the times! In addition to its purely academic applications, the book *Strategies for Central and Eastern Europe* gained some popularity as a training resource for Western managers posted to Central and Eastern European countries.

Professor Andrzej Korboński, a man of some importance in Los Angeles, proved extremely cordial toward his Polish namesake. Korboński was a Warsaw Uprising insurgent, nephew of the famous Stefan Korboński, doctoral student of Zbigniew Brzeziński at Columbia, an eminent specialist in

political science – especially Polish postwar politics – and head of the Centre for East European Studies in the Department of Management at UCLA. He always used to collect Andrzej from the airport on Andrzej's arrival from Warsaw. Professor Korboński's partner, Luba Fajfer, found Andrzej an excellent apartment on Veteran Avenue, from which he could reach his university on foot – a real luxury in Los Angeles. They often met in Los Angeles and Warsaw, which Professor Korboński visited every year. He even became an English Track lecturer at Kozminski University. For many years, he acted as editor-in-chief of the internationally renowned *Studies in Comparative Communism*, whose name was changed to *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* once communism fell.

A group of researchers from UCLA interested in transformation issues assembled around the center and the journal: historian Iván Berend, sociologist Iván Szelényi, and visiting professors from Poland: Grzegorz Kołodko, Piotr Sztompka, Tadeusz Kowalik, and Andrzej Koźmiński. Together, they engaged in lively debates and prepared articles for publication. During that time, Andrzej Koźmiński published many articles both in Professor Korboński's journal and in other English-speaking periodicals of a similar profile, including *Communist Economies* and *Communist Economies and Economic Transformation*. Playing an active part in American academic life, he also published articles in journals from other areas of specialization, such as *Management Learning*, *Organizational Dynamics*, *Journal of Management Development*, and *Journal of Consumer Policy*. Professor Korboński not only showed understanding toward his colleague's interdisciplinary interests but also supported and respected him for this distinctness. However, Andrzej Koźmiński seems critical in his conclusion:

■ *Taking a retrospective look at this body of work, it shows a lack of focus on the uniformity and legibility of the researcher's profile. Instead, it bears the stigma of interdisciplinarity and thematically fragmented interests going against the tide of increasing specialization and narrow profiling. This was how I worked: I was closer to Pareto than Prescott, neither fish nor fowl, neither economist or sociologist, nor a specialist in management techniques.*

Still, one cannot deny that his body of work has impressive volume and incredible value, if only to quote the universal metric of the Hirsch index

(h-index), which shows the use and value of cited scientific publications. In the summer of 2024, Professor Koźmiński's h-index was 36, with almost 8,000 citations of his works.

In those years, people used to call California “God’s own country” for a good reason. For several months each year, you could ski down the slopes of the Big Bear Mountain and two hours’ drive later sunbathe and swim on the beach in Santa Monica. The stays at UCLA were comfortable in every sense. Andrzej received a wonderful apartment, a comfortable office connected to the Internet, access to an excellent Faculty Club staff restaurant with a terrace heated in colder weather, and the ability to attend conferences. He could even teach classes remotely. On their days off, Andrzej rented cars and drove his wife to the Grand Canyon, Las Vegas, or Death Valley. Everything was within reach. The university district of Westwood, where they lived, remained very European and “intellectual” in American terms; it had pubs, cafés, bookshops, concerts, and performances. With the climate change, destructive fires and floods have dramatically transformed this idyllic picture.

The small apartment building on Veteran Avenue, facing a large park where homeless people used to sleep, lived through its heyday in the 1960s as an example of the “Californian style” of the time, with its swimming pool, patio, and other amenities. In the 1990s, it became home to aspiring actors and actresses, writers, set designers, thinkers, and loafers who desperately sought all types of casual jobs to survive while making grand plans for the future. Hollywood was within touch. Andrzej enjoyed the pleasures of the community’s thriving social life. Los Angeles life remained upbeat even when Andrzej’s neighbors pestered him for small loans from time to time. He was a member of the small, privileged minority of those with a steady income. Even relations with the homeless residing in the local park were amicable. One of them, an African American man by the name of Joe, proved an intelligent individual with a college education. Joe accompanied Andrzej every morning on Andrzej’s walk to the university, during which they talked about politics and enjoyed a cup of coffee. It was always on Andrzej. Without interrupting the conversation, Joe accepted the quarter dollar with dignity.

This harmonious, idyllic picture fell to pieces at the end of April 1992. The court acquitted white police officers accused of the vicious, near-fatal battery of an African American repeat offender, Rodney King. The riots that erupted in protest against this verdict remain the most violent in American

history. The rioters destroyed thousands of buildings, looted countless shops, set fires that raged for days in downtown Los Angeles, and burned hundreds of cars. The state valued losses at one billion dollars, which seemed an astronomical amount in those years. Many people were wounded and more than 60 were killed. Various news outlets broadcast live footage of the unrest lasting several days around the clock. The powerlessness of the police and the National Guard, who retreated under the onslaught of the enraged, aggressive crowd, seemed astonishing. The area of Westwood where Andrzej resided was out of the way, but at one point, a terrified building administrator came running up, saying that a group of about a dozen demonstrators was heading toward the building armed with baseball bats. Commercial security sent in a heavily manned car within mere minutes, and potential attackers turned into another street. A private security company competing in the market had to act more effectively than the police.

With hundreds of shops looted during these protests, bookshops were probably the only ones left untouched. The unrest only died down when units of the elite airborne division from Fort Bragg landed at Los Angeles airport and proceeded to man key intersections in the city. Helicopters circling above the crowds filmed the entire event. The media coverage of the riots was fascinating and demonstrated the extreme divisions existing in Los Angeles. Affluent or elite neighborhoods such as Beverly Hills, Pacific Palisades, Malibu, Bel Air, or Westwood form only a small part of the metropolis. Huge areas of Downtown and South Los Angeles teem with unemployed African Americans and Latinos who often depend on welfare, drugs, and crime. The Rodney King verdict acted as a catalyst, generating a sense of injustice and wild rage. The protests marked an uprising of the poor against the social order. The reasons for the social revolt that occurred in Poland several years previously were different, and the protests were much more sedate and more civilized. The Solidarity revolution ended with the Round Table Talks and a historic compromise.

On the occasion of Andrzej's subsequent residential visits to UCLA, he often acted as a guest speaker at various seminars, meetings, and lectures. Each year, CIBER organized retreats for its staff and invited guests – both researchers and practicing managers. During retreats held in Carmel, Santa Barbara, or Palm Springs, the participants discussed the future of postsocialist countries and the resulting business opportunities. There were high hopes

for Russia and Ukraine because of their natural resources and relatively high levels of science and education. Andrzej's comments that demonstrated his skepticism concerning the ability to civilize Russia were interpreted as evidence of Polish Russophobia. At the time, Poland did not enjoy a good standing in California. Always questioning such opinions and hurtful stereotypes, Andrzej noticed with satisfaction that his arguments slowly began to win acknowledgement as time passed. Simultaneously, however, the issue of transformation was losing its appeal and becoming less topical. A similar situation applied to globalization. Technology was becoming a principal theme.

As a UCLA professor specializing in the concept of transformation, he often received invitations to lecture in Europe, which included an invite to host a one-day seminar for ABB staff or a half-day seminar at INSEAD in Fontainebleau. His lecture in France was a fiasco, as a part of the audience already knew his case from different sources. Explaining the details in a rather tense atmosphere took too long, and there was not enough time to discuss the company's strategy for entering the Polish market. This was his last visit at INSEAD. Well, painful failures happen to professors, too. On the upside, Andrzej excelled at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, where he arrived at the invitation of Professor Nicolás Majluf. Later, Andrzej applied for a research grant together with Majluf, but regrettably without success. Andrzej also delivered a presentation at the annual American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) conference in Seattle. In Slovenia, he played a role in the establishment of the Central and East European Management Development Association (CEEMAN), which elected him vice president. He held this position until 2005. Professor Danica Purg, who has always overseen CEEMAN, has contributed enormously to the creation and advancement of the business school sector in Central and Eastern Europe.

With time, foreign trips increased in number and became more and more tiring. Andrzej would fly out of Los Angeles immediately after his classes only to return two days later for some more classes. He learned to manage his jet lag by running and taking long walks. Each time, he received support from the Department of Management, and UCLA fully funded some trips, especially those to attend a conference. The organizers of the various conferences and training courses which invited him typically paid for business class flights, but on a few occasions, he had the opportunity to fly first class in sheer luxury. It was a flight he took from London to Los Angeles in the

middle of the 1990s. His seat, or rather his bed, was close to two “newly rich Russians” who, after enjoying a selection of excellent drinks, were speaking Russian quite loudly. This is what he overheard: “We have the money; now we need to put things in order.” “A kleptocratic dictatorship will soon emerge from this desire for order,” Andrzej mused, and this was before all the power in Russia was handed to Vladimir Putin.

After five years of such parallel existence on both sides of the ocean, Andrzej realized that he had to make a choice. He had already made a similar choice back in Paris in 1967, and now he simply had to stick to his guns.

## COUNTRY-STYLE HOLIDAYS

During his time at UCLA, Andrzej took his wife Alicja on a tour of the States. He wanted to show her the places he had visited on his big American trip in 1971. They succeeded in seeing most of the sights, with the glaring exception of Niagara Falls. During their subsequent trips, they were inseparable. Alicja began to enjoy the leisurely drives along empty roads of the Wild West with the radio playing country music and huge breakfasts served at roadside diners. These American road trips that stretched for thousands of miles were an unforgettable experience for both of them.

One day, somewhere along the coastal highway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, they came across a road closure. It was raining, and mudslides were coming down from the mountains. Faced with the need to turn back, they found out from a gas station attendant about an alternative mountain dirt road they could take instead. They decided to take the risk. The rental Renault car, which was the cheapest model, tackled the steep inclinations and sharp corners with real aplomb. Suddenly, they drove into an enormous flat clearing where more than a dozen huge tanks started circling around them. The soldiers seemed visibly amused by this unusual encounter. Alicja and Andrzej unknowingly entered a military base. No one had paid any attention to them before, perhaps because Andrzej was wearing a military jacket. They quietly left the area, stopping just outside the gate for a traditional American breakfast of bacon, fried potatoes, and fried eggs accompanied by unlimited watery coffee. This was the only time and place where they enjoyed breakfasts in truck stops frequented mostly by truck drivers.



Alicja felt intimidated by New York and disliked going there. During one of their visits to the cinema, almost the entire audience was smoking cannabis. After the screening ended, they sat down on a bench to get some air. People walking past were sniffing the air and smiling at them meaningfully. Andrzej was really fond of this atmosphere of diversity palpable in New York, but knowing how to navigate around the city was a necessary skill. He usually walked around wearing his military jacket and always had a handful of coins in his pocket to “bail himself out” in an emergency. In America, you have to depend on yourself. One of Andrzej’s Polish friends left his bag on the back seat of a car and it only took a few minutes for the window to be smashed and the bag stolen. When he reported the theft to the police, he received a rather harsh admonition that he should not bother them with a mere bag when murders were the daily bread in this area, and that if someone was so stupid as to leave a bag in plain sight inside a car in New York, they only had themselves to blame.

Andrzej himself got a fifty-dollar fine for parking momentarily outside a New York hotel to unload his belongings. When he asked a policeman about the ticket, the officer answered with a smile that Andrzej should throw it into a garbage can, as his car was registered in Virginia. Today, New York is relatively safe, and, as Don Cushman used to say, it is the perfect place to live, provided you have a five-bedroom apartment next to Central Park and two million dollars a year of spare cash to spend.

## PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

The university back home was growing at an unprecedented rate, and managing it remotely was out of the question even with Oktawian’s best efforts. While Andrzej knew his place on earth, he was also reluctant to completely end his career as an international lecturer. From 1995 to 1998, every year, he gave a week-long lecture course at Donau-Universität Krems in Austria. The place was beautifully located among vineyards, whose products he enjoyed, albeit with moderation.

In 1992, Andrzej and his wife moved to a house in Warsaw’s neighborhood of Pyry, where they still reside. They bought a half-finished socialist square building typical of the era, known as the “cube,” and decided to use it as a base for their new home. At the time, the conditions and building

technologies used in single-family houses were not much better than those in the communist times, when the bigger building assignments required payment in dollars. Andrzej left the build solely in his wife's hands. Alicja took her Fiat 126 to the Masurian Lake District to buy wood, drove to Kielce to buy tiles, and visited Warsaw market stalls in search of bathroom fittings. She had to deal with the construction teams, the moody site manager, and the construction supervision authorities. By some miracle, she even managed to provide the building team with meals she picked up every day from the canteen of the neighboring military facility. Staś, one of the builders, stayed with them to this day as an important member of the family. They moved into the new home in August 1992.

“This was an additional stability factor which, like many other things, I owe entirely to my wife. It was thanks to Alicja that I was able to cope with the crazy years of the 1990s by focusing solely on my numerous professional tasks,” Andrzej talks about his wife with gratitude more than fifty years after their wedding.

During his last two visits to Los Angeles, Andrzej taught at the Anderson School's beautiful and luxurious new building outfitted with the newest computer equipment. He was able to teach remotely at the London headquarters of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The interiors of buildings situated almost six thousand miles apart merged into one. The modern UCLA building whetted Andrzej's appetite for better infrastructure at Jagiellońska Street. However, more than twenty years had to pass before this appetite became at least partially satisfied. Why did it take so long? Well, Poland was and still is unable to entertain something that Andrzej witnessed at the office of Dean La Force at the Anderson Graduate School of Management at UCLA.

One day, he was invited to attend a professorial meeting inside a small conference room adjacent to the dean's office. Suddenly, a tall elderly gentleman entered the administrative office, and the dean greeted him effusively after leaving the conference room. Someone mentioned that the gentleman was Mr. Anderson. Andrzej was unable to hide his surprise, unaware that the patron and arguably the main donor to UCLA's business school was still alive. After half an hour or so, Mr. Anderson left, escorted out by the dean, who then smiled widely and showed the professors a cheque for forty mil-

lion dollars he had just received. The money was to cover the start of the construction of a new Anderson School building. Almost the same amount came mainly from alumni, and the students were able to move into their new premises several years later.

In Warsaw, you had to earn money to pay for every brick and every radiator yourself. With one sole exception. In 2003, when the university was implementing an investment to the amount of twenty-five million zlotys, it legally received a four million zloty grant from the Ministry of Education and Sport, then headed by Krystyna Łybacka. She should gain recognition for her courage, as this remains the only case of a government investment grant awarded to this nonpublic higher education institution. The money received at the time rescued the project of constructing a new university building, as this was the final phase and, in view of the numerous cost overruns on the contractor's part, the available funds had simply run out. The campus of the nonpublic Warsaw School of Economics was built in the 1930s entirely with state money; however, such things were no longer possible in the reborn Republic of Poland after 1989.

