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KATOWICE REGION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SELECTED CONCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

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ABSTRACT. Taking into consideration all conceptions of economic and social development discussed here it should be concluded that

- non of the classical models of social transformation is represented in the Katowice region in homogeneous form. In fact, only modernisation (as it is a historical aspect) is most distinguished among others;
- it is possible that features typical for several models of economic or social transformations occur at the same time. This concerns spatial approaches.

The consequence of frequent fragmentation of social-economic reality in numerous theoretical conceptions and proposals of restructuring changes is a narrow understanding of the research problems. It seems, therefore, that conceptions of social development created on the basis of sociology may be successfully applied in social geography. The condition here is not only taking into account spatial aspects but also the possibility of applying several models of transformations at the same time.

KEY WORDS: Katowice region, conceptions of economic and social development, theoretical conceptions, models of transformations.

OUTLINE

The paper concerns the Katowice region, identified here with a group of several of the largest towns located in the central part of the Silesian province. The aim of the investigation is an attempt to assess the usefulness of the most popular conceptions of economic and social development in the analysis of the transformations to date of the Katowice region.

INTRODUCTION

In geographical literature two differentiations of the Katowice region can be found. The first one – wider, and also more frequently occurring – identifies this notion with a unit of administrative division (province). Taking into account several essential changes of the area and the name of the province (śląskie, śląsko-dąbrowskie, katowickie, śląskie), there has not been territorial univocality in the process of the region's crystallization. The second differentiation – narrower – concerns the most urbanized central part of the province, i.e. the Katowice conurbation. Also in this case, there are some differences in the region's delimitation by individual authors, nevertheless they are much more insignificant than in the first differentiation.

Irrespective of the accepted territorial approach, a several-year period of political, economic and social transformations impels us to ask the following questions:

- a) To what extent are the conceptions of economic and social development useful in the interpretation of the transformations to date of the Katowice region?
- b) Which one of the discussed aspects of transformations (economic or social) plays a more important role in possible interpretations for the Katowice region?

The Katowice region itself is treated here in the narrower approach.

CONCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tab. 1 includes 14 conceptions of economic transformations of the area studied, which are regarded as representative for a classical investigation approach and also more recent approaches. Intentionally, the term theories of regional development has not been taken into consideration, because some of them represent wider or narrower approaches (e.g. theory of product cycle and derivatives or theory of clusters). The considered conceptions include therefore the following:

- 1) theory of location of economic activity (A. Weber),
- 2) theory of central places (W. Christaller),
- 3) theory of economic base (W. Sombart),
- 4) theory of growth poles (F. Perroux, J. R. Boudeville),
- 5) theory of innovation diffusion (T. Hägerstrand),
- 6) theory of exogenic development (J.M. Keynes),
- 7) conception of endogenic development (R. Cappellin, N. Thrift),

Tab. 1. Usefulness of the conceptions of economic development in the interpretation of transformations of the Katowice region

Theories of economic transformations	Main assumptions	Usefulness in explaining transformations of Katowice region
Theory of location of economic activity (Weber)	<p>Classical theories</p> <p>Minimalisation of costs while choosing the place to start a business activity. Location is influenced by primary factors, i.e. labour force, costs of transport, and the so-called advantages of agglomeration (multiplayer effects).</p>	<p>Useless theory</p> <p>a. location of economic activity determined mainly by the presence of mineral resources (in medieval times non-iron ores, since the end of the 18th century hard coal);</p> <p>b. economic development initiated in the situation of insufficiency of local labour force (constantly growing immigration is required);</p> <p>c. factor of transport costs became essential after construction of basic system of railways (second part of the 19th century).</p>
Theory of central places (Christaller)	<p>Rule of centrality – a centre plays the role of a core in relation to the surrounding space. A settlement unit of a higher order organises distribution of units of lower order (supply and demand for goods and services) according to isotropic properties of geographic space (hexagonal model of hierarchical location of individual towns).</p>	<p>Useless theory</p> <p>a. discordance of spatial-functional structure with Christaller's model;</p> <p>b. theory of central places is able to explain only agglomeration settlement systems – but not all of them.</p>
Theory of economic base (Sombart)	<p>Development of a town/region in categories of economy division into exogenic (external) sector and endogenic (internal) one. Location and development of the first one are considered as decisive in economy development; however, it cannot exist without the second one; they need to complement each other.</p>	<p>Entirely useful theory</p> <p>It concerns mainly relations between leading economic activities in the region (coal mining, metallurgy, transport) and other spheres.</p>
Theory of growth poles (Perroux, Boudeville)	<p>The basis of region development represents the so called “growth poles”, i.e. predominating and strongest developing economic activities (branches, lines of business, individual businesses). In the regional approach, a growth pole represents the most developed territorial unit, which contains the largest development potential influencing the surrounding areas.</p>	<p>Partially useful theory</p> <p>a. since medieval times until the 1750s, the growth pole was non-iron ore mining; later coal mining and metallurgy;</p> <p>b. in the regional aspect – the growth pole was changeable in time, moving from the western side of the region (Tarnowski Góry, Głitwice) to the east (Katowice);</p> <p>c. spatial stabilisation of the growth pole only in the 1930s; however its predominance over other centres in the region has been small (reason – conurbation character of the settlement system).</p>

