
Mental Procedures Helping Search For Solution Of Societal Problems

A Brodziak

Citation

A Brodziak. *Mental Procedures Helping Search For Solution Of Societal Problems*. The Internet Journal of World Health and Societal Politics. 2004 Volume 2 Number 1.

Abstract

Schemes of immaterial, 'invisible' concepts from the realm of psychology and sociology can evoke the impression of simplicity. Graphical models are however effective because visual pictures are appropriate to natural features and functions of receptors, neuronal pathways and all cognitive process of the brain.

The authors review some graphical models of the 'psychic apparatus', proposed formerly. They supplement the accessible graphical outlines by the scheme of so called 'higher level, supra human entity (social - self)'. It is a planar model, therefore a set of such planar schemes can be composed into a pile of different, interdisciplinary formulations. It can form the core of a graphical tool helping the search for the solution of different troublesome societal problems. The second step of this mental procedure foresees the search for possible actions increasing the awareness of a particular person or group of persons. It should be emphasized that usually just this 'broadening of understanding' (increasing of awareness) solve the societal problem.

The authors review some of severe, burdensome societal troubles and they chose for further consideration the problem of the risk of the depopulation of Europe.

They present in the paper also a short summary of this problem, its possible solution and the evaluation of their proposal by EU RTD Commission. They argue that it is a kind of verification of the effectiveness of the graphical tool proposed by them.

INTRODUCTION

There are only few authors, who try to visualize immaterial, 'invisible' concepts from the realm of psychology and sociology by means of graphical models (^{1,2,3,4})

Many readers of these papers analyzing the proposed schemes could have the impression that these pictures don't constitute serious scientific knowledge. Some of them can be discouraged by impression of simplicity.

Taking into account human abilities of perceiving, we should remark however that presentation of information by means of pictures is effective because it is appropriate to natural features and functions of receptors, neuronal pathways and all cognitive process of the brain.

There are thousand of articles and papers presenting important societal problems like: unemployment, depopulation, corruption, fundamentalism and terrorism by trials of linguistic, narrative description of these phenomena.

Sentences of language are pattern for thoughts. Thoughts consist on trial of imagination of objects. Mental processing of a problem can be enhanced by schemes, if they are not trivial. Semiotics remember us that humans communicate also by signs, having more or less iconographic character. It seems to us that discussion of new ways of iconographic presentation of cognitive, psychological and sociological functions and processes could be useful for many people trying to search for solution of mentioned problems. Therefore we try to propose bellow some new graphical tools discussing and confronting them with similar efforts done by Andrzej Kokoszka (^{2,3,4}).

SCHEMES OF PSYCHIC APPARATUS, PROPOSED FORMERLY

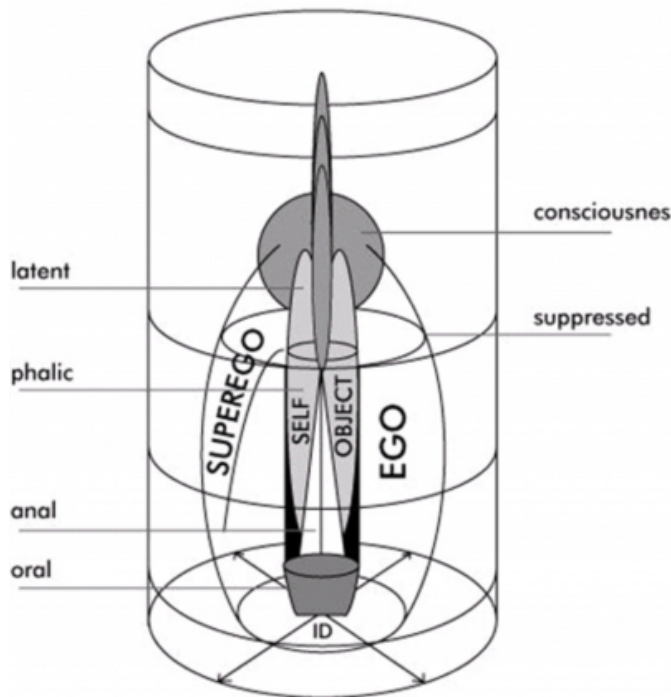
Sigmund Freud presented simple scheme of so called 'psychic apparatus', reproduced by A. Kokoszka (³). He succeeded to improve efficiently iconographic illustration of many aspects of Freud's theory (^{2,3,4}). My extensive