Andrzej Koźmiński knew that the university had to build its own future itself, and the future had to be anything but mediocre. He did not end his quite successful love affair with California only to end up in some inferior provincial school that no one had ever heard of. The goal was to climb to the very pinnacle of European higher business education, just like the prewar Warsaw School of Economics, and then continue climbing even higher. Andrzej's ambition was at odds with the priorities of the state, private business, and probably also many Polish academics, who see nonpublic universities only as a source of additional income – the easier, the better. Still, all the university's founding fathers and a growing number of young academics and administrative workers shared Andrzej's ambitions. They all saw their future here and, most importantly, believed in it. Many years passed before the Polish academic community stopped seeing them as "lunatics," but this only strengthened their faith in a positive outcome. With each success achieved by the university, Andrzej could always count on the extraordinary effort and commitment of the many people who formed its part. Such a supportive attitude has invariably been incredibly helpful. The strategy to match the world's leading business schools relied on the "seven pillars of wisdom":

1. Maximum student satisfaction.
2. Obtaining full academic accreditation.
3. Internationalization.
4. Research excellence.
5. Development of own research and teaching staff.
6. Efficient management.
7. Cultivating contacts with business practice.

One never achieves these goals in full, but constant attention to their fulfillment gradually enters the institutional DNA. There is no need to formulate guidelines and go over them as part of strategy sessions, as everyone already knows them well. At first, however, this was not so obvious.

In terms of student satisfaction, they had to confront the cultural legacy of state universities, where employees of the so-called student services have always been rude, misleading, abrasive, slow, and overly bureaucratic. Student matters are usually handled in crowded, poorly decorated rooms by frustrated and low-paid staff. The people they initially engaged to work in deans' offices had previously worked at state universities and brought with them this type of work culture. Rector Koźmiński used to explain that it was not him who paid their salaries, but the students. They genuinely thought it was a joke. Andrzej visited the deans' offices every day to oversee their work, often shouting at the employees; today, one would probably speak of mobbing. He also sacked several people, every so often changing the managers in charge of the offices.

Progress went very slowly. What helped was generational change and the increasing use of IT. The credit for this should go to the then vice rector and later rector, Witold Bielecki, who managed to stabilize the management staff in the administration division. Today, student opinion surveys invariably identify the service provided by deans' offices as one of the main strengths of Kozminski University compared to other higher education institutions. Furthermore, an increasing share of these services is moving online. Ensuring positive personal communication, however, continues to be of primary importance.

## ACADEMIC STAFF

A university's essence are its lecturers. They must be able to teach their subjects with passion and have a good rapport with students, but without undue leniency toward those who refuse to learn anything. From the outset, it was necessary to battle the misconception that students of nonpublic universities automatically deserve a pass. Overly lenient examiners needed discipline, while the overly strict ones learned that the exam results should fit into the curve of a standard statistical distribution. Ever since the university opened its doors, students have had the ability to grade their lecturers with the option to formulate their own opinions. There were also some rare instances of lecturers who demonstrated a lack of respect for their students, treating them as worse or less clever than those studying at state universities.

On the whole, the level of teaching proficiency of lecturers at Polish universities remains much lower than in America. In the USA, one sees much more acting and even "prestidigitation." Fortunately, the situation is slowly improving along with generational change. Besides, eminent scholars often make poor lecturers, but academic prestige does not really impress most students. The reverse is also true: people without significant academic achievements sometimes prove to be excellent teachers whom students truly like. All in all, Andrzej succeeded in putting together a solid and loyal crew who gradually became tied to the university through their first and only affiliation. A good working atmosphere turned into a key competitive advantage of Kozminski University. Salaries were slightly higher than at public universities, but the added bonus was the support for academic development, opportunities to participate in foreign scholarships, conferences, and seminars with papers accepted by the organizers, as well as a healthy, amicable atmosphere. No big deal, but this was so different from the feudal customs still prevailing in many schools that virtually everyone whom the university cared about tied themselves to it for the long term as their first and primary place of work.

Andrzej personally ensured that his young academics with doctorates completed at least one longer scholarship at a good Western university, as this typically raised the level of their teaching skills. As time went by, scholarships became less and less financially attractive, so extra money was necessary, if only in the form of paid leave.

## STUDENTS

When discussing student satisfaction, one must consider the specific nature of the population. Kozminski University students are primarily sons and daughters of entrepreneurs and managers. It is not uncommon for them to be the first in their family to pursue higher education. They often lack intellectual habits such as the reverence for books or regular participation in high culture – theater performances, exhibitions, and concerts – but instead have above-average purchasing power. They succumb to the temptations of Warsaw’s *la dolce vita* and yet show considerable ambition.

Another group gathers ambitious students with limited funds who often combine their studies with gainful employment and whose tuition fees are paid by the whole family. These two groups have similar expectations of the teaching staff: they want friendly methods of imparting theoretical knowledge and a large number of case studies taken from business practice. Lecturers who enjoy particularly high esteem are those who can demonstrate their practical achievements in business or public service work. Knowing these student preferences, the university is keen to hire former managers as well as current or former ministers or top-level judges.

The students who studied at Kozminski University in its early years might have indeed been somewhat less capable, and many of them chose paid studies simply because they had not managed to get into public higher education institutions. This has changed over time. The university’s growing prestige made it the first-choice destination for most of those studying there in the 2020s. Before this could happen, however, it was necessary to send off into the world graduates who were perfectly prepared for their careers, ambitious and courageous, and highly motivated to achieve professional success. This endeavor worked a treat, as Kozminski University gave the rebellious souls, with their creativity often stifled by the general education system, their chance to shine. Most of them knew how to take advantage of this opportunity. Observing the achievements of graduates is a source of great satisfaction for Professor Koźmiński. On his initiative, the university recognizes outstanding graduates at the inauguration of each new academic year. Those who have achieved the greatest professional success receive awards and Kozminski Lions statuettes. The heavy object is a copy of Leo the Lion, the sculpture that guards the university’s main entrance.

The lion made its introduction during the twentieth anniversary of Kozminski University as its mascot with a special connection to its patron's name. Sculptor Piotr Grzegorek created the bronze statue of a young lion resting on a globe, and Professor Koźmiński and his wife funded the work. The statue found its home outside the entrance to the building and received a warm welcome. Every person associated with the university sooner or later has a picture taken with Leo. A smaller copy of the statue serves as an award for the best graduates. The idea for a lion as a mascot emerged from a competition held among the students. Initially, they opted for a shark, but when it became apparent that another university had come up with the same idea, the lion gained the most approval.

An important factor in student satisfaction is the university's physical infrastructure and – increasingly – its IT facilities. Due to financial constraints, getting to what is now a small but modern and well-equipped campus was real donkeywork, or rather walking a tightrope over a precipice.

## UNIVERSITY FINANCES

In this first, most difficult phase, the negotiation skills and business contacts – mainly of Oktawian Koczuba and Rector Koźmiński – proved hugely important. The culture of supporting fellow university friends on graduation remained very strong, and decision-making positions in business at the time were dominated by graduates from the Warsaw School of Economics and the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Warsaw. Oktawian and Andrzej could count on the support of both these groups. In difficult situations, their conservative approach to finances proved exceptionally useful. Instead of wasting money on luxuries and over-the-top investments, they consistently invested any excess revenue in the university's development. Such financial decisions seemed obvious and beyond question. As a result, it was possible to expect reasonably certain returns in the future. Rentier temptations were completely inexistent in this environment. This organizational culture has not changed until today.

Importantly, they could always count on the assistance and generosity of the staff. The university's purchase of the neighboring building formed a major investment effort. The former vocational school building at 57 Jagiellońska

Street was to become a brand-new library. Funds were raised not only by the research and teaching staff but also by auxiliary and manual employees. The collected amount reached an impressive one hundred and sixty-seven thousand zlotys – substantial help back in 2001.

However, the university's finances took the biggest hit during the complete conversion of the 57 Jagiellońska Street building, which doubled its volume and connected it to the building at 59 Jagiellońska Street. They had to spend a whopping twenty-five million instead of the forecast twenty million zlotys. Other unexpected developments ensued, such as the need to build a parking lot to obtain an operating certificate. This is when the ministerial grant came in. Unfortunately, the start of the twenty-first century proved challenging for universities in general. At that time, the higher education sector in Poland experienced a sudden drop in enrolment numbers. This decline also had a negative impact on Kozminski University, made worse by this unfavorable period of heightened investment expenses.

A crippling blow was the death of Oktawian Koczuba, their friend but also their “money man.” This was when Andrzej Koźmiński created an advisory body to the rector, known as the Finance Committee. Meeting several times a week under the leadership of chair Bazyli Samojlik, the Finance Committee made regular decisions based on a daily analysis of financial flows. Sometimes, they paid staff wages with a delay. Samojlik, a junior colleague of Andrzej Koźmiński from Professor Wakar's Political Economy Department, and for a period also minister of finance in Zbigniew Messner's government during the twilight years of communist Poland, saved the finances and thus the entire university during the most challenging time. Incidentally, Poland also owes him a debt of gratitude, as he negotiated the country's return to the International Monetary Fund and initiated work on the financial reform plan. The subsequent minister of finance, Andrzej Wróblewski, continued these negotiations and almost brought them to a close even before a change in the regime. The personal risk taken by a friend helped the university obtain the necessary bank guarantees. This is how Kozminski University ultimately entered the road to recovery, although it only regained its solid financial health in full in the final years of Andrzej Koźmiński's rectorship.

The university now had a modern building that guaranteed student satisfaction and enabled further development. First and foremost, this development required overcoming the downward trend in enrolment, which



resulted from poor communication with potential university applicants, the students, and, most importantly, with their families who paid for the studies. For this reason, during the most difficult period, Andrzej Koźmiński commissioned a professional audit concerning communication methods with the public and the development of a new marketing strategy. Contrary to the advice of most of his colleagues, he also doubled the university's promotional budget. Based on a merit-based competitive selection process, Daria Kowalska became the manager of the promotions department. Highly creative and committed, Daria knew how to implement the relevant procedures to increase enrolment. The school introduced the necessary solutions which solved the problem for the long term despite the fact that ten years into her employment at the university, Daria took up painting, married an Australian, and currently lives somewhere in the Antipodes. Sometimes, she sends copies of her increasingly interesting, fabulously colorful paintings, which she has already begun to exhibit and sell on the international art market.

The university's poor financial situation, on the other hand, required a number of challenging and even drastic measures. Forced to reduce costs, they had to cut wages. The rector sought the assistance of the academic staff in this matter. Together with a group of a dozen or so best-paid lecturers, he agreed on a voluntary salary reduction for a period of one year. Andrzej cut his own salary by half. This generated several million zlotys in savings, which provided a necessary safety cushion for more difficult times. The following year saw a return to the former salary level and repayment of the amounts pledged. No interest was paid, but thanks were given. Furthermore, the staff agreed to have the minimum number of teaching hours increased by thirty hours a year.

However, as the costs remained too high, some redundancies became unavoidable. Within a month, Rector Koźmiński personally dismissed around seventy people. This was the most difficult month of his eighteen-year tenure as rector. He dismissed mainly academics whose main employment was elsewhere and administrative workers who did not meet his expectations. The personal toll of these redundancies proved really severe. Not everyone understood that such measures were a necessity. Halina Wasilewska-Trenkner, Andrzej's colleague from the Warsaw School of Economics and former minister of finance, was among those who did understand, so she just said: "Of course, you have to save the university, and that is what matters most!"

Those who stayed on board became a close-knit crew that made it through the storm. That said, they lived through a trauma of sorts, so the university authorities waited more than a decade before they embarked on a new investment offensive. The person to plan and implement this next initiative was the subsequent rector, Witold Bielecki. The project, which matched the budget and the timeframe perfectly, proceeded without any interruptions to teaching, and that was no mean feat.

But this is a story about the shoemaker's son who always goes barefoot himself. While running the most advanced management and finance degree courses, the university itself fell victim to a misinterpretation of the law – and by fault of a celebrated lawyer. The school considered itself exempt from fees for the long-term lease of its plot from the State Treasury and failed to pay them for many years. Together with the accrued interest, a substantial amount had accumulated; moreover, its payment deadline fell at the least opportune moment when every penny mattered. The mayor of Warsaw at the time was Lech Kaczyński. Rector Koźmiński reached out to him to ask for help or, more precisely, to request splitting the payment into installments. He had previously met with the later Polish president when Kaczyński headed the Supreme Audit Office. At that time, they discussed the institution's staff training program, still successfully implemented many years after Kaczyński's departure. When Andrzej visited Lech Kaczyński at Warsaw's City Hall almost five years later, the mayor immediately referred to that meeting as if they had just parted. Kaczyński was the one who initially commissioned a series of training courses for the city officials, and the successive Warsaw authorities continued these courses. Andrzej Koźmiński recalls:

■ *When I asked the mayor why he gave us this contract without the compulsory tender procedure, he replied: "Because I know you will not swindle me." He also responded favorably to our request and instructed the preparation of an appropriate decision. As I know from a reliable source, the officials – in their usual way – slipped him a decision that was disadvantageous to us, hiding it inside a whole folder of other documents waiting for his signature. Alas, their plot failed. The mayor fished out the relevant letter and had it altered in his presence. Only then did he proceed to sign it. We could finally breathe a sigh of relief. At the same time, this small event signified something much bigger: the relevance of trust*

*and reputation in management. This is also one of the many reasons why I keep the late President Lech Kaczyński in grateful memory, even though I was – and still am – far removed from his political views. He had the wisdom to understand and respect these differences. I think this was due to the academic culture with which he was well acquainted.*

By 2019, the university had a state-of-the-art campus on Jagiellońska Street and a stable financial situation thanks to the wise policy of Rector Bielecki. And then came the pandemic of 2020. Thanks to the IT infrastructure development program that had been in place for years, the entire university – which already had more than ten thousand students and nearly five hundred employees – was able to switch to a remote or mixed learning mode literally overnight. Enrolment numbers for the following academic year did not drop and continued to grow.

## POSITION BUILDING

The university founders never doubted that their institution should achieve the highest possible academic status and wide recognition as a research university. Andrzej Koźmiński always opposed the opinion that they could be a prestigious vocational school and that they should only focus on improving their didactic methods. Fortunately, he was able to convince most of his fellow academics of his view, although not all of them, and not at once.

The fulfillment of this ambition required a great deal of effort to satisfy the conditions that the Central Commission for Degrees and Titles places on universities applying for the right to confer degrees in various scientific disciplines. These terms include the employment of a certain number of professors, doctors of science, and doctors specializing in the discipline of the relevant degree. The applicant must also demonstrate evidence of its research activity.

The university expectedly began with undergraduate qualifications but soon augmented them with graduate studies in management, economics, law, and finance. In September 1998, it obtained approval to award the degree of doctor of economics in management as the first nonpublic higher education institution in Poland. Next came doctoral qualifications in

economics, law, finance, and sociology, as well as habilitation qualifications in management, economics, finance, and law. At the start of the twenty-first century, the university was already well equipped with academic credentials despite being less than ten years old. As a key objective of the university's strategy, such credentials gave it a level of prestige that was difficult to challenge and protected it from the accusation – often leveled at nonpublic universities – of parasitizing the knowledge produced at public higher education institutions.

Completing this “armor” was not easy, especially at the beginning. In the professorial bodies that decided on academic entitlements, the ambitions of a nonpublic institution aroused suspicion and even hostility. Indeed, after 1989, the number of nonpublic universities exceeded the number of public higher education institutions; for this reason alone, one could speak of a devaluation of diplomas. Many still considered the word “private entrepreneur” as the equivalent of “speculator” or “wheeler and dealer.” Even today, certain academics at the Polish Academy of Sciences sometimes express such an opinion. Kozminski University makes a conscious effort to also excel against public higher education institutions. In fact, this objective constitutes one of its most important strategic assumptions.

