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The Polish Career of *The American Soldier* From the Model to the Legend¹

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Abstract

The study conducted by Samuel Stouffer and his team in the US Army during World War II is generally considered to be a founding study in quantitative empirical sociology. The book *The American Soldier* (1949-1950) played an important role in the development and institutionalization of empirical social research. Joseph Ryan's monograph *Samuel Stouffer and the GI Survey* (2013) analyzes the history and reception of the research and book in the United States. This paper investigates the reception and impact of the book far from the United States: in Poland.

Keywords

The American Soldier; Samuel Stouffer; empirical social research; Polish sociology

Introduction

In the spring of 1945, divisions of the victorious American army halted at the Elbe, in the center of Germany. This border was to become the demarcation line between communist countries and the "free world." Many Poles regretted that the American soldiers had not gone further east. However, a soldier of sorts did venture further; *The American Soldier*, the work of the Research Branch created by Samuel Stouffer. This is the story of its career.

The research on the American military by Stouffer's branch during World War II was intended to provide reliable information to the leadership about soldiers' attitudes in order to aid decisions regarding the guidance and management of the armed forces. Generally speaking, the research helped the military—in war conditions—to move from an authoritarian model to a managerial one, replacing an emphasis on obedience with one on morale (Ryan 2013). Engineering and science are mutually inspiring. Published in the years 1949-1950, the four volumes of the *Studies in Social Psychology in World War II* are today acknowledged to be not only the fundamental study in military sociology,

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but also one of the founding works in quantitative sociology, playing an important role in the development and institutionalization of empirical social research (Converse 1987; Platt 1996; Schwebber 2002).

Strictly speaking, *The American Soldier* is the title of only the first two volumes of the *Studies* (Stouffer et al. 1949a,b), but in common parlance this is the name given to the entire work by Stouffer's team, which also includes *Experiments on Mass Communication* (Hovland et al. 1949) and *Measurement and Prediction* (Stouffer et al. 1950). Joseph Ryan's recently published (2013) and pithy monograph *Samuel Stouffer and the GI Survey* reveals the history and reception of the research and book in the United States. This article explores their reception and influence far from America, in Poland.

From the war to the post-Stalinist thaw

Before World War II, sociology in Poland was among the most highly developed in Europe and was based on a tradition reaching back to the nineteenth century (Bucholc 2016). Polish sociology originated as a native version of positivist sociology and later diversified into historical sociology, Marxism, humanistic sociology, the Durkheimian school, sociography, and other orientations. In the interwar period, sociology in Poland departed from theories of a speculative nature, entered the universities, and turned, as Thomas Kuhn would say, into a "normal science." Ludwik Krzywicki (1859-1941), Leon Petrażycki (1867-1931), Stefan Czarnowski (1979-1937) and Florian Znaniecki (1882-1958) are commonly recognized as the founding fathers and leading figures of early and prewar Polish sociology. Stanisław Ossowski (1907-1963), and Maria Ossowska (1896-1974), the scholars from the Lvov-Warsaw School of Philosophy, and Józef Chałasiński (1904-1979), a student of Znaniecki, all started their brilliant academic careers in the 1930s. Polish sociologists began to travel to universities abroad; a number of books on American society were written by those who had visited the United States. In 1932, Stanisław Rychliński published the first modern handbook on methods of social research, *Badanie środowiska społecznego [Studying Social Milieus]*, (Rychliński 1932), which was based mainly on American sociological literature, particularly on the achievements of the Chicago School.

World War II interrupted this development. Many sociologists were killed, and some left before, during, or after the war, but afterwards the discipline revived. New sociological institutions were created and some prewar institutions were reactivated. The University of Warsaw, along with other academic centers in Poland, started teaching sociology and conducting empirical social research. Just as before the war, case studies involving fieldwork and biographical research were most common. Polish sociology cemented its first contacts with world sociology in 1949 in Oslo, when Stanisław Ossowski signed the founding declaration of the International Sociological Association (ISA). Then, with the consolidation of communist power at the turn of end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s, social research and the teaching of sociology at universities was interrupted because sociology was considered a bourgeois discipline and was supposed to be replaced by historical materialism.

