

## Introduction

The content of the presented book is a fight for memory and recognition. It is therefore a book about these human activities, those social practices that are today often treated as fundamental to the existence of society, as essential for its development and change. The concept of recognition, derived from Georg Hegel's philosophy, and now developed by Axel Honneth, shows that the social project of liberalism is not and cannot be based solely on economic, particular and selfish premises. Public sense, virtue and commitment to the goals of the wider community are values whose lack or deficit was at the heart of the critique of liberalism. Also, the selfishness of a private individual who pursues, in the public space and in his individual life, only short-term particular goals, has become an inspiration for such criticism. Hence, I believe, our contemporary interest and reference to those works by Hegel in which he presents an interpretation of liberal society based on the unselfish aspects of human personality and making these aspects the heart of the modern political project. The category that makes such an interpretation possible is precisely that of recognition. The struggle for recognition can be treated today both as a condition and an opportunity to work on one's own identity, it can be a way of restoring a constantly endangered, unstable individual identity. It then becomes an extremely important individual category, describing the contemporary individual, its location, its situation and its operation. In this way, the struggle for recognition becomes a biographical category. It can also be treated as a condition of social change and social development. It then becomes a social category relating to the location, situation and activities of a wider community. The struggle for recognition, which is located in both of these areas at the same time, is, in my opinion, an extremely important category today. It indicates a dimension of human action other than the desire for profit. Seduced by the neoliberal discourse in the sphere of ideology, ideas and justifications of such and not another image of the world, and such and not another social practice, contemporary people may be surprised when it turns out that their motivations, desires, aspirations and plans are not always related to the implementation of particular goals that are based on economic calculus. Such an important goal, need, condition for a good life is recognition. It is formed in our relationships with others, and underlies our individual and social activities. We are today, like the Hegelian "first man", hungry not only for material objects: apartments, cars, beautiful and useful equipment. Today, as never before, we are thirsty for other people's acceptance, that is, to be recognized by others. We are dependent on what they think, what they say, and how others treat us. We are to ourselves who we are to them - who we are in their eyes. The category of recognition is significantly broadened by the banal judgment, that man is a social being. At the heart of this judgment is the belief that our self-esteem and identity are closely related to the value that other people give us. Each of us wants to be recognized. It needs recognition and is able to recognize another person. 'In short, man is capable of making a real moral choice, that is, of making a choice between two ways of acting, not because one of them is more useful, not because of the victory of one group of passions and instincts over the other: the choice results from inner freedom to make rules for oneself and to follow them. The specific dignity of man is hidden precisely in this ability to free moral

choice, and not in the ability to more efficiently calculate one's own benefits, thanks to which it surpasses other animals as a machine' (Fukuyama, 2009, p. 226).

The fight for recognition is therefore today the way in which our freedom, our individual and community autonomy is revealed. It is our chance for emancipation. It is for these reasons that it has become the subject of this book. It has been described and interpreted on the basis of the narratives I have listened to and recalled in the book. These are two kinds of narratives. Due to the relationship that exists between the category of recognition and the concept of identity, I have made the notions proposed by Alasdair MacIntyre: individual narrative and community narrative, an important context for my research. Based on these categories, I try to show how important and why so important for us today is identity, working on it, and the effort to constantly biographically construct it. I also try to describe the place of narration among identity consolidation practices, i.e. those activities which, in the changing contemporary reality, provide (or try to provide) the individual with a subjective sense of continuity and duration. The narratives I describe and interpret are those of appreciation. These are always individual narratives and the community narratives accompanying them (they are constituting their genesis, their context, their conceptual and semantic background). This method of understanding the relationship between the individual and the community, between the identity of the individual and the identity of the community, proposed and described by MacIntyre, seemed to me not only interpretatively functional. Not only it perfectly works in the process of interpreting the recognition narratives that I have heard. It also responds, in an extremely convincing way and adequately to our contemporary (also, and perhaps above all, Polish) problems, to the question of how, on the basis of which content, meanings, rules, norms and values come from, we build our identity, which is based on recognition. The subject of description and interpretation in this book are therefore two types of narratives: individual narratives and community narratives. The narrative is treated not only as a biographical story about "me". It is also understood as our way of being in the world, as the way in which we obtain the unity of our existence today. Regardless of what happens to us, whether we manage to implement our own plans, dreams, achieve goals that are important to us or fail in this regard, our story about "I", our narrative, is what distinguishes us from others, which makes us separate and unique. We not only understand ourselves in the form of a narrative about 'I'. We are our narrative about "I". We are what we know about ourselves, what we tell about ourselves. It is similar with the narrative of our community. It is in it, in its content, the rules, norms, roles and expectations of us - its individual members, described and contained in it - that meanings which constitute our individual identity are found. We always relate to them somehow. Regardless of whether we accept the narrative of our community (also regardless of whether it is coherent), it is it that determines who and what we are. The meanings present in it and conveyed by it become for us either a signpost, an important context of our actions and choices, or they are the subject of our refusal, our rebellion, resistance or contestation. Regardless of our attitude to the content of the narrative of our community and its axionormative order, we always relate to it somehow. We do it when we accept this order, we do it when we contest it, discuss it or completely undermine it and try to reject it. We always do this in the face of the narrative of our community that defines us, that shapes us.