experience of utilization of his pictures as a tool facilitating the explanation of Freud's theory to students of medicine and nursing prove that the model is very effective. I present here on the fig. 1 a slight modification of this model. Here, apart of so called object, who first is usually the mother we marked ' next persons ' with whom we are speaking and thinking. The model enables visualization of main Freudian concepts, especially, what was difficult before the development of psychic apparatus in childhood. The difficult notion of consciousness is here depicted by an appropriate sign. By this way A. Kokoszka built the graphical model, which overcome educational difficulties in teaching Freud's theory, which is still rejected (again and again) as controversial by reason of defense of many people against realization of intimate, sexual elements of human psychic development.

Figure 1

Figure 1: Slight modification of Kokoszka's scheme. Here, apart of so called object, who usually is the mother we marked ' next persons ' with whom we are speaking and thinking.

PHASES



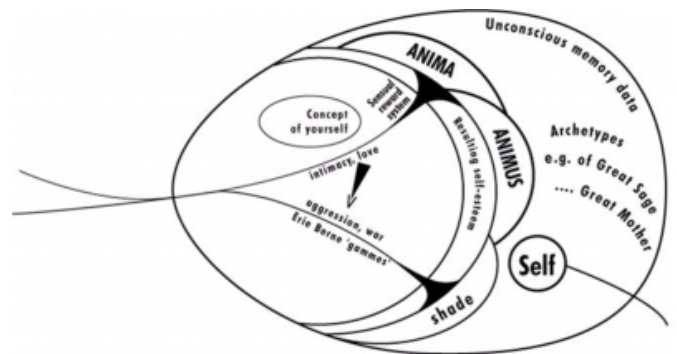
OWN GRAPHICAL MODELS OF ' PSYCHIC APPARATUS '

It happened that the author of this paper proposed many year ago another simple model of ' psychic apparatus ' (,). It was based on Carl Gustave Jung's concepts. One of possible, rather simplified scheme of this model is presented in fig.2 It

is possible to adjust Kokoszka's model to our scheme. It can be performed by imagination of three dimensional version of our planar scheme. However our planar outline has some advantages. It is easier probably to generalize the planar scheme of human, personal psyche to the scheme of ' societal mental entity '. Planar schemes enables also the composition of a set of several planar schemes to obtain the tools named bellow as ' solvers '.

Figure 2

Figure 2: Basic concepts of three important psychological theories are marked on the scheme. We can recognize here Carl Gustave Jung's notions and ideas of Eric Berne and Carl Rogers.

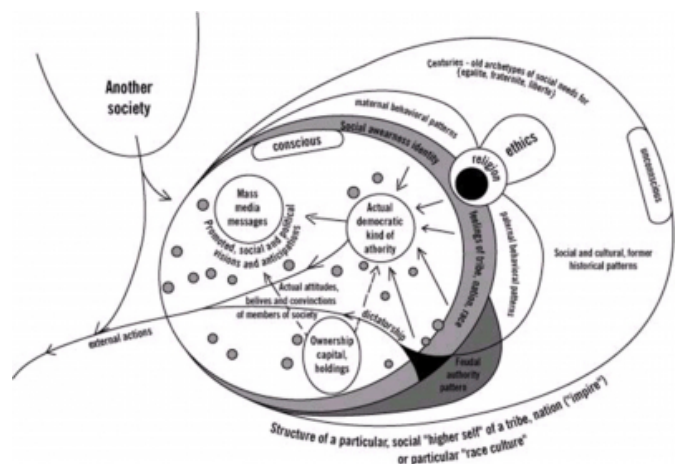


GRAPHICAL MODELS OF THE 'SOCIETAL MENTAL ENTITY' AND OF A SOCIETY AWARENESS

If we will assume that a particular discerned group of people (like tribe, nation , culture) forms a distinct ' higher level mind or mental entity ' it would be possible to propose its scheme. We do it on the fig. 3.