In this brief period, news of the most recent developments in American sociology did not manage to reach Poland let alone become widespread. The first postwar works on survey methodology could not even mention Stouffer's research; their authors based themselves on American textbooks from before 1945 (Mirek 1948) and on the experiences of the Gallup Institute and the Czechoslovakian

Public Opinion Research Center (Matejko 1948). The first postwar manual on methods of sociological research was written by Jan Szczepański (1951)—a student of Znaniecki and a future president of the ISA—and was based on his lectures at the University of Lodz. In the manual, he pointed to standardized surveys as a method that plays an important role in sociology. He thus based his work on American books, but did not refer to them explicitly. In any case, his readers did not learn about Stouffer’s study of the American military from this book either, although they may have heard about the work during their classes.

In March 1949, when the “cold war” period had already begun, Stanisław Ossowski, then head of the Sociology Department at the University of Warsaw, took part in the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace in New York as a member of the official Polish delegation. After the conference he visited Harvard, where he met Pitirim Sorokin and toured the Laboratory of Social Relations directed by Samuel Stouffer. On April 9, he noted in his diary (Ossowski in press):

Stouffer. He did not come to the party yesterday; today he slipped away at once. He is probably afraid to have contact with a delegate to a peace conference.² He receives large subsidies for research on the military. (The state can not subsidize science, because science is free. The military can.)

It is hard to call this episode a meeting even. From the entry it is also hard to determine whether Ossowski had heard about Stouffer’s research during the war or about his book, which was to appear a couple of weeks after this entry. Perhaps he had heard about it from Theodore Abel or Robert Lynd, with whom he met earlier at Columbia. Abel, who came from Poland and had been a student of Florian Znaniecki, sketched for him a collective portrait of American sociologists, and Lynd, who captivated him by his “progressive” views and interest in the social changes in Poland, published a notable criticism of Stouffer’s research a couple of months later (Lynd 1949).

The sociology departments of Polish universities were formally closed in 1952, but until then academic libraries could receive and import books from abroad. Ossowski’s Sociology Division in the Humanities Department of the University of Warsaw managed to buy all four volumes of *The American Soldier*. Ossowski knew about the appearance of the work from advertisements and reviews in the *American Sociological Review*. When his division was eliminated in 1952, the book collection – including the set of *The American Soldier* – was sent to the newly established library of the Philosophy Department. These were the last contemporary American books to arrive there. The political blockade on purchases lasted only for a short time, however. At the end of 1954 the library bought a second set of *The American Soldier*, and it was obvious that there were thoughts of reinstating sociology.

After being prevented from teaching sociology at the University of Warsaw, Stanisław Ossowski conducted private seminars in his own home for his students and colleagues—legally, though he was harassed by young communist activists. The attendees reported on and discussed contemporary American books. Hanna Malewska-Peyre (2003), a participant, remembered of these books Ernest Greenwood’s (1945) *Experimental Sociology* and “some methodological tome with those large studies into the American army”—that is, obviously, *Measurement and Prediction*. Both books came from the former library of Ossowski’s department. Among newer books they read *The Language of*

² Ossowski’s surmise is not necessarily correct. In a letter to me, Stouffer’s biographer, Joseph Ryan, commented that “It isn’t difficult for me to believe that Stouffer ducked out of a party early. While not exactly shy, he preferred smaller gatherings or the quiet of his office” (9 IX 2016).

Social Research by Paul Lazarsfeld and Morris Rosenberg (1955) and Stouffer's (1955) *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties*. From them they learned social research methods: "just theoretically for the moment, but with the hope of application." They were right, because before long the post-Stalinist thaw began. In 1955, the Polish Academy of Sciences's Institute of Philosophy and Sociology emerged and the Sociological Research Unit, directed by the Marxist Julian Hochfeld (1911-1966), began to study the working class. Marxists quickly abandoned their distaste for the methods of American sociology and in 1957 sociology returned to the university as a field of study and area for research. Stanisław Ossowski returned to academia at the same time. In sociology, a new generation of sociologists had appeared alongside the scholars trained before the war.