That is why the description and interpretation of individual narratives is always accompanied in this book by a description of the community narrative concerning those problems which are the area of the struggle for recognition in it. Recognition is treated by me both as a condition for building identity and one of the main problems in individual, personal work on one's own identity. Recognition is both a condition and a need or an endeavor. It is a prerequisite for building a conviction about one's own separateness, while at the same time feeling connected with others and belonging to a larger community. The deficit of recognition condemns people to manipulation, deprives them of agency and the ability to make choices.

Loneliness and a sense of alienation are the features of contemporary individualists. The need for recognition in the world of self-centered people is becoming one of the basic needs, unfortunately often deprived. Contemporary man strives to satisfy this need through an earnest desire to "exist" - he must "say" his "I am". This is the first step. People want to show themselves, expose their experiences on an unprecedented scale. An example of this constant, common need for recognition today are videos published on the Internet, social networks, participation in television programs, and the public sphere. Today, people on an unknown scale need to communicate their 'I Am' to the world. Next, when they say: **HERE I AM**, they need to tell the world: **WHAT I AM**. An example of such behavior is the writing by almost everyone (actors, singers, celebrities, journalists) of autobiographical "confession" books. The multitude of such forms of self-presentation, so much so characteristic of contemporary culture, so much present in culture, coming-outs, consisting in a public confession of a different sexual orientation, experiences related to violence or sexual harassment experienced in childhood, is for me a manifestation of a struggle for recognition. It is happening everywhere today. In the family and in marriage, between partners in relationships, between parents and children, at the workplace, between supervisors and subordinates, between work colleagues. Between people who are close to each other and between people who stay together only in task contacts. The struggle for recognition continues today also in the narrative of our community. Its description and interpretation in this book show that we have a serious problem as a community. Our community narrative is cracked. There is a duality in it, which concerns each of the social problems, each of the values that are important to us. Is it still one more narrative? Are these two parallel narratives of one community? Can a community last, can develop and, most importantly, can it guarantee each of its members some kind of discernment in what it offers, what it considers important, desirable, what it considers possible and what it condemns, rejects and criticizes? Do we see this rupture, this duality? Do we accept it, do we want it, or allow it to last? And what can we, as a community, do in this situation? These questions are the result of my research - but they are a completely unexpected and surprising result. So I do not know the answers to the above questions, they are not in this book. There is evidence of this crack in it, evidence that appeared "on the occasion" of my interpretations. It is important, it is good that they appeared. They can become an additional justification for the thesis about the importance of the issue, its topicality and the cognitive potential embedded in it. The struggle for recognition, which is the subject of this work, has been described and interpreted by me on the basis of identity narratives and narratives of our community. The narrative of the road described here is a biography with the experience of a deficit of

appreciation being its permanent part, an irreducible biographical problem. It is a narrative of a Polish Jewish woman who has a problem with a double identity, who cannot and does not want to accept her Jewish origin. The fight for recognition takes place here on two levels: a woman fights with herself because she cannot recognize herself, her origin becomes the cause of a serious deficit in self-esteem, she also fights for acceptance, for recognition with her surroundings - with her relatives, with friends, with anyone who could potentially turn her down. I found this identity narrative important for several reasons. First of all, it shows how a biographical fact beyond our control (a woman cannot change her unacceptable origin) can decide about the whole life. Second, it shows from the perspective of someone who feels different, who feels unacceptable, who does not have the capacity to accept herself, how such an experience can become a tremendous source of suffering. It also shows what are the biographical consequences of this suffering - both individual and social. I believe that today, when as a community we have failed the test of solidarity with others, when we have shown not only that we do not remember what we owe to the help of other countries, other communities, when we were in oppression, but also that we are not capable of empathy, caring for people who have to flee from their homes and countries in search of not only a better life, but also basic security, recalling such a narrative becomes very important. It allows you to understand another, see his perspective, it allows you to build a concern for another human being.