<p>Theory of innovation diffusion (Hägerstrand)</p>	<p>The most important in development are technological innovations which spread beyond the home centre, causing different consequences. The expansion of these innovations has the character of a logistic curve.</p>	<p>Moderate usefulness a. mainly in the analysis of the first historical phase of regional industrialisation; b. in modern times – attempts to use this theory only in selected types of business (e.g. automobile industry).</p>
<p>Theory of egzogenic development (Keynes)</p>	<p>State interventionism as a main stimulator of regional development.</p>	<p>Partially useful theory (for some periods) a. period 1742–1790 – Prussian interventionism; b. period 1951–1971 – conceptions of deglomeration of the Katowice region (GOP), development of ROW (Rybnik Coal Region), Katowice Metallurgical Complex, FSM (automobile factory).</p>
<p>Conception of endogenic development (Cappellin, Thrift)</p>	<p>Recent theories</p>	<p>Useless theory Development of the Katowice region resulted mainly from realisation of supra-local economic aims.</p>
<p>Conception of decentralised economy (Weaver, Stöb)</p>	<p>Necessity of reconciliation of local community interests and priorities of state policy (transitional variant between exogenic and endogenic development). A region is treated as almost self-governing in spatial management.</p>	<p>Useful theory Numerous problems caused by interest conflict of the business sector with local government.</p>
<p>Theories secondary in relation to the theory of growth poles: a. theory of geographical growth centres (Hirschman) b. theory of “vicious circle” (Myrdal) c. theory of core and peripheries (Friedmann)</p>	<p>a. presence of growth centres located in a definite fragment of space causes the innovation process at a smaller and greater distance (necessity of construction of transport infrastructure, which may carry development impulses from growth centres to peripheries); b. regional differentiation of development is an objective phenomena and it increases in time; c. the fact of creation of development centres causes an increase in peripheries, where the process of “washing” of development factors occurs.</p>	<p>Partially useful theory Because of a complex character of the process of historic changes of the Katowice region, both the core and peripheries were changeable in time.</p>
<p>Theory of product cycle and secondary theories, e.g.: – cycles of traditional industrial products, – cycles of modern industrial products, – raw material cycles, – regional cycles (Schumpeter)</p>	<p>General assumptions of the recurrence of development stages from recession, bottom, boom and peak phase of a given business. Usually these conceptions are connected with N. Kondratiew – investigator of long-lasting cycles (~ 50-years).</p>	<p>Useful theory Especially visible in the analysis of coal cycles in the Katowice region.</p>