Many leading Polish sociologists traveled to America and other countries on Ford Foundation grants. (Sulek 2010; Kiliński 2017). The strategic goal of this program was to weaken Marxism and other ideological traditions, to reinforce empirical and rational thinking, and consequently to strengthen political pragmatism in Communist countries. The primary mission of Paul F. Lazarsfeld, who was the driving force of the program (he visited Poland twice in 1958), was to propagate his own conception of sociology in Europe as "empirical social research" (Pollak 1980; Sulek 1998a). Polish sociologists travelling to the United States brought back the latest sociological knowledge, acquaintance with contemporary methodology, personal contacts with foreign sociologists, and the newest books.

The American Soldier in the Polish army

After the political turning point of 1956, major changes also took place in the army. These were symbolized by the return to Moscow of the Soviet marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky, who had been minister of defense since 1949. The changes encompassed military training, the political apparatus, and methods of political propaganda. The Political-Military Academy, an institution training officers to conduct political and educational work in the armed forces, was reformed. The new commander of the Academy, General Adam Uziembło wrote firmly in an article in the officers' magazine *Wojsko Ludowe* [*The People's Army*] that political work in the military should rest on scientific foundations. "In the field of sociology and sociological studies," he wrote, "we have a lot of catching up to do in order to acquire a real understanding—no worse than in, for instance, the United States—of the moods and social attitudes of the working class, the masses, and in the army—of the mass of soldiers" (Uziembło 1957). That making up for lost time began quickly.

As early as 1957, the Military-Political Academy opened a sociology department, which was briefly headed by Jan Szczepański. In the same year, an extensive presentation by Zygmunt Gostkowski (1957) of the research on the American military in wartime appeared in *Wojsko Ludowe* along with Uziembło's article. Before the breakthrough of 1956, Gostkowski had been interested in the shaping and researching of public opinion in the United States and before long was to become one of the most innovative survey researchers in Poland. In his article, Gostkowski discussed the organization of research by Stouffer's team: the format of questionnaires; the idea of a representative sample, with the manner of its selection for research on the military; the experimentally proven effectiveness of film propaganda; and how the material was used. Gostkowski presented the research so illustratively, and in such detail, that it was possible to follow in the footsteps of Stouffer's team without having read the source material. He also presented American research into soldiers and enemy propaganda, and research on the military in peace time.

Before long, in 1958, the chairmanship of the Sociology Department in the Military-Political Academy was taken by Jerzy Wiatr of the University of Warsaw, a student of Hochfeld and an "engaged"

Marxist, but also a proponent of modernizing Marx through empirical research and the assimilation of sociological achievements. For example, in 1959 and on his initiative, the two first volumes of *The American Soldier* were translated on the basis of the copy in the University of Warsaw's sociological library. The following year the book appeared in four volumes (*Studia* 1960). These were published by the Board of Political Propaganda of the Main Political Board of the Polish Armed Forces as issues in the *Biuletyn Informacyjny* [*Information Bulletin*] in the "Psychology and Military Pedagogics Series." The book was intended "for the exclusive use of generals and officers of the Polish Armed Forces," but it was available, without restrictions, in several copies in the library of the Philosophy and Sociology Department at the University of Warsaw. It is not known whether other translations of the book were made anywhere in the world.

In the foreword to the translation, Wiatr made a partly formal, partly honest critique of the book from the Marxist standpoint; among other things, he pointed to the author's lack of class analysis of the American military. Such introductions were added to many translations of western sociological books in Poland. More importantly, Wiatr argued for the value of this work for the Polish military. First, he wrote, the book showed the American armed forces as a social institution and environment. Second, it revealed how sociological research was conducted and utilized in the American military. Third, it taught the methodology of sociological research in military conditions and for the practical uses of the armed forces. Wiatr also wrote favorably about *The American Soldier* in his numerous works on military sociology—starting with an introduction to military sociology, *Armia i społeczeństwo* (1960) [*The Military and Society*], where he reported on some of Stouffer's findings and generalized them for other armies (for instance, the findings concerning the hierarchical structure of the military). It is worth adding that Wiatr's department also issued a duplicated translation of Morris Janowitz's work (1962), including fragments of the book *The Professional Soldier*. These supplemented reports of research on the American military with a theoretical view of the military as a social institution and added information about military professionals to the information about conscripted soldiers.