Figure 3

Figure 3: The scheme of the higher level, supra human entity (social - self)



There are some schools of thinking, which admit the real

existence of the higher level, supra human entities. In fact most of academic sociologists approve this assumption. Sociologists emphasize that humans are societal beings and cannot exist without group coexistence and cooperation. The links among individuals and groups are created by culture and internal structures of the society, e.g. multi level state administration institutions.

There are also advocated of different physical media of functional organization of such “higher level minds or selfs”. Rupert Sheldreake is taking about so called ' morphic fields' (10). Matti Pitkanen developed the vast, sophisticated theory of quantum entanglements (6) It seems to us that enormous amount of unsolved societal problems justify the trials of formulation of theoretical, also graphical models of society as well as its control, homeostatic and developmental mechanisms, which probably have features of supra - human intelligence or awareness. It occurred also that having the graphical models of societal mental entities it is possible to formulate the mental procedure helping to solve different societal problems.

GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION OF GENERAL MENTAL PROCEDURE FACILITATING SEARCH FOR SOLUTION OF SOCIETAL PROBLEMS

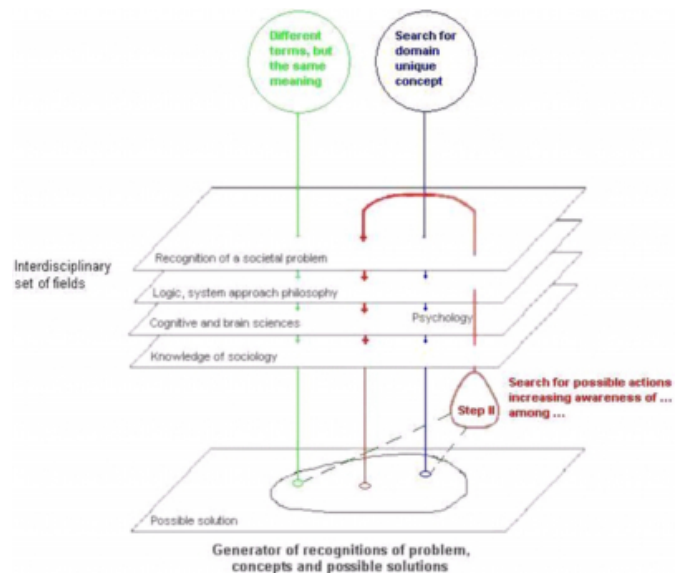
There are some scientific domains, discussing abstract, generalized rules of the problem solving. One of these rules states that the solution can be found if definition of the problem touches the most important factors of a real situation. Usually the search for solution of societal problems should be interdisciplinary. Using the planar schematic representation of different, interdisciplinary approaches and taking into account that most of societal problems, similarly to personal problems arise from limitation of awareness it is possible to propose the ' general mental problem solver '. In fact it is the mental, but first personal and finally the group thinking procedure, however it can be illustrated by a graphical outline also. All the range of various, specialized mental procedures can be proposed.

We present first, on the fig.4 the mental procedure, which help to establish the project of research leading to a solution of different troublesome societal problems. It is not random that the first proposed procedure concerns the way of the formulation of a proposal of scientific projects. We realize that usually the resources necessary to solve a strenuous, burdensome problem should be substantial. The implementation of the efficient control of a strenuous problem should be usually financed. Much more important is

however the permanent conviction of any citizens that it is possible, even rather easy to define the right way of going to solve any severe problems. In fact it is yet discussable if a simple procedure to formulate this way is known.

Figure 4

Figure 4: The outline of a mental procedure, which help to establish the project of research leading to a solution of different troublesome societal problems.



We want just to present here this kind of general tool facilitating the definition of the way to search for solution of severe social troubles.

The tool is composed of planar graphical representations of the definition of the societal problem and all the pile of representation of interdisciplinary set of different domain appropriate for the considered trouble.

The procedure foresees first to look among discerned domains for different terms with the same meaning and after for unique terms.