In 1998, the Polish Academy of Sciences elected Professor Andrzej Koźmiński as its member. The entire academic community of Kozminski University worked hard to become a research university and, in doing so, has built itself and the university a solid reputation that is difficult to dispute today. Everyone here understands that they are expected to try harder than others.

## THE LAW SCHOOL

The process of obtaining full academic accreditation in the area of law was a unique experience, especially as they had to brave this very special professional culture inherent to lawyers that is exotic to specialists in management and economics. Andrzej's lawyer friends were the ones to advise him that he should choose law as the university's new field of study. Fed up with the economic illiteracy of lawyers, and especially judges, they suggested a certain blend of legal, economic, financial, and management knowledge.

Thanks to his knowledge of business schools around the world, Andrzej was able to tell that only several of them offered full-time legal studies under one roof as the basis for practicing law, an example being the School of Business at Aarhus University in Denmark. He recalled his own studies at the Warsaw School of Economics, where the eminent lawyer and excellent lecturer Professor Jerzy Wiszniewski taught the bizarre subject known as the Encyclopedia of Law and where the legal community was marginalized. In the end, he concluded that a full-time law degree program could become a significant source of competitive advantage for his young university. With some difficulty, he convinced his colleagues to agree. Oktawian Koczyba saw potential in the idea and, just before his death, took charge of organizing the new program. It was only later that Andrzej became convinced that he had underestimated the importance of cultural differences.

The creator of the College of Law was Professor Cezary Kosikowski, an eminent specialist in financial law with vast experience in legal education. He proposed the original concept of a boutique, diminutive department where students have the opportunity for direct contact with renowned professors. Indeed, Professor Kosikowski succeeded in putting together exactly such an eminent group of lecturers. However, as the public did not perceive Kozminski University as a law school but as a business school, the number of candidates applying to study law was negligible. For the first several years, the College of Law generated a financial deficit; even worse, these years were financially difficult for the university in general. Out of concern for financial sustainability and the clarity of the message regarding the character of the business school, many colleagues suggested closing the course.

The College of Law survived owing to Professor Jolanta Jabłońska-Bonca, who agreed to become its vice rector and dean following much persuasion. Soon after, she successfully stabilized the situation, provided the College of Law with the ability to award doctoral and habilitation qualifications, and gave the law studies a solid reputation that resulted in increased enrolment numbers. Moreover, she helped the legal community to attune itself to the environment of the business school and establish rules of cooperation with economists and management specialists. She also helped them to achieve a certain level of synergy and collaboration, even though lawyers view the world through the prism of legalism and economists through the prism of efficiency. Their language and research methodology remain completely at

odds. And yet, it is possible to work together and implement interdisciplinary projects, although not without problems, misunderstandings, and challenges. The prerequisite is the ability to appreciate and respect other people's individuality.

## INTERNATIONALIZATION

Internationalization was the central focus from the start, ever since the establishment of the International School of Management. Everyone involved in setting up the school and later the university realized the power of globalization, the global determinants applicable to managers and entrepreneurs, as well as the internationalization of business and management processes. History propelled Polish business onto the global stage almost immediately after the birth of Poland's capitalism in 1989. As not everyone was prepared for it, a need arose to supplement people's knowledge and skills and educate individuals ready for new challenges. The starting point had to be an excellent command of the English language. Andrzej Koźmiński used to tell first-year students, as he always lectured to them on the basics of management, that one who does not speak English is not a human being in the twenty-first century. Some got slightly offended but then knuckled down and learned the language. In the university's first years, some newly accepted students had no knowledge of English. That was when Stefan Kwiatkowski came up with the subject known as English Business Terminology, during which he talked in Polish about concepts such as cash flow, management by objectives, or target market. The students highly appreciated these excellent lectures, mostly due to Stefan's unique talents and his perfect preparation. At the end of one class, a student approached him saying that he had bought a car, a Lincoln. As the instructions were in English, he wanted his professor to translate them for him. Such were some students that the university needed to mold into real Europeans. By and large, this task was achieved. Stefan's language class ultimately ended because no one was capable of taking over from him and because the general English proficiency among the young was rapidly improving.

To measure the internationalization of a university, one uses several universal scales: the proportion of foreign students, the proportion of foreign lecturers, the scale of international student and lecturer exchanges (intern-

ships, placements), the number of international accreditations, the position in international rankings, the participation of staff in international research programs, and the number of publications in high-impact international journals. The university tackled all these aspects of internationalization simultaneously and with great intensity. The entire management team accepted internationalization as the university's strategic objective, and the academic staff added it to their list of personal, ambitious goals.

Initially, the axis of internationalization was the English Track, namely a bachelor's and then a master's program taught in English by Polish and foreign lecturers to both Polish and foreign students. Words of praise should go to the first head of this project, Professor Dorota Dobija. The program she created began to attract also foreign students from around the world. Today, only thirty percent of all the participants in the English-language studies are Poles. The rest form a multicultural mix of people from all over the world, among whom the largest group has always been the Ukrainians, closest to Poland in terms of geography. Then, there are representatives of as many as seventy different countries from all corners of the globe.

Professor Koźmiński recalls meeting an older couple of Native Peruvians who once waited for him outside the rectorate dressed in traditional clothes. He found out that they came to visit their son studying at Kozminski University and wanted to thank the rector for such a wonderful educational institution. Their son explained that he had searched online for a European business university. When he compared the international rankings and the reputation of various institutions with the tuition fees and cost of living locally, Kozminski University came out on top, so he decided to travel to Poland. He was not disappointed. Andrzej can recall many similar situations.

As a rector, he formulated a strategic goal at the outset: the university was to have fifty percent of Poles and fifty percent of students from abroad across the board. At first, the lecturers were quite doubtful about this objective. Meanwhile, on the eve of the pandemic in 2019, they approached forty percent of foreign students, getting closer to their goal step by step, year by year. The target still applies and looks increasingly realistic. Over time, people stopped laughing at Andrzej Koźmiński's dreams.

The internationalization of lecturers proved slightly more difficult. While it was relatively easy to invite visiting professors to teach in Poland – especially when Poland was “fashionable” despite quite meager earnings on

offer – employing foreigners on permanent contracts has always been much more problematic. The reason for this is not only money but also, and perhaps most importantly, the lack of established English-speaking scientific communities conducting joint research and engaging in debates. Foreigners working in Poland become isolated on the margins of Polish academic life if they fail to master the Polish language, which is a considerable undertaking. This situation certainly works to Poland's disadvantage when compared to Scandinavian countries, France, or Germany, where international scientific teams work in English.

## THE GUESTS

Rector Koźmiński, and later his successors, always endeavored to maintain good relations with the representatives of the Republic of Poland's authorities and elites. Successive Polish presidents visited the university, including Wojciech Jaruzelski and Bronisław Komorowski. Some, like Lech Kaczyński or Lech Wałęsa, paid several visits. Somehow, only President Andrzej Duda has never made it.

Lech Wałęsa was invited on several occasions to international conferences held at the university, where he usually attracted a great deal of attention in contrast to Polish events. A special memory concerns Aleksander Kwaśniewski's visit on the occasion of the EFMD annual conference in 2000. The president first answered questions from the floor in English and then gave a prepared speech, which, as he announced, had to be in Polish according to protocol. He asked about the interpreter, who was not present. On the spur of the moment, Andrzej volunteered, saving the situation by conducting thirty minutes of simultaneous interpreting. The president occasionally interjected to offer his own version of individual terms. Kozminski University also hosted many prime ministers, ministers, and ambassadors.

The list of international guests and visiting professors is also very long and equally impressive. Professor Grzegorz Kołodko and his personal contacts played an important role in organizing these visits. Other notable guests include several Nobel prize winners. Robert Mundell was the first and immediately agreed to become a member of the Scientific Council of the TIGER research center headed by Kołodko. He met Andrzej Koźmiński on a number of



occasions, and they always enjoyed interesting conversations. During one talk, Mundell tried to convince him that Poland should become a hereditary monarchy. Why? “Because it could at least partially protect Poland from making the wrong choices.” Mundell, or more specifically, his concept of an optimum currency area, is credited with “fathering” the eurozone. However, Mundell believed that Europe’s currency union lacked much in terms of an optimum currency area, primarily due to the lack of a unified fiscal policy.

Event organizers used to record, transcribe, and publish Mundell’s lectures. Authorization of publications was more problematic, because Mundell lived with his wife and young son – they visited Poland as a family – in Italy, in a small village near Siena. Their Renaissance villa was called Palazzo Mundell. The Nobel prize winner did not use email, only a fax machine on occasion. The story went that his favorite dog transported his traditional mail home from the village post office, often losing some items on the way. The butler answering the phone in Palazzo Mundell spoke only Italian and did not react to any other languages. Luckily, Andrzej Koźmiński communicated with the butler in Italian, which enabled the authorization of several texts.

Douglas North, another Nobel laureate, received a very special welcome at Kozminski University. When Andrzej was living and teaching in the States between 1986 and 1987, during Reagan’s second term, the country was going through the Iran–Contra scandal involving the illegal sale of arms to Iran and equally illegal covert operations to finance the Nicaraguan Contras, an anti-Sandinista rebel group. The whole affair’s organizer was Colonel Oliver North, who gave extensive evidence to the Congressional Committee. The media at the time broadcast his statements around the clock. Andrzej must have encoded it somewhere on a hard drive in his head and officially welcomed Professor Oliver North to the university! Fortunately, the guest took no offence.

Other notable guests at the university included Justin Lin, China’s most celebrated economist and the then chief economist of the World Bank, Stanley Fischer, Mario Nuti, Jacob Frenkel, Edmund Phelps (Nobel laureate), and many other distinguished guests who never said no to Professor Kołodko.

Robert Aumann, who won a Nobel Prize for his application of mathematical game theory to economics, is an Orthodox Jew. Before Aumann’s first visit to Kozminski University, Andrzej discovered that Warsaw did not even have one single strictly kosher restaurant where the scholar could dine. This presented a real problem. Professor Kołodko’s wife studied many thick tomes

and purchased a special set of pots and pans before welcoming the professor into their home. Thanks to the rabbi's kindness, the guests ate a genuinely kosher meal on the premises of the yeshiva, the rabbinical school, located on Dzika Street. And to think that before the war, Warsaw was the world capital of Jewish cuisine! Andrzej remembered one thought from Aumann's lecture: *incentives explain all*. He often thinks about this statement.

A special memory indirectly involves Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber Stambler, who played host to university representatives on the occasion of Aumann's visit. The memory concerns a debate on Jan Tomasz Gross's book *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne*, organized in 2000 at Kozminski University. This publication is widely known as highly controversial. No university wanted to host the debate and the book's author. The university's promotions department agreed without consulting with the rector, presumably unaware of the wider context of the case. The challenge had to be met. They invited a group of distinguished panelists, such as Professors Barbara Skarga and Marcin Kula, while Andrzej Koźmiński assumed the difficult role of moderator. With everyone anxious about the unpredictable behavior of various nationalist groups, the university hired a strong contingent of private security guards as a deterrent. The interconnected auditoria were bursting at the seams, with around six hundred people in attendance, which included nationalists wielding banners. Fortunately, the academic tone of the discussion had a calming effect, and no major incidents ensued. After a while, the bored young flag-wavers left the auditoria under the watchful eye of security and decided to express their feelings outside the university, in front of television cameras and several police cars. Fortunately, everything ended peacefully. Despite several emotional voices from the floor, the discussion was interesting, as the author addressed historians' allegations in detail. Rabbi Stambler and several other rabbis took seats in the front row. Kozminski University passed the test by demonstrating high standards of academic debate and openness to tackling difficult topics.

Edward Prescott, a Nobel laureate from 2004 and one of several most cited economists in the world, was a member of the university's International Corporate Advisory Board from 2009 until his death in 2022. On several occasions, he personally attended the Board's meetings and gave lectures. In 2018, Prescott received an honorary doctorate from Kozminski University. He was a surprisingly modest man, expecting no royalties or special luxuries.

## THE ELITE GROUP

The process of internationalization depends on the university's international accreditations and standings in rankings, which open the way to the world's elite business schools. Accreditations and rankings are what matters most to the more demanding applicants and the more ambitious staff members. Andrzej Koźmiński knew this from the start and convinced other executives that it was necessary to strive for prestigious accreditations instead of feeling satisfied with the university's good standing only in Polish rankings. With time, the entire management accepted his reasoning.

The size and dynamics of the domestic market in the early 1990s were surprisingly deceptive factors. Private establishments achieved high enrolment numbers without too much effort. Candidates were flocking to nonpublic business schools, perhaps to avoid the congested public higher education institutions that had stringent admission requirements. Few realized at the time that this situation would soon end. First of all, the demographic projections were clear: the number of students graduating from high schools was to halve by the end of the century. Second, the quality of teaching at most nonpublic universities remained poor or even tragic. Once the first graduates entered the labor market, the cat would surely be out of the bag. The reputation of all nonpublic universities, also those ambitious, would be immediately destroyed.

The only way to avoid both these catastrophes was international recognition in the form of accreditations and rankings that would validate the high standard and quality of education. The primary purpose of international recognition was to facilitate the recruitment of larger and more diverse groups of international students. However, such recognition would also have benefited the university's ability to stand out in the Polish market. Investing in such a strategy was risky, and some of the staff preferred to enjoy the fruits of this temporary prosperity without worrying about the future. Countless public and nonpublic higher education institutions chose this path too. During one meeting of the university's senate, a prominent economist said that they should feel satisfied with their position as one of the top six economic universities in Poland, because this was enough. Andrzej was highly allergic to such statements and to the lack of ambition shown by some of his

colleagues. However, as the leader, he decided on the final destination. Such an unambiguous and hard line imposed by the top management soon proved to pay off as Kozminski University began to sail into open international waters. Moreover, the school consolidated its position as one of Poland's top economic higher education institutions.

The starting point for the race for international laurels was the university's active presence in foreign business school associations. Andrzej Koźmiński made sure to secure the school's presence in this category from the very outset. When UCLA delegated him to the AACSB conference, he had the opportunity to participate in a debate on the internationalization of this typically American organization. He also joined a task force of several people which was to prepare relevant recommendations, meeting for this purpose in San Francisco. Subsequently, he took part in several AACSB events, but this time on behalf of the Polish university. Andrzej continued to assess his chances of obtaining this particular accreditation. However, due to the AACSB's unambiguous US-centrism, he concluded that he first needed to focus on European accreditations. In the end, the AACSB accreditation found its way to the university's collection only in 2011, which was the last year of Andrzej Koźmiński's rectorship. He saw it as his crowning achievement.

At the start of the 1990s, Andrzej became involved with the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), with its headquarters in Brussels. He was invited there as a representative of the "new Europe" while still serving as director of the International Management Center of the University of Warsaw, and by force of momentum, these contacts continued. Besides, Kozminski University had very few, if any, competitors from Poland, as Polish universities were completely uninterested in internationalization in the early 1990s.

The EFMD was planning to launch a European accreditation system for business schools similar to that of the American AACSB, hoping to strengthen its international standing. This was when Andrzej Koźmiński and Stefan Kwiatkowski came up with the crazy idea to try to obtain this accreditation as part of the first group of leading European higher education institutions. The belief that they would succeed seemed sheer audacity or even madness: they were a small nonpublic school in a postcommunist country, with just one graduating class, and located in a former factory building on the outskirts of Warsaw. It was Professor Stefan Kwiatkowski who achieved the impossi-

ble. He flew to Brussels and invited the director of Accreditation Services, a slightly stiff British gentleman, to dinner. Although the restaurant bill was enormous, the dinner had the desired effect. They were now admitted to the accreditation procedure!