<p>Conception of sustainable development (Cassel, Nurske, Lewis, Rosenstein-Rodan)</p>	<p>Tendency to realise rules and directions of integrated order including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. social order – improvement of conditions and life standards of the society; b. economic order – effective and permanent economic development; c. ecological order – consolidation of sustainable development i.e. reconciliation of civilisation progress with requirements of environment protection and rational management of resources; d. spatial order – rational management of geographic space. 	<p>Conception useful only in the postulate aspect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. possibility of confrontation of the assumptions of sustainable development with social, economic, ecological and spatial reality of the region; b. formulation of certain postulates for authorities and animators of spatial management in the region.
<p>Theory of contact region (Rykiel, 1991)</p>	<p>Considering historical transformations of a region as a transition from a peripheral system to a core system (assuming an essential role of a border in these transformations).</p>	<p>Useful theory</p> <p>Its usefulness concerns only regions which develop at the contact of state borders.</p>
<p>Conception of a region as a territorial social system (Chojnicki, 1996)</p>	<p>In regional development the following stages are visible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. spatial-material crystallisation of a region, b. development of regional consciousness, c. institutional development of a region, d. region stabilisation. 	<p>Partially useful conception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. in the process of spatial-material crystallisation, different centres in different times played a leading role. The pole of this process gradually moved from the west to the east of the developing region; b. because of an essential role of immigration, the level of regional consciousness is rather weak, moreover considerably differentiated; c. because of priority of industrial investments, institutional development is clearly delayed; d. political-economic transformation and its consequences do not prove the thesis of the Katowice region stabilisation;
<p>Theory of clusters (Porter)</p>	<p>Geographical assemblage of mutually related businesses, specialised suppliers, services, businesses acting in related sectors and connected with their institutions. Clusters, reaching a critical mass (number of businesses, their potential, effect of agglomeration), gain certain production-service effects successfully competing with other businesses</p>	<p>Useful theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. possibility to include the automobile industry in the research (long chain of connections); b. application of activity of special economic zones in the analysis.

- 8) conception of decentralised development,
- 9) secondary theories in relation to the conception of growth poles,
- 10) theory of product cycle and derivatives,
- 11) conception of sustainable development,
- 12) theory of contact region (Z. Rykiel),
- 13) conception of a region as a territorial social system (Z. Chojnicki),
- 14) cluster theory.

The first group of conceptions includes classical conceptions (1–7). From the very beginning an attempt to refer Weber's theory of location of economic activity to the Katowice region is controversial. Indeed, Weber's theory considers the location aspects in terms of their role as resources necessary in production (resources orientation, market orientation), but

- firstly, his conception concerned an individual entrepreneur, working in free market conditions and his aim was to find such a place which shows minimum unit costs;
- secondly, factors of location of economic activity include certain resources of the work force, transport costs, and agglomeration advantage (among others Domański, 1977, pp. 215–228; Kuciński, 1998, pp. 78–93).

At the beginning of development of the Katowice region (end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries) in the area studied, a dynamic development of hard coal mining occurred – the first industrial coal mine started in 1769 in the present Ruda Śląska (Pukowska-Mitka, 2002). The increase in coal exploitation took place, however, in the conditions of increasing work force shortage. The lack of a local work force is the effect of the peripheral location of the area in relation to former political and economic centres. Moreover, the excavated hard coal was in the beginning used mainly in local metallurgy and in households. The lack of technical and organizational possibilities for the wider export of coal until the 1840s, when the railway was built in this area, was caused by limitation of mass transport (Długoborski, 1967),

So, the factors of location of economic activity accepted by Weber do not apply to the Katowice region, at least until the 1850s. It should be remembered that also another condition was not satisfied, i.e. limitation of the research conception to the activity of an individual entrepreneur. In the historical process of development of the Katowice region two types of investors were present: on the one hand, state investors (Austria, Prussia, Russia, and then Germany and Poland), and on the other hand, private investors, who did business despite the location of political borders and often according to geopolitical interests, and not economic calculus (Rykiel, 1985).

There are also some substantial reservations in the case of the theory of central places by W. Christaller. It assumes a hierarchical subordination of settlement

units – according to the hexagonal model – having an isotropic character of the space, i.e. regular distribution of resources, economic activity and inhabitants.

Historical-geographical investigations into changes in the spatial-functional structure of the Katowice region show the inadequacy of this conception. A deforming influence is exerted by

- location of natural resources,
- former attachment of the territory of this region to several states with different social-economic policy,
- conurbation character of the settlement system,
- spontaneous character of urbanization processes.

As a result, the polycentric character of the region – which developed in general as a “filler” and movement of population centre and building area from the west to the east – substantially differs from Christaller’s model.

Among classical conceptions, the theory of economic base makes it possible to interpret the process of development and temporal changes of exo- and endogenic sectors of the economy. In the Katowice region it is extremely visible, for example in specific relations of authorities to leading economic activities (e.g. postponing the coal mining restructuring process at the beginning of the 1990s), but not in intra-regional activities.