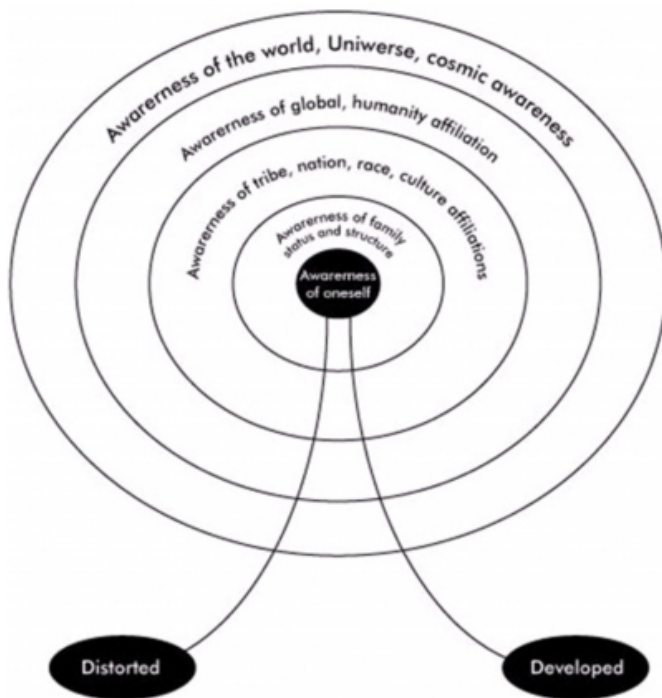
The second step of this mental procedure foresees the search for possible actions increasing the awareness of a particular person or group of persons. It should be emphasized that usually just this ' broadening of understanding ' (increasing of awareness) solve the societal problem, but the real process can be accomplished only when the resources for the project will be already allocated. The author of the project, on the step of the elaboration of the proposal of a project should anticipate however results of the action aiming the ' broadening of understanding ' . He should plan (know) what will happen after the increase of awareness, because such result can be only an intermediary step in of planed

endeavor.

Therefore it should be emphasized, that however the tool concerns social problems, but the essential assumption of the proposed method are related to the phenomenon of consciousness, understand in a very broad sense. We assume that a person or a group of people can have larger and larger awareness of the reality. It is illustrated by the fig. 5.

Figure 5

Figure 5: Scheme of the development of awareness of the reality.



So the way to solve different societal problems utilize achieved results of research upon various kind of awareness. It is obvious that the major bulk of these results came from consideration on personal awareness of oneself. It can be seen that our paper arise from the practical realization of the analogy between personal consciousness and societal awareness. The metaphor can be however also reversed. The society is 'visible' and can be analyzed by anybody of us. Remembering the proposed analogy we can grasp some phenomena of 'societal mental entity' and utilize conclusions in our personal life. Therefore a 'general mental problem solver', but concerning personal matters can be proposed also, however it should be discussed in a separate paper.

IMPORTANT, PRACTICAL PROBLEMS LYING IN THE SCOPE OF DISCUSSIONS, THEORIES AND RESEARCH ON PHENOMENON OF

AWARENESS AND CONSCIOUSNESS, RECOGNIZED BY US, WHICH MERIT FORMULATION OF PROJECTS, WHICH WOULD BE ABLE TO INDICATE APPROPRIATE SOLUTIONS

1. CONTEMPORARY, INEFFECTIVE MECHANISMS OF DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS.

Recently some social and political thinkers remarked, that at present so called 'democratic system' can not be more defined as the authority based on convictions of the majority of citizens. Contemporary, on average frequency of participation in election for European Parliament is about 10%, and in election of the US president about 30%. So called 'majority governments' are formed on the basis of vote of 20 - 25% of citizens of a country. Yet 20 - 50 years ago the participation was much higher (10+11).

Moreover citizens don't believe more in concept of so called political parties. Recently political parties are formed by a group of activists only. They are no more mass social organizations. Political platforms and programs are perceived as very similar. Only some elements of these programs would be supported. Programs are perceived as promises which are usually not fulfilled. Electors are not patient enough. Citizens who supported a party are not willing to wait rather long period of time, which is necessary for the anticipated change and realization of party's program.