That was when the real work began. Everyone, without exception, was involved in preparing – or rather directing – the accreditation team’s visit. The documentation was perfectly prepared and awaiting inspection inside the base room. All the paperwork was in English and the people the inspectors spoke to, namely students, graduates, and administrative employees, were all fluent in the language. On the whole, the visit seemed to have gone swimmingly; however, its course did not determine the outcome. Before voting, the Awarding Body engaged in a long and fiery debate that was anything but unanimous. The discussion took place as part of the annual EFMD conference in Edinburgh, which Andrzej Koźmiński attended as a member of this association. Having to wait outside for the voting result, as was the custom in Scotland, Andrzej paid a visit to several pubs, because the discussion of the Polish case lasted almost two hours. Finally, in 1999, EQUIS accredited Kozminski University as the sixteenth business school in Europe and the only one in the former “socialist camp.” This first EQUIS accreditation was a conditional one, given for a period of three years. Since that time, Kozminski University has had a long-standing tradition of close cooperation with the EFMD and its director general, Eric Cornuel, the man behind the tide of European management education successfully competing with the American model. In 2024, Eric Cornuel became honorary doctor of Kozminski University.

This was how they made a quantum leap into the small and elite circle of top European business schools. It was an enormous achievement. Those residing in the West often refused to believe that a Polish university would have EQUIS accreditation, so they frantically sought validation on EFMD websites. This was only one of the numerous indignities that the university had to endure with sheer doggedness. In any event, things seemed no better in Poland. For the first few years, nobody knew what EQUIS was, what it meant, or what accreditations were all about. Everyone wanted to know the cost and wondered why a nonpublic university would need this when no public education institution had such a thing. Surely, the accreditation also served as a marketing gimmick. From that moment on, Kozminski University underwent the accreditation fever every three years, and after obtaining the full

accreditation, every five years. One could think that the whole procedure was a great nuisance. Meanwhile, from one accreditation to the next and from one self-assessment report to the next, the university was improving dynamically and functioning seamlessly thanks to procedures tried and tested abroad. Not just the management but the whole team learned to “position” the university strategically using a longer-term perspective against the backdrop of Poland, Europe, and the world.

The process of drafting self-assessment reports brought to light all the weak points – such as alumni relations – which necessitated seeking appropriate solutions. Moreover, the school was better aware of its own competitive advantages, such as becoming the first-choice university for the young generation of the emerging Polish middle class. First and foremost, however, it became better equipped to undergo the processes of institutionalization and formalization that always accompany the quantitative development of any organization. The university implemented procedures similar to those used by other leading European business schools and gradually started to resemble its original role models. As Rector Bielecki used to say later, they no longer had to “paint the grass green” before each accreditation visit and pretend to be better than they actually were.

The experience gained during the subsequent EQUIS cycles came in useful when Kozminski University applied for the British accreditation of its MBA – AMBA programs and the American AACSB accreditation. They encountered some problems with the latter because, at the time of applying, the Americans had just implemented a complex system known as the “assurance of learning,” which consisted of measuring the effects of education. Fortunately, the university succeeded in mastering the system, and everything went smoothly in the end. Although everyone complained a little about the “American bureaucracy” during the process, their efforts paid off as the quality of teaching visibly improved. This system was later simplified and employed as part of the EQUIS accreditation. Afterwards, subsequent accreditation procedures went smoothly, always used as an opportunity for a general review of the entire organization to further its development.

In 2011, Andrzej Koźmiński stepped down as the rector, handing over to his successors a university that held “three crowns,” namely the most important international accreditations awarded to business schools. Today, the domestic market also appreciates the path to internationalization through



KOZMINSKI UNIVERSITY IS THE FLAGSHIP OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN POLAND.

accreditation, and Kozminski University plays the role of an expert in the field. “In the days of our first accreditations, they saw us as someone who had bought a feathered headgear and attempted to go to church wearing it,” Andrzej admits, laughing.

## A MISSION IN THE EAST

In the early 1990s, an idea emerged to launch an MBA program in Russian. After incredibly protracted and complicated negotiations, the university obtained a letter of commitment of sorts to organize such a program jointly with the Lomonosov Moscow State University, which was a guarantee of its prestige in Russia. Unfortunately, when it came to agreeing on the diploma template, nothing could proceed without the consent of the rector, Viktor Antonovich Sadovnichiy. Continuously holding office since the Soviet times, Sadovnichiy is a fervent supporter of Russia’s war on Ukraine, just like the majority of Russian rectors. Witold Bielecki, responsible for MBA programs, performed miracles to meet this “relic,” but to no avail. Therefore, due to the lack of a suitable Russian partner, Kozminski University ultimately abandoned the project.

They had more luck with the nonpublic Moscow Academy of Economics and Law, at least at the stage of preliminary agreements. Cooperation with Moscow was to encompass exchanges of students and lecturers and the joint publication of several scientific books. The Russian partners enjoyed coming to Poland, where they still had contacts with the Pułtusk Academy of Humanities, while Polish professors also visited Moscow several times. The Soviet mentality survived in Moscow unscathed; perhaps the only change was the addition of ardent and sincere worship of money, which replaced the completely insincere worship of communist ideology. Visits to Moscow were celebrated in true Soviet style – with excessive consumption of alcohol.

Invited to the official inauguration of the academic year at Kozminski University, the guests from Moscow experienced an enormous culture shock on seeing the president of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski, attending the celebrations. In his well-prepared speech, President Komorowski carefully listed all of the university’s international accreditations, alongside its top placements in various rankings. The rector at the time was Professor Witold



Bielecki, who flippantly said something to this effect: “I can see that student Komorowski has done his homework and knows exactly which university he is visiting.” As the speech went on, the Russian guests’ faces grew increasingly paler. Such an unceremonious remark addressed to the country’s president at a large public gathering was something they could not comprehend. From that moment on, they treated Bielecki with pious respect. As the president only smiled slightly at such a statement and chose not to put the rector behind bars, Bielecki must have been someone very important. Or perhaps they simply concluded that Poland was already a “failed state.”

Rector Bielecki successfully performed solid and useful work in Belarus. In the mid-1990s, the university began to implement its own MBA program together with the Minsk Institute for Privatization and Management. It ran for a dozen or so years and produced graduates who represent a hope for the country’s return to the civilized world, which will surely happen once Alexander Lukashenko’s regime falls. That said, these graduates would have to avoid incarceration in the first place. Initially, an American foundation provided financial support, but when that funding ran out, the project successfully switched to self-funding, targeting the Belarusian middle class. Crucially, the program took advantage of all the accreditations awarded to Kozminski University, as it was identical to the one conducted in Warsaw. Moreover, the staff consisted of Polish lecturers and carefully selected academics from Belarus, while some classes took place in Warsaw at Kozminski University’s campus. Representatives of EQUIS and AMBA even paid a visit to Minsk to check the quality of teaching. Professor Bielecki treated this project personally as a civilizing mission of sorts. In effect, this was a form of public diplomacy in the field of education. Unfortunately, the program had to be discontinued after 2021, following tighter restrictions and the regime’s closure of their Belarusian partner. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022 made the situation even worse; however, Professor Bielecki hopes that the MBA program will return to Minsk one day. For the time being, fellow Belarussian lecturers have found protection from Lukashenko’s repressions in Poland and got jobs at Kozminski University.

A vital dimension of internationalization entails being an active member of international business school organizations. Such participation enables educational institutions to get a better idea of the latest trends and the market, and to establish valuable contacts. Andrzej Koźmiński’s activities in

America were limited to the aforementioned AACSB task force, and Kozminski University still has a rather passive approach to the States, focusing on Europe instead. Andrzej was a member of the EFMD's board for two consecutive terms (1995–2001) and a member of the Awarding Body for the subsequent two (2002–2008). These roles involved monthly trips, but at least Andrzej knew what was happening in Brussels, and he also established numerous interesting contacts. The Awarding Body was a typical, slightly capricious professorial entity, so discussions over accreditations of individual universities were both thorough and lively. Sometimes, the Awarding Body rejected a peer review report and altered its conclusions, for the most part to the candidate's detriment. Those meetings taught Andrzej which pitfalls to avoid. Of course, whenever the discussion concerned Kozminski University's accreditations, he would leave the room and wait outside. At times, the wait seemed excessively long, and he did not take that well. In such situation, the formation of alliances between smaller groups of universities, especially those that could not yet count on partnerships with global or European leaders, became a factor of crucial importance. Andrzej was involved in the formation of such alliances with the French *École Supérieure de Commerce* in Nantes (later Audencia Nantes), under the leadership of the dynamic Dean Aïssa Dermouche, and with the Spanish EADA of Barcelona, managed by David Parcerisas. By supporting other schools and holding joint research projects and conferences, Kozminski University gradually raised its status within the EFMD. Around the same time, the university started competing in the *Financial Times* rankings. Currently, Kozminski University is among those representing the solid top league of European business schools. The Premier League remains out of reach but provides a challenge for the future.

The alliance with Nantes slowly lost intensity after the departure of Aïssa, who took a prestigious state post: he became prefect of one of France's prefectures. In that role, Aïssa was the target of terrorist bombings on three separate occasions. Unexplained to this day, the attacks left him severely injured, and for this reason, Aïssa currently serves as an honorary prefect. In consequence, another French higher educational institution to become the Polish university's strategic partner was ESCP Business School. Founded in 1819 as the first business school in Europe, it has campuses in Berlin,

London, Madrid, Paris, Turin, and Warsaw at Kozminski University. ESCP Business School enjoys the status of a top global business university and one of Europe's finest. Andrzej Koźmiński has memories of the school from his first visits to Paris in the 1960s, and there is also the honorary doctorate he was incredibly proud to receive, with the commendation highly respected in the European business school community.

Andrzej was also one of the founders and long-term (1993–2005) vice president of the Central and East European Management Development Association (CEEMAN). The organization has always been – and continues to be – dominated by Danica Purg, head of the International Executive Development Center (IEDC) headquartered in Bled, Slovenia. Danica stands behind the great success of this institution, beautifully located among the mountains overlooking a lake. Attracting students and trainees from all over the world, especially wealthy Europeans, the school relies almost exclusively on external staff sourced from top European schools: IMD, IESE, and LBS. Their professors have worked with the IEDC for many years, and together, they create a unique atmosphere attractive to students and lecturers alike. The school operates in two small, modern buildings with stunning views of the lake; they house a permanent exhibition of modern art. The IEDC has an ongoing collaboration with world-renowned conductor and violinist Miha Pogačnik, who specializes in teaching communication and leadership through music. For obvious reasons, this first-class enclave of elegance cannot receive any valuable academic accreditation reserved for fully staffed universities engaged in research. Unfortunately, to Andrzej's regret, the EFMD and CEEMAN remain separate instead of providing a common platform for pan-European cooperation.

In Slovenia, Andrzej once spent a week's holiday with his wife. They both marveled at the beauty of this miniature country, its culture, and its prosperity. In their opinion, Slovenia was the crown jewel of former Yugoslavia and the hidden treasure of Europe. They hired a car and drove to the mountains and the coast in Piran, and from there continued to Trieste. The couple also enjoyed the friendly hospitality of Danica Purg. In 2015, during Andrzej's stay in hospital due to a serious health scare, Danica called him every day. Andrzej still remembers her phone calls with gratitude. "I consider her a 'comrade in arms,'" he admits.

## CELEBRATED ALUMNI OF KOZMINSKI UNIVERSITY

Andrzej Koźmiński's objective was to create favorable conditions for the development of science at his university. He wanted to build his own scientific school but never seemed to have enough time. A growing group of scholars successfully developing their international careers at Kozminski University had similar ambitions.

Bogdan Wawrzyniak, an empirical researcher and author of numerous publications still frequently cited today, regrettably ceased his scientific work many years ago. The community will remember him as the organizer of the annual national conference "Management Report," whose reactivation sadly proved impossible. He also put together the first doctoral studies, later becoming the supervisor of Jan Dąbrowski, the first doctoral student in the university's history, with nearly three hundred others to follow.

Wojciech Gasparski was a student of the eminent Polish philosopher and methodologist Tadeusz Kotarbiński, a follower of his work, and an outstanding representative of the Polish praxeological school in the science of organization and management. For many years, Gasparski published successive volumes on praxeology under the auspices of the American publishing house Transaction Publishers in the form of yearbooks entitled *Praxiology: The International Annual of Practical Philosophy and Methodology*. The series comprised as many as thirty titles. On this account, Gasparski received the Prime Minister's Award.

Together with Tadeusz Pszczołowski, also a student of Kotarbiński, and later with Witold Kieżun, another student and continuator of Kotarbiński's praxeological concept of good work, Gasparski set up and for many years ran the nationwide seminar "Critical Organization Theory," whose name we owe to Professor Monika Kostera. The seminar retained a vital position in Polish management science for many years. Another achievement to Wojciech Gasparski's credit is the establishment of Poland's first Business Ethics Center at Kozminski University, initially in collaboration with the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences. It was thanks to Gasparski that in 2014, already under Rector Witold Bielecki, the university played host to the World Congress of Business Ethics.

Such large-scale international events serve to increase the university's academic prestige and strengthen its international position. As the rector of

a still relatively unknown higher education institution, Andrzej Koźmiński found it more difficult to apply to host such important scientific meetings. Still, already in 1997, thanks to Monika Kostera's contacts, they organized the first Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism, attended by numerous eminent representatives of postmodern trends in management. In 2000, Kozminski University hosted the annual EFMD conference. Andrzej came up with an optimistic motto for this event: "One Europe, One World," which today sounds like a grim joke. When the university gained further accreditations, strengthened its position in international rankings, and secured better international recognition, organization of major international conferences finally became possible.

To build a reputation, the university needed genuine luminaries – scholars from the very pinnacle of Poland's rankings. A considerable achievement was hiring Professor Grzegorz Kołodko – a former deputy prime minister and minister of finance at the time (in 2000). Without interrupting his tenure at the university, Kołodko returned to his post in 2002–2003. He initiated a research center with the distinctive acronym TIGER, which stands for Transformation, Integration, and Globalization Economic Research. TIGER and its head continue to pursue scientific activity with extraordinary intensity. Dozens of scientific conferences and symposia have taken place under this brand, often with the participation of Nobel Prize winners. There have been publications in Polish, English, and other languages. Kołodko is a public figure, actively engaging in media activities. Still, he emphasizes his links to Kozminski University with admirable loyalty. Both in Poland and abroad, he is considered "Kozminski's luminary," a star of an international research university.

The university itself has witnessed the emergence of several research centers which one can describe as scientific schools at different stages of development. Here are several examples. A group of psychologists and mathematicians have gathered around Professor Tadeusz Tyszka, practicing empirical behavioral economics as the first researchers in Poland. The group issues the highly valued periodical *Decyzje* (Decisions). Moreover, they publish extensively in international high-impact journals. After long-standing and renewed placements at leading American universities, two of Andrzej Koźmiński's outstanding doctoral students – currently professors – are in the process of building their own schools with international connections. Dariusz Jemielniak focuses on the increasing impact of new information

technologies on organizations, society, and management, while Dominika Latusek-Jurczak studies the issue of trust in society and management. Professor Aleksandra Przegalińska-Skierkowska is one of the leading experts in artificial intelligence worldwide, closely cooperating with top American universities.