The next classical conception is the theory of growth poles. Inasmuch as the general approach of the division of economic activity into a leading one and stimulated for development is not questionable, their analysis in the Katowice region proves their considerable temporal-spatial changes. Taking into account demographic potential itself, in 1810 Gliwice was a growth pole, in 1825 Będzin, in the period 1843–1857 Gliwice and Bytom, and in the period 1880–1890 Chorzów, Zabrze, Bytom, and not before the interwar period did Katowice become a growth pole. However, the predomination of Katowice over other urban centres is small.

The theory of innovation diffusion reflects qualitative changes, mainly in the periods of essential economic innovations. It concerns on the one hand the beginning of the industrialization period, and on the other hand the appearance of new sectors of industry (e.g. automobile industry), or wilderness (pristine) locations (e.g. development of the Rybnik Coal Region).

The role of state interventionism in regional development is only partly useful in the case of the Katowice region, namely the second part of the 18th century (Prussian interventionism), in the interwar period (1922–1939), just after the second world war (the so called deglomeration conception) in the 1970s (investment of supra-regional character). The circumstance of such a type of activities was usually represented by initiation of development in a new political reality, or taking decisions strategic for the economy, being located in a certain space.

More useful in the interpretation of transformations of the Katowice region are more recent conceptions of economic transformations. Although there are also doubts (e.g. theory of endogenic growth conception secondary in relation to the conception of growth poles, sustainable development, region as a territorial social system) these theories are closer to reality. The most important among them are

- conception of decentralised development – which indicates the necessity of reconciliation of regional and supra-regional economic interests with needs of local communities. The case study by I. Sagan (2000) concerning urban regimes is very interesting;
- the application of the conception of a region as a territorial social system (Chojnicki, 1996) raised a question of the adequacy of transformation stages. So, in the case of spatial-material crystallisation, we deal with the uncompleted stage of transformations in the post-war period (especially spatial urbanisation and qualitative turn in the 1980s and 1990s in demographic urbanisation); lack of usefulness of the criterion of regional consciousness in the identification of the process of “closing” of the Katowice region; controversial role of institutionalization and stabilisation (Runge 2003, 2007);
- inasmuch as the conception of contact region has a “closing” character (i.e. considering the hitherto social-economic transformations to date of the area studied from early medieval times to the post-war period), the conception of sustainable development and the theory of clusters are useful in interpreting contemporary changes and predicting future changes. Essential directions of regional development include on the one hand aspiration of regional and local authorities to assure the so-called integrated order in a such a spatially and structurally complex area, and on the other hand development of special economic zones being the initiation of transformations in the sector of small and medium businesses.

The analysis of the conceptions assumed in the investigations reveals a very controversial role of classical approaches in relation to the origin and transformations to date of the Katowice region. More recent conceptions seem to be more useful, as they better interpret directions of changes of the area studied.

CONCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The second group of research conceptions, includes theories of social changes. They consist of four groups; however, from the geographical point of view, the most essential is the first of them. Therefore, the following conceptions are discussed in detail (Tab. 2):

Tab. 2. Usefulness of the conceptions of social development in the interpretation of transformations of the Katowice region.

Theories of economic development	Main assumptions	Usefulness in the explanation of the transformations of the Katowice region
I. Theory of social modernisation	<p>Development of societies shows a linear character. Social change is understood as a progress, i.e. a move from underdevelopment to civilisation. The cause of transformations is an industrial revolution and its multi-aspect consequences. The progress is inevitable, but the dynamics of these transformations is various. The fact of local, regional or state differences (historical heritage) is not included here, although these factors influence the process of transition from a feudal society to modern capitalistic society.</p>	<p>Useful theory In social-economic geography modernisation is usually associated with the urbanisation process (spatial, demographic, social, economic, infrastructural aspects). It concerns both the investigations of the area of the core of the Katowice region and its surroundings in the broad sense. The literature of these aspects started in the inter-war period</p>
a. evolutionary approach (Spencer, Tylor, Morgan)	<p>Social evolution is understood as one of the types of Darwin's common evolution rule. Social change is synonymous to progress. A gradual, evolutionary nature of progress means that each succeeding stage of transformations results from the previous stage.</p>	<p>Useful theory Explaining possibilities in the analysis of development of structural changes. Changes of this type cause larger or smaller functional changes. Useful in the investigations of social structures and processes.</p>
b. dychtomic approach of social changes	<p><u>Saint-Simon</u>: Feudal society – industrial society. <u>Maine</u>: - society based on the rule of statute (basic role of a family and family bonds); - society based on a contract (system of rights and duties accepted by individual members). <u>Durkheim</u>: A man exists only as a member of a society and is dependent on it. In order to examine the level of advancement of a society towards development, it is necessary to determine its place in a continuum, the limits of which are marked by – on the one side mechanical solidarity (assemblage of beliefs and feelings common for all members of the group. A strict social control means that there are no differences between people); and on the other side, organic solidarity. Characteristic features include large amount of mutually complementing social roles, weakening of the role of religious beliefs and tradition in favour of rational thinking.</p>	<p>Partially useful conception It mainly concerns comparative analyses of social-demographic structures and processes from the period before and a after a certain stage of transformations of the area studied. These usually concern comparative studies of selected towns of the Katowice region in characteristic periods or moments.</p>