A narrative discourse of recognition would, in my opinion, be an attempt to combine or find a common denominator between the Habermasian concept of narrative discourse, which is close to the ideal speech situation, requires high competences from the interlocutors, assumes their symmetry, lack of domination and power, and thus becomes specifically 'elitist"', with the concept of Honneth's recognition, which emphasizes the intersubjectivity of any communicative relationship. This is the intersubjectivity not only of our mutual claims, but also of our positions - they are not and cannot be identical or symmetrical. Recognition means assigning rights to another, not any rights, but rights that I also attribute to myself. Extending the concept of Jurgen Habermas' narrative discourse to include the category of recognition makes it no longer an elitist concept, but opens it up to the problem of commitment and shows its critical perspective.

The struggle for recognition in the narratives that I have presented in this book may be the beginning or a form of social change. Changes towards a community that is an alternative to the neoliberal, oppressive social order for individuals and groups. A community which, in place of the dictatorship of the market, money, profitability and efficiency, would restore the rightful place to everything that the dominant, economic language has replaced, marginalized, and doomed to oblivion. A community that would allow every individual, every group to build a relationship of recognition, a life that could become satisfactory in all circumstances, in every situation, when good would be realized, understood not only in a material but also in a spiritual, existential, emotional and intersubjective way. A happy life does not have to be an economic life. It can be a life based on rules implementing the vision of living well together. Always living with others, always with another person. Only the presence of another human being provides us with what is

most valuable to us, without which we will not be able to cope with our identity, self-esteem, and we will not be able to cope with ourselves. He gives us recognition. And that's what this book is about.

It is located in an interpretative methodological orientation. The consequence of the orientation adopted in it is its structure. It differs slightly from the structure of scientific works in the field of social sciences, which are in a positivist orientation. I believe that the traditional structure, based on three consecutive parts: theoretical, methodological and empirical, is adequate for the positivist concept of research. However, it cannot be transferred to the field of interpretative research. I have written about the differences between these studies many times, several texts on this problem are included in my book entitled 'Education and upbringing in the discourse of science and everyday life' (2012, 2014). Therefore, at this point I will only remind you that in the interpretative orientation the role of theories and concepts derived from it is completely different than in the scientist orientation. In the positivist research paradigm, theory decides everything: about the way in which the research question is formulated, about the hypotheses being put forward, which are an attempt to answer the question, about the research procedure. The operationalization of the basic research category, converted into the language of indicators, determines what terms and concepts we will use in our research. The selected research method, adequate to the language of the theory, will allow for asking questions only in the area of this language. The language of the chosen theory is therefore prior to the research itself, it is prior to the research question. It may be correctly or incorrectly worded. It is correct when it falls within the language of the chosen theory. It is incorrect when it goes beyond this language even in the slightest degree. The research situation and the researcher's situation are completely different in the interpretative perspective. Here we are dealing with the absolute primacy of the research question. It is the impulse for the entire research effort, it activates the entire complex research process. I am asking about some fragment of social reality that is important to me, I am asking about some aspect of human life that is important to me. This question prompts me to choose the path, the best path that guarantees me the opportunity to answer it. Knowing a question, finding a way to search for an answer, I look for theories, concepts and categories that fall within my (and related) discipline. Therefore, the theory appears in these studies after formulating the research question, after finding the best method available to the researcher to search for an answer to this question. The theory appears in these studies in many different ways. Not like in positivist research, where it reigns in the first chapter and in the ending, where conclusions are formulated in the language of this theory. In research conducted in an interpretative methodological orientation, the theory (or many different theories) appears at every stage, in every phase of research. First, the research question, which for us may even take the form of a colloquial sentence, based on some experience important to us, leads us into an area related to a specific theoretical concept. In my case, it is a category of recognition derived from Hegel's philosophy and developed by Honneth. Then, within this theory, a research question must be specified and posed. The next step is to choose the methodological orientation, justify its adequacy to the research question, show ontological and epistemological justifications for adopting such a research orientation. The next step is a synthetic description of various concepts and theories of social sciences and philosophies of conceptual categories that are necessary for us to answer the