After an impressive career at one of the top five consulting firms, Professor Jerzy Cieřlik focused his research on entrepreneurship. In doing so, Cieřlik made a reference to the university's particularly valuable achievement: the work that Stefan Kwiatkowski and his team conducted on intellectual entrepreneurship. Kwiatkowski was a pioneer on a global scale. He introduced the concept of intellectual entrepreneurship to the Department of Intellectual Entrepreneurship, which he headed and which emerged in 1998 under the auspices of UNESCO. Furthermore, Kwiatkowski launched a series of international seminars and studies on this topic. These efforts led to fundamental theoretical work and the series *Knowledge Caf  for Intellectual Entrepreneurship* published in English. The series comprises six publications coedited by Kwiatkowski and his Swedish collaborator, scholar Leif Edvinsson. All these volumes were carefully prepared by the university's own publishing house. Regrettably, their distribution remained limited, and few scholars have heard of these valuable publications. This is the reason why Kozminski University currently publishes its books and other works in cooperation with renowned professional publishers providing marketing support.

## PUBLICATIONS

Over the years of working at foreign universities, Andrzej Koźmiński discovered that what really counted was almost exclusively the academic output published abroad in English. This scholarly work determines the international standing of individual scholars and the institutions that employ them. Therefore, he has always encouraged his academic staff, especially junior scholars, to publish in English in the highest-ranking journals and through reputable publishers. This consistently applied policy is yielding results today. The rector awards special cash prizes for such publications.

A group of junior academics has successfully mastered the rules of this "peer-reviewed journals" game. One cannot swim against the tide, and the

“game” has a decisive effect on the international standing of individual researchers and the university as a globally recognized research center. Nonetheless, one must admit that this system is absurdly inefficient, extremely unfair, and detrimental both to individuals practicing science and to science itself. First, many years – two, three, or even five! – pass from manuscript submission to the eventual publication. One can accept this fact if the text is not anchored in a specific time – which is problematic in management – but what is worse is that the manuscript loses any clear meaning and message after successive amendments. Individual reviewers insist on including the works of their respective communities, and so a subpar hybrid comes into being. Second, publishers refuse to accept articles from certain postal addresses at all, on the assumption that “savages” can write nothing interesting. One of Andrzej’s assistants once got a telling comment in an article compiled from research conducted in Poland: “Who cares about Poland?” There is no question that linguistic editing of a text proves essential. Reviewers always require, first and foremost, that the work presented display strong grounding in the existing literature. In the simplest terms, this means that in the economic, social, and management sciences, no innovative or original concept can appear in print. As a result, some areas of knowledge, such as contemporary management science, are becoming a wasteland where nothing intellectually original has grown for a long time.

The listed disadvantages of the peer review system are no revelation. In fact, they have been common knowledge for quite some time. Despite all this, chances for a change remain incredibly slim. The system perpetuates the existing hierarchy of prestige of research centers and their associated journals, exclusively benefiting the strongest and the most influential groups. The peer review system reinforces the selectivity and elitism of certain research centers; for example, the acceptance rate of submitted publications lingers at a startling level of four percent. The odds against new players of higher categories appearing on the playing board are high. Even worse, nobody is liable for the submissions’ acceptance or rejection, as everything is collegial and anonymous. Scholars who want to stay active and advance have no choice but to abide by the system’s constraints.

The progress of young researchers has always had a direct link with ongoing studies. In the first phase of existence, Kozminski University’s compet-

itive advantage came from eminent professors with an established position in Polish science. It goes without saying that the university employed very strong research personnel from the outset. However, the leadership remained fully aware that this was a temporary advantage. Professors have always been expected to build a scientific environment and raise worthy successors in addition to their teaching responsibilities. Then, the university provided those potential successors with optimal conditions for rapid academic advancement and attaining subsequent degrees, including professorships. Such policy has yielded good results.

The award system for publications dates back to Rector Koźmiński's days and has undergone consistent expansion and enrichment ever since. Kozminski University has nurtured a group of its own professors, dozens of doctors of science, and hundreds of doctoral graduates who have evolved here and feel connected to this place. At his university alone, Professor Koźmiński has personally promoted three professors, two doctors (with habilitation), and Ph.D. holders who continue to work here. Such individuals are the most valuable assets.

## CLOSE TO BUSINESS

Almost from the birth of Polish capitalism, Professor Koźmiński has acted as either a member or chair of supervisory boards in companies or important committees, such as the personnel committee. This work gave him an insight into the management mechanisms of these enterprises. He became aware of practical challenges and learned how to solve them while having the ability to assess the solutions' effectiveness. Andrzej also met business people and established useful contacts. By doing so, he followed in the footsteps of his father, who was heavily involved in business before and after the war. Leon Koźmiński believed that economists working in microeconomics or management should not lose direct ties to economic practice; otherwise, they would be unable to respond to its needs. In Andrzej's case, this relationship with the practical side of business had a varied impact on the university's management, its curricula, and especially the range of postgraduate courses, training workshops, and conferences. His successors, Rectors Bielecki and Mazurek, have continued this policy with considerable success.



Since its inception, the university has achieved a significant share of revenue and margins through various forms of postgraduate education. Andrzej Koźmiński's close links to the practical aspects of economy increased brand recognition through the identity of his and the university's name – both among potential postgraduate students and parents making study choices for their children. Such brand awareness made recruitment much easier. Moreover, the practical business environment provided the university with many valuable lecturers. Kozminski University's faculty staff consists of theoretical and practical researchers, both current and former. Classes taught by practitioners invariably enjoy high esteem and are an important source of competitive advantage for the university. The founder's active participation in business practice, and his knowledge of the mechanisms and – most importantly – people had a positive impact also on the purely business aspects of the university's operation. Professor Koźmiński explains:

■ *Of course, I do not intend to give away any boardroom secrets, nor do I intend to spread gossip or anecdotes whose protagonists are easy to identify. The list of companies on whose supervisory boards I have served – I hate the word “sat,” as it essentially implies parasitism on the company's organism – is not very long, but it includes several major players in the automotive, furniture, telecommunications, banking, and IT industries, all of them one hundred percent private. In my opinion, this is a solid representation of key areas of the economy. My list does not include a single company of the State Treasury, where they give you money “for nothing,” and you just “sit” on the board. Most are companies with a dominant share of foreign capital. Based on my experience of more than thirty years, I feel tempted to formulate several prerequisites for the success of such enterprises. In negative terms, one can also describe them as the seven deadly sins to avoid:*

1. *Communication must utilize a shared language platform, which is the English language.*
2. *One needs to reach unequivocal agreement on aspects of mutual trust and control between nationals and foreigners. These aspects must not change without mutual consent.*
3. *Mutual empathy and respect are a must. Negative stereotypes kill companies.*

4. *The supervisory board must consist of independent and competent members who can exercise a genuine supervisory and control function and have a discussion with the management on equal footing. A professional audit committee is particularly important. Figureheads only destroy businesses. The supervisory board's composition should change in tune with a reasonable cadence.*
5. *The supervisory board should exercise genuine oversight over the processes for filling board positions based on professional criteria. The quality of management is an essential element of success.*
6. *One should avoid drastic differences in salaries and any additional benefits between foreigners and nationals.*
7. *The flow of information and documents between the head office abroad and the subsidiary in Poland must not delay decision-making.*

*Most companies of this type commit all or some of these sins to some extent. The ones that sin excessively sustain enormous losses and, ultimately, must leave the market humiliated, while others continue to achieve success.*

While he was still rector, Andrzej Koźmiński initiated a debate among the university's management staff on whether postgraduate studies should be left to the grassroots initiatives of scientific teams and departments, or whether the school should centralize the management of such activities and entrust them to a single specialized unit. Citing his American experience gained at UCLA, Andrzej advocated the latter solution, which eventually took shape as the Center for Postgraduate Education. The Center has successfully operated over the years under various names, most recently as Kozminski Executive Business School. Its first head was Witold Bielecki, succeeded by Dr. Sylwia Hałas-Dej. The unit organizes subsequent editions of MBA programs, conferences, and short training courses, as well as annual, semester, and shorter postgraduate programs. These programs and courses bring in more than thirty percent of annual revenues and a bigger share of the margin. The management – or rather the school's excellent head, Sylwia Hałas-Dej, who has held this position for many years – has always pursued a consistent and coherent competition policy in regard to price, product, quality, brand, and other aspects. The market for training and postgraduate

studies proves exceptionally difficult because it is teeming with both Polish and international consulting and training companies and universities. Enjoying a solid position on the Polish market in this area, Kozminski University is looking forward to conquering the much more advantageous but also more challenging European market.

## A PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL

Professor Andrzej Koźmiński is a well-known public figure. His acceptance of this role stemmed from the natural and stimulated media interest in the university and its achievements, as well as his personal writing and public appearances, most often linked to his role as rector. The starting point of Andrzej's activity on the public forum was his conviction that the position of rector satisfies his ambitions completely and definitively and is not a "stage," "springboard," or "rung" to another career. As a consequence, Andrzej unequivocally and exclusively subordinated all his actions to the university's interests. He always tried to stay away from all types of "waiting rooms" and conscription places for high-ranking positions.

On one occasion, Andrzej was unofficially offered the portfolio of minister of science and higher education in the government of a prime minister he knew personally and respected, and with whom he had a good relationship. On merit, it was a strong government – and, for this very reason, it was politically weak. Even though Andrzej knew the answer immediately, he customarily asked for twenty-four hours to consider the proposal. What prevented him from accepting the post was the fact that the university was dealing with a financial crisis while undergoing restructuring and redundancy proceedings. A captain does not abandon his ship in such circumstances. Moreover, to the best of his knowledge of how ministries operate, Andrzej felt that accepting the post of minister would not enable him to help the university in any way while maintaining standards of decency, likely causing harm instead. He knew that ministers usually have the least say within a ministry. Furthermore, for all his sympathy for the then prime minister, Andrzej did not predict a long life for his government and, therefore, saw no prospect of implementing any meaningful project. After twenty-four hours, he called to make his decision known. The price of refusal was not high: the slightly

strained relations expressed in the fact that a previously valued acquaintance stopped addressing Andrzej by his first name.

At the invitation of the then deputy prime minister and minister of finance, Professor Grzegorz Kołodko, Andrzej Koźmiński became a member of the Economic and Social Strategy Council in 1995. This quite large body mainly comprised professors of economic and social sciences with a whole range of alternative views. Fortunately, this diversity proved to be the council's greatest strength. Professor Jan Mujżel chaired the sessions with impressive civility, while Elżbieta Mączyńska, future president of the Polish Economic Society, organized the council's work with great energy and efficacy. Meetings took place regularly, about once a month, in the building of the Office of the Council of Ministers located on Ujazdów Avenue, with a press conference ending each session. All papers and discussions appeared in print.

Those were still the days of rationalism in socioeconomic policy, which gradually gave way to political struggle, or squabble, to be more exact. Especially at the outset, members of the government participated in the experts' deliberations; however, over time, they did so less frequently, less willingly, and at lower levels. The reason behind this noticeable drop in interest might have been the realization that substantive knowledge does not determine success in politics. The council addressed key aspects of socioeconomic policy, both general and those needing immediate attention. Andrzej Koźmiński prepared an article entitled "What capitalism? Exemplary trends and avenues in politics." He participated quite regularly and willingly in these debates, which were lively, interesting, and seemed to have some relevance. Regrettably, the council was unceremoniously disbanded in 2006 during the reign of the first Law and Justice government, when Jarosław Kaczyński became prime minister.

Andrzej had some hopes for the return of substantive debate to the political echelons with the establishment of the National Development Council, founded in 2010 by President Lech Kaczyński, whose meetings he attended. The discussions were engaging, and the president himself was an active participant. It all came to a standstill after the Smolensk air disaster in April 2010.

When he was still mayor of Warsaw, Lech Kaczyński and his wife, Maria, attended the opening of the library at Kozminski University. Amusingly, Warsaw's mayor had to resort to borrowing a tie from his driver. On several occasions, Andrzej too was a guest at various meetings that Lech Kaczyński or-

ganized at the Belvedere and the Presidential Palace. His attendance stemmed from his membership in the Council for Education and Scientific Research, established by the President of the Republic of Poland. Other debates Andrzej attended related to the implementation of the Lustration Act at higher education institutions, which generated strong resistance among scholars. The president understood the dilemmas of the academic community, to which he belonged as a professor of law, and often emphasized this; at the same time, he believed that lustration was necessary. He once cited the following case to support his argument: “Professor Koźmiński built his career in communist Poland, for example, and he did not cooperate with the communists.”

All those who knew the president were aware of his dedication to checking the facts he used in his work. Perhaps that was the reason why he provided Andrzej with selfless expressions of sympathy on numerous occasions. Spotting him among the crowds filling a philharmonic foyer, the president once approached Andrzej and greeted him cordially. On November 11, 2009, Andrzej was attending an official event at the Presidential Palace, standing among a group of rectors. Lech Kaczyński approached Andrzej, they exchanged civilities, and the president then said: “If I lose the elections next year, I will be reporting for work at your university, rector.” That was the last conversation they had, with Lech Kaczyński dying in the Smolensk air disaster on April 10, 2010. Professor Koźmiński took part in a fifteen-minute honorary vigil next to the president’s coffin at the Presidential Palace. “Especially in recent years, I think about the void he left on the Polish political and public stage,” Andrzej admits.

Due to his position as a rector, Andrzej has participated in various collegial rector groups, such as the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP). The conference is a type of club or association that successive ministers treat as the universities’ representation. CRASP admitted Kozminski University as the first nonpublic university after it gained the ability to award doctoral degrees. Still, even when Kozminski University had five doctoral and four habilitation qualifications, Andrzej – who himself was a professor and member of the Polish Academy of Sciences – felt that he was a second-class citizen, a “private entrepreneur” in this group. Nonetheless, you simply had to be there, attend the ceremonies, rituals, lunches, dinners, and sessions invariably devoted to “problems of higher education,” maintain contacts, and strive for credibility in the academic community.

However, Andrzej soon lost any illusions that his university could have any real influence and be treated as an “equal among equals.” He recalls a meeting of the CRASP Presidium in Rogów, in a forest belonging to the Warsaw University of Life Sciences. At the time, Andrzej chaired a group of anxious nonpublic universities. A minister in the first Law and Justice government outlined a bill that would have been fatal to nonpublic universities. The bill proposed that these schools pay a bond into an interest-free account to cover the costs of their liquidation. Andrzej protested – and he was the only one to do so. From that moment on, he never felt safe in this environment despite knowing that he had to play his role within it. Fortunately, the Law and Justice government soon saw its final days, and the bill never left the ministry.

In 1997–2001, Andrzej was the president of a short-lived structure known as the Convention of Nonpublic Universities at the Ministry of National Education. The intention was to develop a platform between nonpublic universities and the authorities, and possibly provide some form of state funding for this type of higher education. Alas, all these efforts proved futile, not least because of the firm resistance of state universities. The latter argued that any support for nonpublic higher education institutions would become possible only after state universities had all their needs fully met, which would be... never. And so the Convention of Nonpublic Universities departed into obscurity.