	<p><u>Tönnies:</u> The criterion of division is the type of social bonds. The following societies are distinguished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - primitive society – domination of direct human relations. Tradition, customs and religion play an essential role; - associational society – community of economic character based on a political commonwealth (a state). Social bond is treated as a kind of convention, agreement between people (in order to fulfil certain interests and needs). 	
c. sequence of modernisation stages	<p><u>W. Rostow :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - traditional society - first stage of modernisation: getting ready to start (investments); - second stage of modernisation: start (accelerated economic and technological growth → industrialisation); - third stage: reaching maturity (times of the 2nd industrial revolution – superseding of traditional industries); - fourth stage – maturity (using a surplus in economy, politics and domination over others, or creating a secure society – <i>welfare state</i>). 	Useful conception Numerous conceptions of development stages of the region.
d. conception of three waves	<p><u>A. Toffler</u> Changing society is compared to sea tides. The succeeding stage starts when the previous one retreats, causing political, economic, social or psychological crisis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the first wave – from 8 thousand years B.C. until 1650-1750; - the second wave – 1750 – the 1970s. - the third wave – after the 1970s. 	Limited usefulness For the Katowice region this model of transformations is too simplified.
e. tertiary models	<p>Fourastie, Bell Three sectors of economy – three types of societies: pre-industrial, industrial, post-industrial.</p>	Useful conception It is applied in publications during the last several years.
f. megatrends	<p><u>Naisbitt:</u> An attempt to distinguish certain development trends associated with economic, social and political processes (based mainly on transformations in the USA):</p>	Useless conception Until the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, lack of relation with world's social-economic processes.

<p>a. informational economy b. globalisation processes c. revival of locality d. new trends in urbanisation.</p>		<p>Useless theory On the one hand political closing of the region within a centrally-governed economy, and on the other hand political choice of further development was in fact determined just before the 1990s.</p>
<p><u>Burnham:</u> Possibilities if using different paths to the same aim i.e. modern society.</p>		<p>Useless conception Lack of proper material which would verify the assumptions of the research conception.</p>
<p><u>Galbraith:</u> The future character of a state will be determined not by ideologies or social conceptions, but consequences of the applied technologies and production organisation (technical determinism). In the society the following corporations may be distinguished: a) shareholders, b) wage-earners, c) "white collars".</p>		<p>Slightly useful conception Lack of certain materials both in social and economic spheres.</p>
<p><u>Smelsev:</u> Each modernisation process is connected with a phenomenon of structural differentiation. Complex tasks in more and more complex societies are carried out by more and more specialised organisational structures. Social problems occurring in the modernisation process result mainly from the lack of integration between these complex structures.</p>		<p>Useful theory At the time of annexation (1795-1918) the area of the Katowice region should be treated as a colony of three invading states. As G. Frank (1969) noticed that regions which in the past had the strongest connections with the metropolis are less developed. The consequence is a peripheral character of social-economic development.</p>
<p>g. convergence theory</p>		
<p>h. conception of industrial system</p>		
<p>i. conception of structural differentiation</p>		
<p>II. Theory of dependent development (Frank, Cardoso, Furtado)</p>		