It can be considered that, thanks to the translation and discussions of *The American Soldier*, the book was known to the educated members of the military, or at least many of them would have heard about a large and interesting sociological study of the American military during the war. I am unable to say how the findings of the American sociologists on shaping soldiers' attitudes affected practices in the Polish military in regard to training and leadership, the adaptation of soldiers to army conditions, evaluations of their morale, and so forth. However, this book undoubtedly influenced the development of military sociology in Poland. The Sociology Department, changed into the Department of Sociology of the Military, began systematic survey research into various aspects of military life and the relation between the military and civilian society. Research into the military, which was first undertaken by the Military-Political Academy, was continued by other research institutions. After the elimination of the Academy in 1990, there was even a separate Military Institute for Sociological Research that existed for several years. Naturally, that research is not currently shaped by studies of the US Army during World War II, but the first drives toward it came from America and are part of the tradition that *The American Soldier* created. The book itself is quoted in the works of contemporary military sociologists. For the most part, these are ritual and generalized references, serving to give an impression of the authors' erudition and to underline their connection with that praiseworthy tradition.

In the university world

From its rebirth (in the middle of the 1950s) to the end of the 1960s, sociology was taught and practiced at three universities in Poland: Warsaw, Lodz and Krakow. It was at the University of Warsaw that *The American Soldier* was most prominent, due mainly to Stefan Nowak, who became an “intervening variable” in the influence of American methodology on sociology in Poland. But also to Stanisław Ossowski and Zygmunt Bauman, who referred to Stouffer’s works in their discussions and polemics on the sociology of the time, both in Poland and abroad. At the time, Ossowski and Bauman were emblematic figures for two streams and two generations of Poland’s renewed discipline of sociology. Ossowski, who was born in 1897, was considered to be a classic exponent of Polish humanist sociology, while Zygmunt Bauman, born in 1925, was the rising star of modern Marxist sociology.

Shortly after the rebirth of sociology, Stefan Nowak, a student of Stanisław Ossowski, became the leading figure in the field of sociological methodology and also the embodiment of a new model of empirical sociology. In 1958, he conducted the first academic survey research in Poland (“Warsaw Students”), which was described on the front page of the *New York Times* (6 October 1958) as the first opinion survey to be conducted beyond the “iron curtain.” Nowak spent the academic year of 1958/9 on a Ford Foundation fellowship with Paul Lazarsfeld at Columbia, and on returning gave popular seminars and lectures propagating the new research techniques. Nowak had a significant impact on the empirical sociological model practiced in Poland after 1956 (Sulek 1998b). Although during his stay at Columbia, Nowak most probably did not meet Stouffer personally (Stouffer was then at Harvard), he studied *The American Soldier* closely, both directly and from other books that referred to it: *Studies in the Scope and Method of “The American Soldier,”* edited by Robert Merton and Lazarsfeld (1950), Herbert Hyman’s book *Survey Design and Analysis* (1955), and the well-known essay on *The American Soldier* written by Lazarsfeld (1949) for *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

For Nowak, the research by Stouffer’s team was a source of persuasive and memorable examples to be used in his university teaching. He quoted findings from *The American Soldier* in order to show how deceptive a reliance on common knowledge can be. It was generally considered obvious that better educated soldiers and soldiers from the city would have a harder time dealing with the difficulties of military service and the stress of battle than less educated soldiers and those from rural areas: farm people and people with little education were considered to be less psychologically sensitive and more accustomed to hardships. The research showed the opposite: better educated soldiers and those from the city managed more easily. In order to show how a mediating variable can elucidate a surprising original relation, Nowak (1968) cited the explanation of an *additional* relation between the educational level of recruits and their willingness to do military service: less educated soldiers more often had acquaintances who, on account of work in arms factories, were exempt from service, and thus being drafted appeared to them an injustice on the part of fate. From Stouffer’s research, Nowak also drew models of valid indicators. One such example for him was the question of whether a soldier wore his uniform or civilian clothing while on leave; this behavior was a very accurate indicator of identification with the military. Nowak’s former students also remember a curious indicator of the caste nature of the American military—non-commissioned officers who were promoted into the officer ranks were released from service for a day before being called into the officer corps!