As the rector of a university frequently discussed in conversations and written commentaries due to its success in international rankings, but also as a scholar and active researcher, Andrzej Koźmiński considered himself a public intellectual. As the name suggests, public intellectuals have the privilege and duty to explain the world and its dynamics to the public – to give forecasts, reflections, and warnings. Despite his other responsibilities, Andrzej tried to fulfill this role with considerable dedication. He believed that it was both public service and promotion of the university, its name, and its achievements. Over the years, he has regularly published columns in the opinion-forming daily newspaper *Rzeczpospolita* and analytical articles for *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna*. He gave hundreds of interviews, both on the radio and television, and even tried to publish a blog on the Salon24 portal for several months. However, he gave up the blog when he realized that the responses to his texts were generating written reactions from various political crackpots.

Andrzej published two volumes containing his columns, but their moderate sales precluded the publication of subsequent collections. In 2004, Andrzej traveled to Zakopane in the company of his friend, the eminent sociologist Piotr Sztompka. While in Zakopane, Dariusz Jemielniak and Henryk Buliński helped them record several dozen hours of conversation, or rather debate, on the topic of Polish transformation. The recording served as the basis for *A Conversation About the Great Transformation*, published by Kozminski University. The book describes how Polish society and economy dealt with the crucial period of transition. Since the date of its publication, it has regrettably lost much of its relevance. The likely reason is that nobody wanted to remember the details of this difficult transition once Poland happily landed in the free world of democracy and the open market and, soon after, in the European Union. Poland was already living a new reality and facing new challenges.

## EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT

Higher education institutions, especially in Europe, do not serve as models of efficient management. On the contrary, they typically face charges regarding inefficient use of resources, formalism, bureaucratization, and ritualism bordering on the ridiculous, as well as lack of respect for young academics, whom they treat as “subjects” and not as clients or even less as partners. Other accusations raised against universities, unfortunately not without reason, relate to nepotism, favoritism, feudal relations, and, more recently, discrimination against women and minorities, bullying, and sexual harassment.

Professor Koźmiński has spent a lifetime in academia and believes that there is quite a lot of truth in these allegations. The original sin remains the inefficient, incompetent, unprofessional, and, in extreme cases, parasitic management of these institutions. To some extent, this stems from the democratic principles that Poland adopted in regard to elected administrative functions. In essence, these principles prevent university leaders from violating the interests of the powerful pressure groups of their subordinates, which means that the leaders have no possibility to implement changes and reforms. Especially in large centers, outstanding leaders overcome these constraints

by skillfully playing off certain interest groups against other collectives. However, these are lengthy and complex processes, difficult to condense into two terms of office. Therefore, universities are struggling to adapt to the changing environment, even when managed by outstanding leaders. And the latter is by no means a prevalent situation.

The founders of Kozminski University agreed from the start that their management school would operate according to the tenets of art they themselves taught. Their overriding rule stated that individuals should fulfill – or not fulfill – specific functions according to their performance. Consequently, individual performance indicators needed measurement, at least intuitively, while academic roles required separation from administrative and management functions. Someone who failed in organizational or managerial tasks simply returned to their academic duties without any resentment. Such an approach prevented conflicts on this topic. At the same time, the university witnessed the gradual formation of a group of professional managers who oversaw various processes with noticeable efficiency. The processes included student services, research administration, foreign cooperation, and database administration. In consequence, their research activity became less intensive with time. However, this marks a natural phenomenon where academic lecturers and researchers transform into professional administrators. The professionalization of university management is a process overseen by the rector.

A crucial element of Kozminski University's organizational culture is the powerful authority of the rector, who takes full responsibility for the entire school's performance. The rector is appointed by the Board of Trustees after consultation with the university's senate and can be dismissed in the same way. To ensure the continuity of the programs and processes in place at the university, the previous rector is both president and chair of the Board of Trustees. The rector's subordinates – whether vice rectors, office directors, or program managers – do not have authority in their own right; instead, they rely on the revocable delegation of authority granted by the rector. Academic customs and organizational culture both dictate that the rector should consult the academic community before making any important decisions. By way of example, such informal advisory bodies to the rector of Kozminski University include the Finance Committee in financial matters and program councils for individual types of study in curriculum matters. Many advisory



bodies emerge on an ad hoc basis for specific issues, without unnecessary bureaucracy. The rector makes all the final decisions – and takes the ultimate responsibility. Although the rector does consider the advisory bodies' recommendations, their advice is not binding.

Such a structure keeps decision-making processes short and unambiguous. As a result, the university can ensure rapid and flexible responses to changes in the external environment (educational and scientific market, legal system) and the internal environment (staff, students). Importantly, such considerable power necessitates the rector to “feel” the academic community's prevailing mood as well as its hopes and fears. This requires constant, personal, and direct contact with all the groups, both staff and students. That is why the rector cannot completely abandon giving regular lectures or participating in postgraduate studies. Therefore, the model of a “flying rector,” who focuses solely on external – particularly foreign – relations, and the model of a “chief fundraiser,” who constantly seeks external sources of funding, are both inadmissible. The rector should know how to do it all but in the right proportions. The right individual must be versatile and able to cope well with diversity while never forgetting the university's core values. During his rector's tenure, Andrzej Koźmiński promoted the idea of “management by wandering around” to always stay close to the matters at hand.

Professor Witold Bielecki was at first Andrzej's deputy and then vice rector, taking over as rector for nine years in 2011. He has done plenty to modernize the academy and equip the management system with professional tools. Information technology has played an exceptionally important role in that process in terms of hardware, software, human skills, and operational habits. The management support systems in place made the university “anti-fragile,” as Nassim Taleb would put it – for instance, in the confrontation with the COVID-19 pandemic, when the school proved able to switch quickly and efficiently, virtually overnight, to a completely remote system of tutoring and administrative operation. Professor Grzegorz Mazurek, who became rector when Professor Bielecki's term ended in 2021, has ensured further progress in this area by moving IT systems and databases to the cloud. Rector Bielecki brought a culture of project management to the university's organizational structure. Such measures resulted in the major renovation and redevelopment of the campus buildings in 2018–2019. Moreover, Professor Bielecki

tried to instill the idea of turquoise management based on self-organization among his employees. Although it takes time to see the ultimate results, efficient management remains one of the university's main sources of competitive advantage.

## SUCCESSION

Sometime in the middle of the first decade of this century, Andrzej Koźmiński realized that the game he played simultaneously on many different chessboards had to come to an end: he needed to leave the post of rector. The post gave him great enjoyment, lots of adrenaline, delight with the university's achievements, a sense of agency and fulfillment, unforgettable meetings, contacts, and experiences. However, as a specialist in organization and management, he knew that entrepreneurial organizations need a succession mechanism allowing the first boss – in office for a very long time – to calmly hand over the authority to a designated successor. Furthermore, Andrzej recognized that this was a crucial moment when failure could have undone all the work performed to date.

Fortunately, everyone at the university knew that Professor Witold Bielecki would become Andrzej's successor. He had served as vice rector for several terms, independently managing important areas such as postgraduate studies and university administration. They were partners back in the days of martial law at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Management, where Bielecki served as vice dean and Andrzej as dean. They had complete trust in each other, which neither of them ever abused. Witold Bielecki was a key co-author of the university's strategy and governance mechanisms. For this reason, there was no danger that he would deviate from the chosen course. Furthermore, he had plenty of skills and talents that Andrzej lacked: he could manage projects brilliantly and had developed his very own management style. Only the transition date remained to be set.

Professor Koźmiński's seventieth birthday served as a good opportunity to perform the succession formality. In the process, a new academic custom and a norm of the university's organizational culture took shape: after the age of seventy, individuals could no longer hold leadership positions. Simultaneously establishing another important tradition, Andrzej took on the role x



*SAINT-GERMAIN FOREST* BY JÓZEF CZAPSKI.  
A SMALL AREA ILLUMINATED BY LIGHT IS VISIBLE AMONG THE TREES...

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Professor Koźmiński's seventieth birthday served as a good opportunity to perform the succession formality. In the process, a new academic custom and a norm of the university's organizational culture took shape: after the age of seventy, individuals could no longer hold leadership positions. Simultaneously establishing another important tradition, Andrzej took on the role of president and chair of the Board of Trustees. Such a succession procedure guaranteed continuity. The school successfully repeated the whole process at the end of Professor Bielecki's second rector's tenure, when Grzegorz Mazurek became rector, and Bielecki became president and chair of the Board of Trustees.

Bielecki's two terms in office, lasting a total of nine years, produced excellent results. All the achievements of Kozminski University were nurtured and developed with numerous new elements introduced for good measure: turquoise management style, project management, thoroughly renewed infrastructure, and IT systems in university management. The succession procedure proved seamless, and the university's DNA strengthened and consolidated. Now, Andrzej not only could but also had to find himself another focus. But what would it be?

He found the solution in art, or more precisely in Józef Czapski, whose painting *Saint-Germain Forest* hangs opposite his favorite armchair. The painting has its own history, as the idea for its creation was born during Czapski's stay in the Soviet Gulag. The painter decided that on his release, he would paint hope. The image shows the intense, vibrant green of a forest with a small, bright area in the center. Looking at the painting, Andrzej tried deciding on what he considered to be the bright area in his life. The answer he came up with was science and research work. And that was what he decided to pursue in the time he had remaining.

# RELOADED

Professor Koźmiński's farewell after eighteen years in his post was ceremonious and touching. There were several carefully organized banquets in both smaller and larger groups, including one at the famous Myslewicki Palace in the Royal Łazienki gardens, where the first Sino-American negotiations had taken place in the 1950s, and at the no less famous Sobański Palace on Ujazdów Avenue, the home of Polish "big business" and the headquarters of the Polish Business Roundtable. Andrzej received three gifts that he considered particularly precious:

- a painting by Edward Dwurnik produced specially for the occasion. Entitled *Koźmiński's Warsaw*, the piece contains references to important events in Andrzej's life linked to Warsaw;
- an illustrated booklet entitled *Koźmiński: A Retrospective* published in several copies. The work comprises Andrzej's favorite sayings and jokes, painstakingly collected by Mirka Łukasiewicz, Daria Kowalska, and Agata Stępień. Andrzej reaches for the book in moments of sadness and can attest that it works;
- a book containing extensive interviews in which he took part with people important to him, collected and compiled by Ewa Barlik. Among them were friends who passed away over the past decade: Witek Kieżun, Grzegorz Domański, and Andrzej Zawisłak.

For the last publication, Andrzej came up with the title *Reloaded*, as it was supposed to be short and effective. As a matter of fact, the book's title is not entirely appropriate, because the interviews mostly relate to the past.

Andrzej's aim, however, was to highlight their focus on the future. He did not know how to do anything different from what he had done before. But he was certain that he needed to step down as rector so that the university did not die with him. Thanks to the inspiration he found in Józef Czapski, Andrzej decided to reload himself as a scholar.

Research work was very well suited to reactivation, because Andrzej had not conducted empirical research for a long time despite never stopping his academic and publication work, dedicating all his free weekends to these activities. He decided that from that moment on, he would publish only articles based on the results of his own research, perhaps with the exception of some journalistic or commentary pieces. Aware that valuable empirical work could only take place in teams, he knew that he would either have to build a team or join one.

Having reviewed his previous scientific works, Andrzej decided to focus on three areas:

- economic imagination;
- leadership;
- social and economic equilibrium.

By making this choice, he once again joined current interdisciplinary research. His decision materialized in the establishment of the Interdisciplinary Center at Kozminski University, which was to provide a platform for cooperation between researchers conducting projects on the “boundary” of disciplines. Anna Baczyńska became the center's deputy director. Her energy and ingenuity stood behind the success of this unit, which has produced an entire series of meetings, seminars, and conferences conducted within interdisciplinary groups of scholars and participants and in empirical research. The center's structure is essentially virtual, stimulating the implementation of research projects, seminars, and conferences.

## POLES' ECONOMIC IMAGINATION

Andrzej first came across the concept of economic imagination during his first or second year of sociology studies, which would have been in 1958–1959. This was the time of sociology reactivation at the University of War-

saw in the wake of Gomulka's thaw, and all the international luminaries of sociology were making obligatory pilgrimages to Warsaw to pay homage to Mr. and Mrs. Ossowski and catch a glimpse of the discipline that had emerged in socialist Poland like a phoenix from the ashes. One of these guests was the famous left-wing sociologist Charles Wright Mills, who dedicated his lecture to his newly (1959) published book *The Sociological Imagination*.

Andrzej Koźmiński became fascinated by the concept of studying human consciousness as an intermediary between social reality and human behavior. Already at that time, he decided to focus his interest on society's perceptions of the economy and its governing mechanisms. Importantly, in the decades that followed, few scholars were willing to tackle this specific area of interest. Economic sociology developed rather sluggishly and lacked an empirically grounded behavioral perspective. Sociologists were not overly interested in economics, while economists had limited interest in sociology – and this was one of the main reasons for the weakness of both disciplines. Andrzej Koźmiński returned to this concept during the breakthrough year of 1980 in his commentary book *After the Great Shock*, in which he identified the role and direction of economic imagination's transformation as an important factor in the ongoing revolution. However, these considerations lacked support by empirical research.

The opportunity to fill this gap came more than thirty years later thanks to a grant from the National Science Centre and the collaboration with a group of sociologists from Kozminski University. The group's leader was a colleague of Andrzej's from his sociology studies: Krzysztof Zagórski, long-time director of the Centre for Public Opinion Research and probably Poland's most experienced researcher of large populations' opinions and attitudes. Commissioned by Kozminski University and in accordance with a suggested questionnaire, in April 2012, the Centre for Public Opinion Research conducted a survey on a representative sample of the Polish adult population. Stratified sampling was used to create a sample of 1,001 individuals. Certain questions reappeared in later surveys conducted with similar samples in 2012–2014. The results made their way into numerous publications, both scientific and commentary.

An in-depth statistical analysis of the data produced a surprising view of socialist social consciousness in a capitalist country. Here are several examples. The survey showed overwhelming support for state interventionism. As many as 51% of those surveyed felt that the government should set

wages, and 65% wanted the government to reduce the income gap between people. Similarly, almost 40% thought that the government's role was setting the prices of goods and services. As many as 66% declared that it should be up to the government to provide job opportunities for everyone, while 93% said that the government should actually be creating such opportunities for everyone. By comparison, 54% advocated that the government should assist failing private enterprises, 80% believed that it should financially support agricultural production with concessions, subsidies, and low-cost loans, and more than 90% declared that the government should grant low-cost loans or apply tax exemptions for people setting up new business ventures. Finally, 61% of those surveyed believed that banks must only be state-owned, while 82% said the same of power plants, 72% of railways and 77% of mines. Another surprise was that 22% of respondents would only want state retail. This absurd idea pops up from time to time in political debate and even in forecasted government activities. The survey also uncovered powerful distrust of foreign capital: as many as 54% of the respondents postulated that those in power should not allow foreign concerns to buy Polish companies. The distrust soon materialized in practice, when the subsequent government actually bought back some companies from foreign owners.