<p>III. Theory of endogenic development (Schumacher)</p>	<p>Thesis of a predominating role of internal conditions of development in region transformations (emphasising their own consciousness and identity, cultural heritage, and rejecting external patterns). Postulate: new forms of management and development should be adjusted to specificity of each state, in order to include historical heritage.</p>	<p>Partly useful theory The specificity of origin and transformations of Katowice region at the borders of three state organisms gives the reasons for application of this research conception. Attention is paid to: development of self-government, idea of "small homeland", dislike of globalism, distrust of external experts and cosmopolitan elites (small is beautiful - Schumacher).</p>
<p>IV. Theory of the world's system (Wallerstein)</p>	<p>I. Wallerstein: a. necessity to observe processes of social changes in a wider way (not only from the point of view of one discipline); b. observation of transformation from a long time perspective. Objection to two-pole approach of the world's order: centre-peripheries in favour of three-level approach: core, semi-peripheries, peripheries.</p>	<p>Partly useful theory Classification of parts of the Katowice region as a core, semi-peripheries and peripheries is controversial.</p>

- 1) conception of modernisation,
- 2) theories of dependent development,
- 3) theories of endogenic development,
- 4) theory of the world's system.

The conception of modernisation, most efficiently developed in social sciences, contains at least 9 approaches – historically from the evolutionary approach to conceptions of structural differentiation. Their typical features are shown below.

Evolutional approach of modernisation represented by H. Spencer is also called a social functionalism. This author referred social transformation to the process of evolution in biological sciences. His theory is based on the following arguments:

- social reality should be considered as a system;
- processes recorded in this system should only be understood in categories of mutual relations of parts of the system to the whole of the system;
- a change in social structure causes functional changes. Therefore, the transformations of the first type cannot exist without transformations of the second type;
- a social system – similarly to a living organism – is a relatively isolated object, showing some processes acting towards retention of both its integrality and its boundaries (Tkocz, 2007, p. 181).

Such a conception of social functionalism is useful in characteristics of the historical process of community development of the Katowice region inhabitants, which has led from the state of social homogeneity just before industrialisation, through subsequent of urbanisation changes, until the modern period. The increasing complexity of social structure (differentiation of national, religious, employment, and income structures) in the developing contact region reflects the long-lasting process of social stratification. The fact that successive stages of transformation resulted from previous stages of social development additionally confirms the conception of H. Spencer.

The dynamic approach of social changes is quite popular in social sciences (e.g. Saint-Simon, Maine, Durkheim, Tönnies, Rostow). A common feature is the acceptance of the dual division of a society, e.g. autochthons and immigrants, urban population and rural population, younger population and older population, population with university education and population without university education, etc.). Such divisions occur in geographical literature, including works concerning the Katowice region. The subject of interest in this area has always been a) differentiation of the urbanisation process into the core of the Katowice or Rybnik conurbations and surrounding areas (e.g. Litewka, Rajman); b) social-demographic transformations of towns as compared to rural areas (e.g. Krakowska, Runge). It should be remembered, however, that limitation of the

differentiation spectrum and directions of social changes into the two-element approach is in many cases only a part of the whole social structure.

A tendency to identify the stages of the modernisation process is a self-evident aim of many scientists. It is therefore possible to set the subsequent development stages into order, which is not always consistent with the views of other scientists. As a result we usually have many approaches.

Inasmuch as the conception of Toffler's three waves has rather a global character and it is too simplified as for the research requirements of the Katowice region, the tertiary models refer to the theory of economic base, being a kind of supplement to it (pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial societies).

Also the next three approaches of modernisation, namely megatrends, convergence and the world's system, are also controversial. The first approach concerns global processes of changes which appear in post-industrial societies of high social-economic development. The second approach refers to a possible choice of the so called "alternative" development path between capitalist and communist societies. The third approach concerns changes within a society into a group of shareholders, wage-earners and superintendents ("white collars"). Factors such as a long period of functioning of a centrally-governed economy, the thesis of lack of social segregation in communism, limitation of contacts with the western world with only a few decades of political changes, make it difficult to apply or even hinder the application of this kind of investigations.

A similar character is shown by the approach of structural differentiation, which is very interesting as a conception, but at the present stage of transformations it is difficult to apply mainly because of material reasons.

Side by side with modernisation, a second important theory of social changes is the conception of dependent development. Searching for difficulties of development in former colonial dependences makes it possible to identify different consequences of the process of "washing out" development factors towards a metropolis. The period of 123 years of annexation may be treated this way for the Katowice region. The problem, however, is insufficiency of proper source materials for verification of these conceptions.

The social theory of endogenic development is an extension of the economic conception of endogenic development. Inasmuch as the endogenic approach does not accomplish its task, the supplement of the social layer may encourage a multi-aspect view on the role of local conditions in all of the transformations in this area.