In empirical social research *The American Soldier* functioned as a manual, or rather as a tool box. The first manual of research methods appeared in Poland only in 1965, when censorship allowed the printing of Nowak’s reader *Metody badań socjologicznych* [*Methods of Sociological Research*]. It was composed of translated chapters of an American manual of research methods from the first part

of the 1950s, and many of them referred to examples, experiments, or innovations in Stouffer's research (Nowak 1965). These included the chapters presenting—or examples illustrating—the selection of indicators (Patricia Kendall), control and interpretation of statistical relationships (Marie Jahoda et al.), experimental designs (William Goode and Paul Hatt, Carl Hovland et al.), Lazarsfeld's latent structure analysis, and Guttman scalogram (Stouffer). The book had a print run of 5,000 copies, which was many times higher than the number of all the sociologists and sociology students in Poland, and for many years was the basic manual of social research in Poland, not only for sociologists, but also for pedagogues, psychologists, and other researchers. It was a major conveyor of the methods and findings of *The American Soldier*.

Examples from Stouffer's team's research also appeared in other popular books of this time. Aleksander Matejko (1962), in a monograph on the sociology of industry in America, referred to findings concerning the key importance of “small groups” in the American military and expanded them to other armies (the Wehrmacht) and other institutions (factories). Hovland's experiments were discussed by Stefan Szostkiewicz (1961) in the textbook *Procedury i techniki badań socjologicznych* [*Procedures and Techniques of Sociological Research*], and generalizations concerning group conformism were formulated in Andrzej Malewski's well-known book (1965, 1967) *O zastosowaniach teorii zachowania* [*Applications of Behavior Theory*].

The case of the Guttman scale is particularly interesting as an example of the migration of a methodological idea. This type of scale, which was developed during the research into American soldiers, appears in Nowak's studies of Warsaw students. In 1958 the students were asked if a person “should risk his life in defense of”—the truth, human dignity, family, religion, the fatherland, friends, a social ideal, or human life. It is not possible to determine, today, whether it was earlier surmised or unexpectedly discovered that the students' answers formed a cumulative Guttman-type order with a high “coefficient of reproducibility”: human life, family, the fatherland, human dignity, friends, truth, religion, a social ideal. Witold Jedlicki, who discovered it, drew inspiration directly from *Measurement and Prediction* in acknowledging that the scale did not measure an outward preparedness to “die for” things but is a scale of “ritualism” in regard to values. Three years later, the repetition of the question revealed a “distinct decline in the popularity of the model whereby a Pole is ready to stick his neck out and risk his life for everything, or at least to value that readiness in others” (Pawelczyńska and Nowak, 1962). Unfortunately, the cumulative nature of this scale was not used in the analysis; the respondent was not given *one* score on that scale, defined by the highest chosen value. Furthermore, Jedlicki's analysis itself remained in typescript form, and later existed only in the memories of the quite small number of people who had read it.

Over time, ideas from Stouffer's team's research became part of the practice of social research in Poland. Their connection with *The American Soldier* became blurred, and it became possible to turn to Polish studies for examples. For Nowak himself, *The American Soldier* was replaced by *Warsaw Students*, and the paradigmatic question of whether a soldier wore his uniform or civilian clothes on leave was replaced by the question “Would you want the world to move in the direction of some form of socialism?” On the other hand, the theoretical implications of the research into the American military gained in significance. This was favored by the fact that in 1962 translations of Hans Speier's article “*The American Soldier* and the Sociology of Military Organization” and of Robert Merton and Alice Kitt's essay “Contributions to the Theory of Reference Group Behavior” appeared in a popular anthology, *Zagadnienia psychologii społecznej* (Malewski 1962) [*Issues in Social Psychology*]. Both articles were from Merton and Lazarsfeld's (1950) book *Continuities in Social Research: Studies in*

the Scope and Method of "The American Soldier." The second article also appeared as a chapter in Merton's *Social Theory and Social Structure* when it was published in Polish (1982).