Although some of these views exist in the public domain of many Western democracies, what was striking was the colossal gap – or rather abyss – between the state of public consciousness and the free-market ideology and rhetoric of the government in power at the time. The book outlining the research on economic imagination appeared in the election year 2015. Thereafter, Andrzej was invited to meet the prime minister's team of advisers. Bringing his book with him, Andrzej tried to draw attention to this gap in awareness and communication that existed between the public and those in power and its potential electoral consequences, but no one listened to him. During the 2008–2010 crisis, Poland was the only country in Europe that did not record a drop in GDP, so everyone felt entranced by this success story and the political preference polls that favored the relevant parties. The chairman of the team amicably inquired about managerial education and probably placed the book he received at the back of a shelf, where perhaps it has been gathering dust to this day. However, a more likely scenario is that the successive tenants of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland threw the book away many years ago.



In the scientific world, the publication generated negligible response among sociologists and economists alike. Sociologists did not read the book because they considered it economic, and economists because they considered it sociological. The citation of economic publications entails no reward in the promotion proceedings of sociologists; by analogy, the citation of sociological works brings no benefits to economists looking to advance their academic careers. The blind leading the lame. Meanwhile, without empirical sociology, economics is blind and deaf – as is sociology, which fails to understand the nature of societal games unless it takes economics into account.

Interestingly, the electoral program of the Law and Justice party at the time included virtually all the elements identified by Koźmiński's team. Even now, the party occasionally mentions a state retail trade system. After all, irrespective of the proposal's absurdity, one does not sniff at 20% of the electorate, and nobody remembers the Stalinist "battle for trade" of the late 1940s anymore. These conclusions lead Andrzej to a sad confession as the study's author:

■ *I doubt that our research was the source of inspiration, although I do not rule out that certain advisers to the opposition of the time read a book ignored by the ruling party. It is probable that they also conducted their own research and surveys, which helped them diagnose the state of public consciousness and use it politically. This ability – and its complete lack in the opponents, who have no idea what is happening – has continued to be the primary source of the electoral success of the Law and Justice party (in 2015).*

Returning to the world of empirical sociology and working with a wonderful team of friends was a valuable experience for Andrzej, although he finds it difficult to speak of satisfaction. The attempt to reactivate the category of economic imagination on both an academic and practical level ended in complete failure. The research attracted no users, followers, or even commentators. "To put it simply: we did a lot of solid work that nobody needed," concludes the professor.

## BOUNDED LEADERSHIP

The reactivation of leadership research proved slightly more fortunate. This particular subject matter has been close to Andrzej Koźmiński since the start

of his academic career, when he dedicated his master's thesis to directors. However, he could not answer the two key questions: what leadership is, and what determines its strength, efficiency, and effectiveness. Moreover, he has always detested the false promises intended to fool the naive: "Buy a book, sign up for a course, attend a webinar, join a university, and we will make you a great leader for the right amount of money, one that is ready to appear on the cover of a glossy magazine." Thinking "better late than never," Andrzej decided to find out for himself the genuine nature of this matter.

The research consisted of in-depth interviews with twenty-nine prominent leaders from the world of politics (two presidents, two prime ministers, and two deputy prime ministers), business, the arts, science, religion, the army, and sport. After all, the study focused on the broad understanding of leadership in different areas of life. Andrzej conducted and recorded all the interviews himself. The data were fully anonymized, so the book presenting the research findings does not quote anyone by name or even in a way that could help identify the respondents. For this reason, one can assume that the answers given during the interviews are frank and unrestrained. Due to the confidentiality promised to the respondents, the book's author also analyzed and compiled the results himself. He was amazed by the huge variation in the strength of the leadership. On the ten-point scale created for this study, the highest scorers achieved 9.37 and 9.17, while the lowest scorers obtained 3.54 and 4.97. The median was around 6.6. Of course, no one has ever seen or will ever see the personalized results of this particular ranking.

The study demonstrated that the leader's role is much more defensive than it might seem. First and foremost, leaders must overcome increasingly stronger and more numerous restrictions. The strength of leadership or the ability to implement the overarching mission depends on how effective leaders are in overcoming obstacles and pushing themselves amidst multiple constraints. Andrzej named his concept bounded leadership theory. He did so by applying the key concept of limited rationality – formulated by one of his masters, Herbert Simon – to leadership. On presenting his findings to the respondents in the form of a book, he found that they considered the term included in the title neither flattering nor agreeable. "What do you mean: am I limited?" asked one respondent with evident resentment. They would probably prefer to see themselves on the proverbial white horse that leaps gracefully over all the obstacles it encounters. This is the prevailing spirit

of managerial mythology contained in beautifully published books with re-touched photos on their covers. The guy who says that the white horses have ended up at the slaughterhouse and learning to ride them is of little use is certainly not welcome.

On the other hand, Andrzej succeeded in getting two researchers interested in the concept: Anna Baczyńska and Paweł Korzyński. They might have felt captivated by the concept's simplicity, its ability to explain reality and provide an answer to the question: why? As part of the Interdisciplinary Center, they secured two research grants to expand the population of leaders under analysis to include middle management in Poland and several other countries. The research analyzed the concept of bounded leadership against the theoretical background of social sciences. The broader empirical database made it possible to attract researchers from partner universities, also from abroad, and to prepare several articles together for international scientific journals. Nonetheless, the bounded leadership theory probably remains the only contemporary theory originating from a management science workshop of Polish scholars. There is also the hope for translating this new approach into a new system of developing leadership competencies to provide practitioners with genuine help.

The opportunity to look at leadership in a new and different way took the form of a lecture Andrzej Koźmiński gave in February 2022 at the University of Warsaw on the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate. Influenced by the spirit of the times, Andrzej decided to title the lecture "Leadership in the Time of Cholera," paraphrasing the title of Gabriel García Márquez's famous novel. He also found inspiration in Albert Camus's *The Plague*. In the book's protagonist, the humble Dr. Rieux, Andrzej discovered the archetype of a new type of leadership: distributed, set within a network, ideologically and situationally motivated, unselfish, based on personal sacrifice, elusive, changeable over time, and continuously appearing and disappearing like a will-o'-the-wisp. Such understanding of leadership enables its identification in seemingly leaderless structures such as Occupy Wall Street, the Yellow Vests Protests, or the Polish Women's Strike.

Andrzej concluded his lecture, delivered in the Senate Room of the University of Warsaw on February 22, 2022 by saying that for the time being, Poland had not yet seen this new type of distributed leadership probably because the real plague had not yet arrived. It did, however, arrive several

days later as the Russian invasion of Ukraine started. At that point, Poland witnessed tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Polish Dr. Rieuxs organizing aid networks for almost two million Ukrainian refugees with astonishing effectiveness and efficiency. They quietly replaced the haughty dignitaries who should have taken the lead in this crucial matter.

Between 2022 and 2023, Andrzej Koźmiński and Paweł Korzyński conducted dozens of remote interviews with the heads of Polish start-up companies that have achieved some success, mostly in the international market. Interestingly, many of these leaders represented the new distributed leadership model. The authors are working on generalizing these results and on a theoretical model of distributed leadership.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUILIBRIUM

The concept of organizational equilibrium, which failed to make a breakthrough in 1989 due to historical events, always stayed at the back of Andrzej's mind. Central to this concept is the notion of functional equilibrium, derived from cybernetics, as a prerequisite for the system's controllability, namely its ability to respond to the impulses of the control center. At one end of the controllability continuum would be the "disciplined" organizations, efficiently carrying out their management's objectives, and at the other, the "anarchic" entities incapable of coordinated action. Neither extreme seems advisable; moreover, the equilibrium can and should change over time depending on the circumstances.

Equilibrium can be measured using a whole range of indicators. In their publication from 1989, Andrzej Koźmiński and Krzysztof Obłój limited the scope of the equilibrium concept to the microscale of individual organizations. As part of the reactivation research conducted more than thirty years later, Andrzej set himself a more ambitious goal and decided to relate the concept of functional equilibrium to national economies. He secured the involvement of an interdisciplinary team of researchers consisting of Adam Noga (economist), Krzysztof Zagórski (sociologist and empiricist), and Katarzyna Piotrowska (psychologist and statistician). The economist Serhii Druchyn assisted in the analysis of the indicators and participated in the discussion of the results.

The team distinguished four dimensions of equilibrium:

- external economic, describing the relationship between the national economy and the external economic environment – imports, exports, foreign investments, exchange rates, and interest rates on government bonds;
- internal economic, describing the economy’s functioning and efficiency – the unemployment rate, GDP growth, public debt, and accumulation;
- social expectations, describing people’s predictions and aspirations for the future on aspects such as their own and the country’s economic situation, the labor market, and business expectations;
- current social situation – the birth rate, marriage rate, expenditure on healthcare, social welfare, education, and science, infant mortality, risk of poverty, and household equipment.

The researchers identified a total of 45 such indicators using publicly available international databases for the period 1999–2017. On this basis, they developed four indicators for the aspects of equilibrium mentioned above. The overall Balanced Development Index (BDI) is the arithmetic average of these four dimensions, and can be calculated for various periods, countries, and groups of countries. The researchers started with Poland and then expanded their study to include the European member countries of the OECD. The BDI enables the assessment of the functioning of the socioeconomic system to the fullest possible complexity and explains its dynamics through interdisciplinary sociological and economic analyses.

Using the results of the BDI study and its detailed indicators, the researchers ranked the 22 European OECD member states along two axes: the dependence of the economic situation on external conditions in the previous year (independence axis) and the correlation between social expectations in the previous year and the current economic situation (emotionality axis). The intersection of these two axes allowed the team to distinguish four groups of countries: independent rational, independent emotional, dependent rational, and dependent emotional. The period under review demonstrated the increasing role of emotions (politics) in the functioning processes of economies. Emotions are increasingly determining economic fluctuations, and the group of emotional countries continues to expand. The researchers identified

interesting dependencies between the BDI and characteristic features of the political environment: political radicalism and the rule of law.

An analysis of the BDI dynamics in Poland showed that despite favorable economic conditions, both external and internal, the emotional level of social aspirations can violate the system's functional balance and push it toward political populism. In other words, emotions may foster the subordination of the society's and the state's functioning to the satisfaction of continuously expanding aspirations, which those in power often arouse deliberately to increase the support they receive.

The team worked on the Balanced Development Index for many years. They began in 2013, first publishing results for Poland and later for a group of twenty-two countries. Articles on this topic appeared in *Ekonomista* and as commentary pieces in *Rzeczpospolita*, in addition to various post-conference materials published in Polish and English. However, the response remained limited. Understanding and assessing this concept – also on a methodological level – requires some intellectual effort and goodwill. These difficulties increase further given the interdisciplinary nature of the concept, its theoretical underpinnings, and the literature cited. Not everyone is willing to make such an investment. Simplifying the matter, the environment erroneously regarded the BDI as yet another indicator going beyond GDP to measure prosperity. Perhaps this explains why the team had trouble securing grants, and so Kozminski University has funded – and continues to fund – the BDI research. International journals rejected articles on the subject due to the sin of originality. The situation changed slightly after Springer released an English-language publication in 2020. This work led to some citations and mentions in the international literature. The results are still to come while the scholars continue to prepare further studies.

The international publication of the BDI concept had almost the same amount of bad luck as the 1989 book on organizational equilibrium. It took place in the spring of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic was emerging as the world's leading topic. The unfortunate editing of the book's title made the matters even worse: the title points to a narrowing understanding of the concept as oriented solely on another indicator's structure. Still, the work on the BDI, its determinants, consequences, and various applications continues. Reloading is underway.

## TAKING THE BITTER WITH THE SWEET

During the reloading phase, Andrzej experienced an amusing and instructive repetition of an unsuccessful adventure he had with the dialogue book which he once wrote with Piotr Sztompka and, before that, with Andrzej Zawisłak. After 2015, Grzegorz Kołodko began to use his numerous publications to promote the interesting concept of new pragmatism as an eclectic and flexible socioeconomic policy pursuing a wide range of objectives exceeding GDP growth in the conditions of globalization. At the same time, in 2016, *The Economist* proclaimed the notion of new nationalism a political trend and an aggressive mentality that questions the benefits of globalization and transnational cooperation for the common good that surpasses the interests of collectivities known as nations. New pragmatism and new nationalism seemed contradictory concepts.

Koźmiński and Kołodko decided to expand their discussion on this topic in the form of a book addressed to a wider audience. They chose to do their work inside a beautiful palace surrounded by a park in Radziejowice. With the assistance of editor Ewa Barlik, they recorded several dozen hours of conversations, debates, and sometimes arguments. The recordings served to create a book of 269 pages with the title appropriate to its content: *New Pragmatism versus New Nationalism*. The book appeared in 2017, released by the Prószyński publishing house. Kołodko has long collaborated with that publisher with excellent results, as many of his books have become genuine bestsellers. Koźmiński's name proved unlucky: the work recorded poor sales and induced only one – and rather brief – review.

However, the reloading process has also enjoyed some success, mainly due to the exceptionally friendly environment at Kozminski University. Mutual friendliness and affection, as well as solid and committed cooperation, remain fundamental features of the university's organizational culture. This is probably an exception among Polish universities, which often see fierce factional fighting, with a mixture of politics, personal interests, and ambitions as the background. Such infighting hardly happens at Kozminski University, not least because it remains a consistently apolitical university that focuses on mutual respect for differences in opinion.

Andrzej Koźmiński's reloading continues with varying degrees of luck, in tune with the saying "You win some, you lose some."





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ANDRZEJ K. KOŹMIŃSKI:

## WHAT REALLY MATTERS?

It is no small feat to write an ending to a story that spans more than eighty years and features you as the main protagonist. Attempting to solve this problem, I decided to identify the factors that have determined the course of my story. To do this, I will strive to answer the popular question: “What really matters?”

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First and foremost, I am a child of history. I have lived my life mentally mostly in Poland, as I have always considered Poland my point of reference. My life has encompassed several distinct historical eras: the Second World War and the occupation, the Warsaw Uprising, postwar reconstruction, Stalinism, the Polish October 1956, the Gomułka era, the December of 1970, the Gierek decade, the “first Solidarity,” martial law and the 1980s, the “great transition” of 1989, the building of liberal democracy within the EU, and finally the so-called “good change” agenda implemented by the Law and Justice party after 2015. Each of these eras had its own singular internal and international circumstances and brought different sets of opportunities and threats to the protagonist of this story. Locomotives of history crushed my projects on several occasions, with entirely new opportunities and perspectives suddenly opening before me. Today, I would struggle to say which of these periods shaped me the most, but in all likelihood, it would be the war I experienced as a child and its aftermath. Yes, I am a child of war who knows that you have to survive and behave in a way that is “expected of you.” This is precisely why

I ardently support Poland's membership in the European Union and NATO. I know that only being a part of a community can ensure Poland's security. This risk has become particularly pertinent after Russia's attack on Ukraine.

Public consciousness tends to blur the differences between separate historical stages. For example, the period of the Polish People's Republic is often presented as a homogeneous entity, a "black hole," but the Poland of the 1940s varied greatly from that of the 1950s, and the 1960s were a different beast altogether. I became acutely aware of this as a child of the Second World War, a beneficiary of the 1960s transformation resulting from the Polish October 1956, a Fulbright scholar in the 1970s, or a member of the University of Warsaw community trying to resist the repressions of martial law in the 1980s. Crucially, each of these decades provided me with brand-new challenges, new value systems, new positive and negative leaders, and even different languages or at least different meanings attributed to words. I know how to keep things in proportion, and I am aware that social capital accumulated in one decade lost its value in the next, and relationships had to be based on sustainable values. Without understanding this distinctive nature of history's individual compartments, one cannot comprehend the dynamics of change or the behavior of its actors.