research question posed. This effort must be based on interdisciplinary, multi-threaded studies that include discussions and disputes in the perspective of our research. And the most important, the most extensive and labor-intensive phase for this research orientation is the attempt to answer the research questions based on qualitative research. And it is at this stage that the theories that we know, and that we do not know yet, are essential for our research activity. It is with the language of these theories that we perform two important research activities: we present narratives, biographies or autobiographies that are the subject of our research, the source of our knowledge about the phenomenon under study. It is the language of these theories that we describe narratives, biographies, and autobiographies. The order in which we show them is a consequence of a specific theory adopted by us and referred to in a given fragment of the work. This is one of its features. Its descriptive function. The second function of the theory in the works falling within the discussed methodological orientation is related to the task of this basic orientation - it is the function of an interpretation tool. The theories, concepts and categories included in them become tools that we use when trying to answer the research questions posed. We interpret heard narratives, biographies and autobiographies through and thanks to these theories, concepts and categories. We do it with their language. There may be many of these languages - after all, narrative stories about "I" do not fit into one semantic order, so they cannot fit into the language of one theory. When interpreting someone's life, we go beyond the boundaries of disciplines, languages, and often go beyond the previously asked questions. We do all this in order to reduce as little as possible what is the axis of our interests. We do not reduce even surprising results, emotions, statements, neither for the sake of methodological purity, nor for the purity or elegance of the form of our research work. Therefore, in interpretative works, theory (s) are everywhere - you cannot separate the theoretical part from the rest of the work. Just like methodology is everywhere - on each page of our research work, we show whether we understand the methodological orientation we have chosen, whether we use it adequately to the questions posed in the work, whether our reader knows and understands what and why we are doing in the research process.

And this is exactly what happens in the presented book. The question of memory and recognition in narratives became the question that organized all my research activities. Activity, which consisted of both literary studies (based on philosophical, sociological, pedagogical, psychological and anthropological texts related to the category of recognition, identity, narrative, biography, autobiography, cultural social roles, stereotypes associated with them and the struggle for recognition in an individual, social, structural and systemic perspective), as well as the process of collecting narratives, biographies, reading autobiographies or their thematic fragments. There was theory at every stage of the research. Various concepts of the social sciences and the humanities were present. I used them in the phase of formulating questions, in the phase of presenting the narrative, in the phase of interpreting them. I also used them in an effort to summarize the conclusions and suggestions resulting from them, as well as at the stage of formulating new questions. Selected problems of the research methodology have also been described by me in the introduction to the research on the narratives of memory and recognition. As with theory, methodology is present in these studies in each of their phases. It is present at the stage of asking questions, choosing the method of seeking

answers, and is present at the stage of presenting and interpreting the results. Verification of its correctness and adequacy to the questions posed in the book is its reception by readers. Mam nadzieję, że udało mi się choćby w niewielkim stopniu osiągnąć założony w niej cel. I hope that I have managed to show how important and fundamental the category of recognition is today, and how, for what reason and with what effect people today fight for recognition in their relations with their loved ones. How an individual fights for recognition and how does a community fight for recognition, and what does this fight mean for the identity of the individual and the community.

A narrative discourse of recognition would, in my opinion, be an attempt to connect or find a common denominator between the concept of narrative discourse described by Habermas (Murphy and Fleming ed., 2012), which is close to the ideal speech situation, requires high competences from the interlocutors, assumes their symmetry, lack of domination and power, and thus becomes specifically "elitist", with a concept of recognition that emphasizes the intersubjectivity of any communicative relationship. This is the intersubjectivity not only of our mutual claims, but also of our positions - they are not and cannot be identical or symmetrical. Recognition means assigning rights to another, not any rights, but rights that I also attribute to myself. The extension of Habermas' concept of narrative discourse with the category of recognition makes it a concept that is no longer elitist, opens it to the problem of involvement, shows its critical perspective.

Education and the social, individual and systemic changes inherent in it are for me a genuine cognitive, social and research problem. They are the basis of my commitment - authentic and real. I think they are also the basis of my discipline. Pedagogy and educators is a discipline and an environment that examines the possibilities of good change, examines the conditions in which it is possible, and examines its desired effects. This problem is treated differently by politicians and educational authorities at various levels. For politicians, local authorities, self-government, the so-called "Educational activists", education can be a means to an end, an instrumental value or a discursive game - a concept that "has meaning" in the public debate and you can try to build your image on this meaning. That is why it is so difficult to create conditions for a narrative educational discourse in which we could participate together: we educators and officials. We assign a completely different meaning to the discursive category around which our discourse could revolve. Everything that we correct in this discourse, striving, not even to agree, but only to maintain the discourse, is ineffective, inadequate to the discursive situation in which we find ourselves. Repair and change is our goal, but these are not the goals of the officials. They want to calmly implement their strategies, and the discourse on education is a background, an appearance, an ornament, an empty meaning. For me, the struggles for recognition in narratives presented in this book are an attempt to create a space for discourse enabling understanding and communication between people and communities. A discourse that will enable ethical and cultural change. Contemporary humanities and social sciences are characterized by the constant, unquestionable coexistence of various approaches and methodological orientations. Their multiplicity,

diversity, inter and transdisciplinarity is certainly related to the phenomenon of "paradigmatic turns" in the methodology of science.