Crisis of so called democratic society is characterized by frequent trials to influence governmental decisions by 'direct force actions' like street demonstrations and acts of less or more violent terrorist acts. Some people believe in e-mails sent to governmental institutions. People attach also hope to so called 'out governmental organization' (like Green Peace movement, anti-global organizations), which assume usually non-democratic principles of actions. Some governments and organizations try to experiment recently with so called 'direct democracy', which can be exemplified by frequent referenda.

In this situation the present state of the 'locus of the power' and the ways of control of 'governmental administration' by citizens should be think over. It seems that first 'scientists', who comprehend and grasp sociology, cognitive sciences, psychology and system approaches should propose some new forms of the organization of society. We try to stimulate the discussion by our proposition of methods enabling the analysis of 'societal higher self'. The starting point to this discussion is our scheme presented above.

2. SOFT (WEEK) STATE - WHAT TO DO ?

According to Gunnar Myrdal (Nobel prize winner in economics) and J.S. Migdal (5) so called ' soft state ' is characterized by : a/ low precision, inconsistencies and gaps in legislative regulations of the country, b/ non consequent execution of legislative regulations caused by : corruption, nepotism, lawlessness, lack of orderliness of officials and functionary, c/ low social orderliness, d/ unfair advantages from positions in administration to promotion of particular chosen social groups, e/ low efficiency of utilization of public funds, f/ low efficiency or inability of reorganizations. The problem how to change a soft state to much more efficient one it is a challenge for interdisciplinary scientific community.

3. RISKS OF ACTUAL CULTURAL, SPIRITUAL AND ECONOMIC PATTERN FOR THE DEPOPULATION OF EUROPE.

So called 'children/woman ratio' for all EU countries is now estimated to be 1,49. The value 2,1 is necessary to maintain the steady number of the population. It causes the quick decrease of overall European populations. The depopulation of many regions in Europe is anticipated in some countries like Italy, Greece, Czech Republic, Latvia or Hungaria, because the ratio is very low (near 1,1- 1,2) .

Paradoxically the prevalent state of mind of citizens, in most of European countries is reluctant to immigration. Moreover another paradox consists on simultaneous increasing unemployment with decreasing number of the population.

The understanding of this phenomenon is possible only by very interdisciplinary research and considerations, taking into account the psychological, religious, social and especially cultural factors. The problem is related to the average, spiritual state of mind of young European women.

The understanding of deep sociological and psychological reasons would facilitate the formulation of some practical social and economic interventions and the new cultural patterns, which should be promoted by mass media to overcome this demographic crisis.

EXPERIMENTAL PROOFS OF EFFICIENCY OF THE PROPOSED TOOL

There are a big amount of societal problems, which constitute a challenge to scientific community . For all of them the appropriate proposal of the scientific research, aiming to solve the problem could be formulated,

The graphical tool, conceived by us helped to formulate several proposals of scientific projects, which could solve very important societal problems. All the range of proposal of such project are presented under <http://salve.slam.katowice.pl/consciousness.htm>

Among them, we present on the page accessible under <http://salve.slam.katowice.pl/insight.htm> the proposal related to the mentioned problem sub title : “ Risks of actual cultural, spiritual and economic pattern for the depopulation of Europe - investigation of possible, necessary modifications “

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE SOLUTION FOUND FOR THE CHOSEN EXAMPLE

We presented to the EU RTD Commission the precise plan of multidisciplinary investigations and anticipated necessary remedies. Our conclusion from the presented inference is : “ The world is not for automats but for people !!! “

People should find equilibrium between the work controlled, accelerated and multiplied by ' processors ' and work performed by people. Processors should not replace women having children and wanting bring them up correctly, what is time consuming, burdensome and difficult human effort.

So called 'third sector' economy approach can help to solve the problem. The notion of 'third sector' was coined and is promoted by Jeremy Rifkin (6,7,8) The simple known controlling factor can be used. The modern economy utilizes often the mechanism of so called excise. This mechanism should consists on:

The imposition of excise on sale of any processor and on transfer of this money with destination to accounts, which will form funds enabling rewards for women having second or third child.

The appropriate short watchword (slogan, hint) should be proposed for this basic idea of the project. Probably it could be the sentence “excise on processors for rewards of maternity “.