The theory of the world's system by I. Wallerstein is also controversial, namely, how to identify a social core, semi-peripheries and peripheries. An attempt to refer Wallerstein's model to this region is possible, if we consider the historical outlook of transformations and its spatial dimension. In the first case we

leave the role of a core in social-economic transformations. Here the conception of economic cycles by N.D. Kondratiew should be mentioned. The Katowice region, as a classical representative of traditional regions, lost its leading role in transformations at the end of the 19th century. In the second case, the spatial dimension of the discussed model of social changes reveals a weakening role of towns and growing role of surrounding rural areas.

Taking into consideration all conceptions of social development discussed here it should be concluded that

- non of the classical models of social transformation is represented in the Katowice region in homogeneous form. In fact, only modernisation (as it is a historical aspect) is most distinguished among others;
- it is possible that features typical for several models of social transformations occur at the same time. This concerns spatial approaches.

The consequence of frequent fragmentation of social-economic reality in numerous theoretical conceptions and in restructuring proposals is a narrow aspect of research problems. It seems therefore, that conceptions of social development created on the basis of sociology may be applied in social geography. The condition here is not only taking into account spatial aspects, or the possibility of applying several models of transformations at the same time, but also the perception of weak points of the modernisation theory. The most important of them include

- excessive idealisation of social reality (taking into consideration not only real situations, but also ideal types of traditional, industrial or post-industrial society);
- assuming an exclusively linear character of development;
- in many cases lack of univocal character of the applied terms and notions;
- eurocentrism.

On the other hand, however, as it is proved by K. Krzysztofek, M. S. Szczepański, (2002, pp. 89): “modernisation theories, especially the newest on as, seem to be useful in the interpretation of part of Polish transformations. They help to describe economic and political impulses and influences, which come from outside the region, mainly from the West and which mark to a large extent development standards”...

CONCLUSIONS

Attempts to pay attention to conceptions of regional development in Polish geographical and economic literature may be found for instance in the works of such Authors as: S. L. Bagdziński, W. Maik, A. Potoczek (1995), P. Churski (2004), R. Domański (1997, 2006), G. Gorzelak (1989), J. Kołodziejcki (1993), W. Kosiedowski (1995), J. Kudełko (2005), J. J. Parysek (2004), D. Stawasz

(2004), but only G. Gorzelak made an attempt to be critical to the problem of application of these conceptions to the conditions of Polish economy – and what should be underlined – to the former centrally-governed (communist) economy.

On the regional level, the works of this type have a sporadic character. In the Katowice region, the work by A. Klasik (1987, 1988) should be mentioned, where the Author used selected conceptions of regional development to construct possible scenarios of further development of the region. It is easy to notice that they were prepared from the outlook of the former political-economic system. Social conditions of social transformations in the light of restructuring plans of the Katowice region were emphasised by W. Błasiak, T. Nawrocki and M. S. Szczepański (1994).

The inefficiency of conceptional approaches concerning the past, present and expected direction of social-economic transformations of the Katowice region makes a surprising discordance with trends of changes recorded recently in this area. Side by side with phenomena being unquestionable derivatives of transformations, there are also long-lasting trends of population transformations and their consequences. The overlapping of a low birth rate and social-economic consequences of transformations caused a decrease in population number, a clear process of demographic ageing of the society, a decrease in the significance of towns (especially large towns) in population migration. In 1982, for the first time after the change of the administrative division of Poland in 1975, faster dynamics of changes in population number as compared to the number of those employed in the economy was recorded. In 1983, there was a historical shift from the long-lasting period of domination of external migration to the period of domination of intra-regional population migration. In 1992, the end of the positive balance of migration for the towns of the Katowice province occurred (Runge, 2003, 2007). Since then, migrants have been more interested in towns located around the Katowice region, especially in Podbeskidzie (south of the region) or in the south-western part of the former Częstochowa province (e.g. Kroczyce, Żarki, Podlesice). This type of the processes of suburbanisation are more and more visible. Similar essential changes have been recorded in the economic sphere. In 1999, for the first time in the history of the region, the number of those employed in services exceeded the number of those employed in industry.

These, and many other phenomena distinctly show the necessity of preparing or adopting the model of transformations of the Katowice region, both in spatial and social-economic dimensions.

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