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In the story of one life summarized in this book, a considerable role belongs to chance and the proverbial stroke of luck – or bad luck – without which no success is possible and no lightning from a clear sky can strike. I am a child of the Warsaw Uprising, pulled out from under the rubble of a blown-up house which buried and killed dozens of people. After the Uprising, I found myself in transport from Pruszków to Auschwitz; however, the commandant refused access to our train because the camp's "processing capacity" was completely exhausted. That is why I am alive. It was thanks to Professor Patricia Sanders, whom Professor Stefan Kwiatkowski met by chance at some party, that I renewed my American contacts after martial law and anchored myself in Central Connecticut and later at UCLA. Another chance meeting with a university friend at the airport in Paris led to me losing contact with the University of Orléans. The book has many more examples of such twists

of fortune. However, I do not think that fortuity is more important than reason. Not everyone can take advantage of the right set of circumstances. You must be prepared for what fate may throw at you. After I was pulled out from under the rubble, my dad was there to call the doctor, with my mother also injured. I made the best of the opportunity to lecture at American universities because I was well-prepared for this work.

### III

For decades, I have tried to play two roles at once: that of a researcher-intellectual and that of a manager of a higher education institution. This is not a happy combination, as each of these roles requires full commitment. The few famous exceptions only serve to confirm the rule, namely Lord John Keynes or Richard Cyert, dean of the Graduate School of Industrial Administration (GSIA) and later president of Carnegie Mellon University. I hoped to succeed, too, but I think I had overestimated my abilities. The pages of this book clearly show that my dedication to management came at the expense of research work. Still, my life turned out to be incomplete in some sense because my two roles absorbed me completely, leaving insufficient space for my private life. Regret.

My master, Professor Aleksy Wakar, got me hooked on the idea of a scientific school of thought. I had access to examples of scientific schools from the turn of the twentieth century, namely Émile Durkheim's sociological school or the Lausanne School of economics. I realize today that these are outdated templates, but they seduced me, mostly without reciprocity. The notion of a scientific school of thought may signify a certain amount of rigidity and dogmatism, but Professor Wakar's School was different. He believed that, as the environment changes in its political, social, or technological aspect, economists should update and revise their concepts without shirking from disproving their previous theories. Professor Wakar's School made at least one such fundamental shift in switching from the concept of indirect market calculation to direct market calculation. I, too, introduced similar "revolutions," for example, by moving away from the systemic approach to the organizational game model.

From the very beginning of my academic career, I associated science with a "grand theory" that explained the behavior of systems – organizations,

national economies, and financial markets – at a high level of generality. Such theories make the pursuit of science a worthy feat. From them, we can derive all sorts of practical guidelines and principles using deduction, which we can then test empirically (inductively). During my year at Carnegie Mellon University, I was incredibly impressed by the behavioral theory of the firm developed by Simon, March, and Cyert, and by Simon’s theory of bounded rationality. This research resulted in a whole series of empirical studies and various practical proposals, such as simulation models of business behavior. Such remains my perception of the “products” of scientific schools of thought.

Importantly, this was not the only template for doing science used by the American management science community. The Harvard model, based on the advisory practice of consulting firms and case studies, was quickly gaining popularity. An essential feature of this approach was to describe the successes or, less frequently, the failures, point out their most important determinants, and leave space for the reader, the client of the consulting firm, or the student to draw conclusions. As time went by, such an inductive model of science continued to gain support and theory-oriented approaches lost their justification. Today, no one asks “fundamental” questions or puts forward “controversial” theories. Moreover, the peer review system prevents anyone from publishing anything of this sort in an internationally recognized scientific journal. Instead, the journals are full of repeated thoughts of other authors sourced from published and “established” concepts with only slight changes or supplements added. This functioning mode of science makes the concept of a scientific school of thought seem like an archaeological artifact from a distant era. Of course, these statements apply to the social sciences – especially economics, sociology, and management. I am unaware of the situation relating to the natural and formal sciences, where the criteria for truth and falsity are less ambiguous.

## IV

I started the project of a scientific school when I was in my thirties, having achieved the status of a senior academic staff member, which took place after my habilitation and appointment as a lecturer, after my one-year scholarship

at Carnegie Mellon in the United States and study stays in France and Italy, and after my appointment as head of the Department of System Analysis at the Management Institute of the University of Warsaw. I had already amassed a certain publication output in Polish, English, and French. It seemed to me that, despite my young age, I was ready to reach for the master's status in the emerging scientific school of thought. Perhaps it was a little too early, but patience has never been my forte.

Subsequent attempts to create a scientific school were related to the general theoretical concepts I had been developing with my team: systems analysis of organizations, the concept of game, organizational equilibrium, and, finally, bounded leadership. This evolution was inspired by developments in world science, various attempts to empirically verify theoretical concepts, and confronting theory with practice through counseling, among others. The game concept and the theory of bounded leadership emerged in opposition to sections of the scientific community and even counseling and training practice. I have always been against the conformist practice of engaging in science through the polite repetition of other people's words accompanied by one's own interpretation. My priority has always been the originality of thought rather than methodological correctness, although I do not disregard the latter.

I practiced science at a time of its politicization. I witnessed Polish science threatened by Stalinism, the "earthquake" engulfing French universities after 1968 and American universities after the Vietnam-era antiwar protests, the left-wing offensive, the right-wing defensive, and vice versa. This would have been diverting if these events had not posed a danger to both eminent individuals and science as a whole. Politics is always the enemy of social sciences as it enforces conformity and patterns of behavior compliant with the expectations of the authorities or the dominant environment. Such consequences of politics stand in complete opposition to the nature of scientific research. I tried to avoid ideological fronts as much as I could while trying to pursue my research and teaching activities with integrity. First, I was happy to discover that no one in Poland read my foreign publications in English or French, and this gave me a certain amount of freedom in socialist Poland. Second, wherever I could, I tried to support my work with facts and objective empirical findings. Third, I tried to avoid straightforward statements that directly irritated the authorities, relying on their inability to understand more elaborate thought constructs.

Fortunately, there is no such dependence on politics in didactics. Students refuse to accept any political agitation in their teaching, regardless of its sway. If you want to establish and maintain good contact with young people, you need to demonstrate an understanding of the contemporary world and modern science. If lecturers have this knowledge, you can always superimpose all the expectations related to the curriculum and similar bureaucratic formulas onto attractive content. As bureaucracy is prone to failure, some regulations must be respectfully circumvented, and such measures become possible within close-knit teams.

## V

My social capital consists of superiors and subordinates, colleagues, competitors, positive and negative personal role models, historical figures, and other individuals. Its value depends on the relationship's quality: the level of mutual respect and trust, the willingness to work together under more or less favorable circumstances with lower and higher levels of risk, and the quality of communication and mutual understanding. In this social world, people we can describe as our friends play a special role. These are people whom we can rely on and with whom we share the same "imaginary world," common knowledge of the world and its mechanisms, and many other values. I can admit with all honesty that I achieved success in my life when I had my friends around me, while my failures typically entailed their absence. I owe a special debt of gratitude for friendship and patience to the people who continue to work with me on a daily basis and make me able to maintain my level of activity: Stanisław Woźniak, Henryk Buliński – my reliable traveling companion for the last twenty-five years, Agata Stępień – the guardian of my time, and Ewa Barlik – my editor and adviser. These people are my definition of the diverse aspects of the word "friendship."

## VI

Managing any organization, including a university, would be an intellectually trivial activity were it not for human affairs. All things considered, I believe

that I have made many mistakes in this area and plenty of bad choices. However, I managed to avoid their worst consequences precisely because of the friends I could always rely on and probably because I was lucky. Indeed, it was more a matter of luck than a deliberate line of action. Sometimes, in hindsight, I wondered about the most important interpersonal human skills. Looking at my own successes and failures in this area, the key must be empathy, which means a good understanding of human motives, aspirations, and habits. We cannot achieve success by working with people whom we do not know or understand and, most importantly, whom we dislike. Therefore, we must always have enough time to understand others. The incredibly diverse human motivations do not fit into any stereotypes or simplistic models, such as *Homo economicus* or *Homo rationalis*. Empathy involves good communication and cooperation. These two prerequisites are necessary to build emotional ties that bind “brothers in arms.” My personal experience does not confirm the virtues of open recruitment. I found it much easier to work with individuals I had known for a long time and had often observed in different situations. I deem it impossible to trust people who have committed minor transgressions, generally tolerated as “insignificant.” Ethics is of primary importance.

A good understanding of human motivations and of the ties that bind people together, the most vital at any rate, allows for effective management. However, it also creates temptations to manipulate, to treat people instrumentally, and to exploit people’s weaknesses for our personal gains. This is a serious threat that can endanger relationships. To avoid this, one needs a moral compass based on two simple principles: not harming other people and sharing the fruits of success fairly.

## VII

My life has been fundamentally monothematic. I have always dreamt of a school in the dual sense of the word: as a university and a scientific school. And to this dream I have subordinated my professional efforts over many decades. I became grossed with the idea of a school as an institution, as a university, thanks to a mythical figure: the founder of the Warsaw School of Economics, Bolesław Miklaszewski. In the real world, I drew inspiration from my father and his friends from the Warsaw School of Economics,

above all, from Rector Andrzej Grodek. The necessary condition for success was warming others up to the idea, and I partially succeeded in this task. The university's founding fathers and their successors continue to have the same dream.

At subsequent stages, I broke down this goal into tasks and milestones, which I wrote down on pieces of paper affixed above my desk. Andrzej Zawislak used to laugh at my methods. Such a considerable focus on tasks can make life simultaneously more organized and more disorganized, mainly because I had to give up a lot of things. In my work as an organizer and manager of a higher education institution, I persistently stuck to my *idées fixes*, rejecting other career options. By contrast, in my purely scientific research activities, I have always tried to refuse as rarely as possible, hence my interdisciplinarity and multifariousness. In my opinion, these characteristics hindered the creation of a scientific school of thought to a considerable extent, while casting a shadow over my own position as a scholar. This is because a scientific career is easiest to build on a clearly designated area of narrow specialization in the company of good friends who share the same interests and follow similar career paths, cite each other's work, meet at the same conferences and seminars, publish in the same scientific journals, sit on editorial boards, and play the role of reviewers. This leads to the creation of success vehicles known as "cooperatives" that operate in the scientific world.

## VIII

My conviction has always been that we can and should pursue our missions also in unfavorable institutional conditions which force us to cheat the system. That was the reason why I attempted to implement the idea of a contemporary Polish business school already in late communism, while at the University of Warsaw. The conditions of the time hindered any greater success, so, together with the future founders of the later Kozminski University, I decided to gradually transition to running our own venture. However, my successors at the University of Warsaw maintained this course and became successful in free Poland.

I have been a pragmatist all my life. Pragmatism refers to the ability to enter into mostly informal agreements based on mutual concessions and



benefits while maintaining one's independence; in other words, it is all about the ability to compromise. Sadly, this word has a negative connotation in the Polish language; in fact, compromise is a prerequisite to maintaining one's independence. I have always considered independence as an overriding value, which I saw as a necessary condition for the creation of both a scientific school of thought and a university. Above all, however, independence frees us from the "intellectual violence" exerted not only by oppressive bureaucracies but also by any "main trends" in science, which lead to conformity and the evisceration of debate. In consequence, I tried to obtain my degrees as soon as possible and enter the ranks of independent academics, free from the scrutiny of other scholars, which they applied with different levels of intensity. I took this privilege seriously, suggesting that my doctoral students and colleagues employ unconventional approaches to their research. The result was a number of original concepts that have permanently entered the field of Polish management science.

I have never lost my independence, be it as a scholar or manager. Communist Poland made it very difficult for employees of state higher education institutions to preserve their independence, and the small quantities of independence remaining made any work incredibly challenging. To this day, I recall with embarrassment that I failed to renovate the toilets during my two terms as dean at the University of Warsaw. In search of greater independence, together with a group of friends, I decided to implement our educational project in the private sector. At the age of fifty, I risked my position and my achievements by following a dream.

## IX

The first organization created by Kozminski University's founding fathers was a consulting and training company with the symbolic name International School of Management. Its flagship products included the second MBA program in Central and Eastern Europe, which is still running today. The International School of Management was soon to become the bedrock of my much-anticipated university. The adjective "international" reflected our operating philosophy quite aptly. Our mission has always been the pursuit of knowledge and the provision of education on an international level and

in accordance with globally recognized models. Furthermore, we wished to secure ourselves an established and increasingly more advantageous position among business schools both in Europe and globally. The goal in question required internal functioning mechanisms compatible with those used around the world – which meant the university’s bilingualism and, above all, the widest possible presence of foreign students and lecturers.

We saw our mission as a process of educating the second generation of the Polish middle class – people who are ready to act on a European and global scale, not only familiar with the global language of business but also well-versed in the mechanisms of international business, politics, and society, free from the fears and insecurities of the previous generations. From the outset, we aimed to be an international institution in the full sense of the word. This has prompted us to draw inspiration from international business school associations in order to fulfill the standards required by international accreditation bodies and rankings. For many years, we lacked the expected level of understanding and acceptance in Poland. As we gradually moved beyond our country, it became our mission to prepare an international group of students for the challenges of today’s world, above all for the speed and depth of the changes we all experience.

## X

In this day and age, every modern university functions as a hybrid of an academy and a business enterprise. Their management relies on the equilibrium between these two dimensions. This correlation particularly affects private universities operating in Poland, because their revenue comes almost exclusively from the market, namely the sale of educational services. Unlike universities operating in Europe and the United States, Polish private universities do not receive any significant funding from the government, local authorities, private sponsors, or even the business sector. Such a situation makes it virtually impossible to ensure high-quality teaching, research, internationalization, or domestic and international brand recognition. Nevertheless, the founding fathers of Kozminski University decided to give it a try. With time, we began to make a name for ourselves, getting closer to European and global standards in all

aspects of quality. The whole process took a long time, however. The strategic line remained unchanged over the years while we continued to achieve successive milestones set by our ambition and hunger for success on a global scale.

Our accomplishment in the form of the university is our gift to the nation. Especially at the start, the whole idea seemed completely out of touch with reality in our home environment. From the outset, we dreamed of a university exactly like ours is today. We hoped that someone would help us financially in the name of public interest, and a Polish version of Harvard would soon emerge after the country's political transformation. Nothing of the sort happened, so we were left to our own devices. Victories began to arrive slowly and with a lot of invested effort. The necessary prerequisite for success proved quite straightforward and close to my scientific specialization: good management. This key to success became our obsession, not least as a result of a few painful mistakes, which fortunately proved rectifiable, as in any well-managed company.

The satisfaction of achieving goals that seem impossible from a pragmatic perspective has always been one of my most powerful motivators. I can see that the university's managerial team draws from a similar driving force. The challenge is the timeframe for the implementation of successive milestones, namely the university's speed of adaptation to circumstances changing on a global scale. The decision-making time drops to a minimum in a well-managed and independent organization. That said, there are always cultural, human, and financial constraints to consider. Hence the delays, the catching up, the constant desire to immediately climb to the very pinnacle of European higher business education, and the appetite for more. The dream of elevating the school on a hill to new heights continues...



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