Details of our plan of investigations and preventing activities see <http://salve.slam.katowice.pl/insight.htm>

VERIFICATION OF THE RESULT OBTAINED BY AID OF THE PROPOSED TOOL

The mentioned example of a severe societal problem was analyzed by aid of the presented tool. The solution, which was found, was formulated in the form of the proposal of the

scientific research. Our proposal was submitted as Specific Targeted Research Project for the call published on 27 February 2003 on “ New and Emerging Science and Technology “ - for action line INSIGHT projects (call reference number/identifier : FP6-2003-NEST-A, please refer to <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/nest.htm>)

The result of the evaluation of this proposal is accessible under <http://salve.slam.katowice.pl/evaluation.htm>

The overall rating attributed by evaluators of EU RTD Commission didn't reach the level necessary for the final approval and financial support of for the project, however it is not essential in the context of this paper.

The evaluators admit that the proposed solution of the societal problem could be effective ! Almost unique disadvantage of the proposed way is its 'dogmatism'. The evaluators have written: “...This proposal is based on a genuine insight about European depopulation and its potential impact on many important characteristics and elements of European society. There can be no doubt about the potential risks and high scientific uncertainties involved...”

“...The project has clearly defined and well- focused objectives, but they are not entirely appropriate to the INSIGHT programme. The proposers assume that they know, in outline, what the problem is, and how it should be addressed, and they envisage exploring how their presumed optimal solution could be implemented...”

“...A multi-disciplinary, fairly ambitious approach to assess the underlying causes for decreasing birth rates; however, the authors seem to have the result of their studies already at hand, including the (rather ideologically influenced) “remedy”, which has been debated for a hundred years...”

“...The project could offer useful information to European the policy makers, even if some objectives seem to be difficult to implement, as a new political party oriented only to the problems of depopulation or to new cultural patterns...”

“...This proposal is not really suited to the INSIGHT programme because it is too dogmatic....”

In our opinion, from the point of view of the verification of

the presented procedure, helping to search for possible solution the result of evaluation is quite good and positive.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite a progress in the domains of science and technology there are thousands of severe, burdensome societal problems. Theoretically, the optimal solution of any of these problems potentially exists. One of important obstacles to find a right solution consists on the necessity of interdisciplinary considerations and on the need to increasing the awareness of a particular person or group of persons. There are few formulation of general mental procedures helping the search for optimal solution. The presented trial of the verification argues that the proposed graphical tool really can help in search for solution of societal problems.

References

1. Brodziak A.(1994) [Is the integration of brain, cognitive, psychology sciences necessary ? - or how to avoid new wars ?] *Przegl. Lek.*, 51(6):255-60
2. Bielecki A., Kokoszka A. Holas P.(2000). Dynamic system theory approach to consciousness. *International J. Neuroscience*, 104(1-4):29-47
3. Kokoszka A.(1997) [An integrated model of psychic states]. Kraków, Publishing House of Jagielonian University - Collegium Medicum.
4. Kokoszka A. (1999)Information metabolism as a model of human experiences *Intern. J. of Neuroscience*, 97 (3-4):169-78
5. Migdal J.S.(1988). *Strong Societies and Weak States*. Princeton, Princeton University Press
6. Pitkanen M.: *Inspired theory of consciousness*. [<http://www.physics.helsinki.fi/~matpitka/index.html>]
7. Rifkin J.(1995). *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*, New York, Tarcher/Putman
8. Rifkin J.: *The Third Sector - and the Rebirth of Civil Society -* speech to Strasbourg Parliamentarians / NGO Conference 1999 [<http://www.jobsletter.org.nz/art/rifkin01.htm>]
9. Rifkin J. : *The End of Work - Five Years Later - Introduction to the 2000 Penguin Edition*. [<http://www.jobsletter.org.nz/art/rifkin01.htm>]
10. Sheldrake R.: *Sheldrake on line* [<http://www.sheldrake.org/index.html>]
11. *The electoral commission* [<http://www.electoralcommission.gov.uk/elections/>]
12. *United Nations Economic Commission for Europe - 12.4 Participation in elections* [<http://www.unece.org/stats/trend/ch12.htm>]

Author Information

Andrzej Brodziak

Professor, Chair, Clinical Department of Internal Diseases, Faculty of Public Health