Among the theoretical innovations of *The American Soldier*, the best known is the idea of relative deprivation. In connection with another important concept—the reference group—it quickly entered circulation, first in academic sociology, later in public sociology, and finally in social journalism. Today, it is no longer elucidated by the example of promoted but dissatisfied air force soldiers and unpromoted but satisfied MPs in the American military.³ The idea can be understood without illustration and, if it needs exemplification, then in Poland's period of systemic transformation and the population's striking inequality in profiting from it there are sufficient examples of relative deprivation—among those who *came out ahead* in the transformation—to not need to reference Stouffer. The longevity of this concept is attested by a newspaper excerpt of an interview with an expert in regard to the 2016 terrorist attacks in Europe (Sasnal 2016). In rebutting the opinion that acts of terror are the blood-soaked harvest of a policy of multiculturalism, the expert explained that

Millions of French Muslims are quite well integrated with the rest of society. But at the same time, many at the lower levels of society are suffering so-called relative deprivation. They aren't hungry, as in Syria; the bombs aren't dropping on their heads; they aren't subject to the terror of the rules introduced by the Islamists. But it is enough for them to turn on the television to be convinced that they have less than others, that they live worse, are poor, and are condemned to failure in life. Such a feeling grows, and thus social and individual frustrations accumulate. And this breeds radicalism, which in the case of Arab society, can be Islamized.

Stouffer's research and book also appeared in meta-sociological discussions in Poland in the early 1960s.

Stanisław Ossowski then wrote the important book *O osobliwościach nauk społecznych* (1962, 1973) [*On Peculiarities of the Social Sciences*], which contained a critical analysis of "modern empirical sociology" and its fascination with the natural sciences model. In Poland empirical sociology—because that is what it was called—was also the model for engaging in sociology, and thus Ossowski countered it with the model of sociology as a humanist discipline. The book is full of the imprint of his meetings, lectures, and experiences during a long stay in America in 1958, supported by the Ford Foundation. Stouffer's research into the American military appears in Ossowski's book as a model representation of empirical sociology, both in terms of research technology and epistemological limitations: Stouffer's team developed a refined quantitative methodology but used it to research problems that concerned specific collectives and were moreover narrowly practical.

Ossowski expressed his opinion of Stouffer's studies using quotations from reviews by their American critics. He referred with approbation to Sorokin (1956: 146), who wrote in *Fads and Foibles in Modern Sociology* that Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* gives "not only a more vivid, more significant, but also more accurate picture of the motivations studied." Sorokin referred to Tolstoy because Stouffer opened his work with a quote from that author—"in warfare the force of armies is the product of the mass multiplied by something else, an unknown x ," and that x factor is "the spirit of the army," or its morale, which Stouffer had decided to study with modern scientific methods. Ossowski

³ Although promotions in the air force were decidedly more frequent than in the military police, the air force soldiers had a much worse opinion of their system of promotion than the MPs had, because the soldiers in each force compared themselves with their colleagues and not with the soldiers in the other force; for those airmen who were promoted, the promotion did not seem out of the ordinary, but for those who were not, the failure was more painful than for the MPs (Stouffer et al. 1949a: 251-253).

considered that contemporary “research of the Stouffer-studies type” was morally ambivalent—“they aim to perfect the technique of effectively managing human masses according to aims decreed by those at the top” (p. 310). He suggested here, probably due to reading too much into Lynd’s opinion, that the true aim of Stouffer’s research was to “find a successful method of subordinating hundreds of thousands of young men to the will of the American leadership, in order most efficiently to incline them to risk their necks for matters that are foreign to them.” This was supposed to be an example of how sociological research, encouraged by the holders of power and capital, enhances the power of those who already possess it.

In *Wizje ludzkiego świata* [*Visions of a Human World*], another much-read book of the period—and relying on the opinions of those same two American sociologists—Zygmunt Bauman (1964) appraised Stouffer’s research in a similar spirit. Criticizing the ease with which the sociologists treat the survey answers as information about psycho-social reality, Bauman (1964: 274) quotes Sorokin’s words from *Fads and Foibles*:

In their study of the correlation between the educational level of samples from the U.S. armed forces and their combat performances—they [the group of scientists headed by Stouffer] neither directly observed nor scientifically tested the combat performance of their samples, nor evaluated it themselves on the basis of any objective, verifiable data. Instead, they simply took the opinion of some army authorities without the slightest checking of its correctness” (1958: 38).

In criticizing what he considered to be the manipulative nature of neo-positivist sociology, Bauman (pp. 258-259) relied on Lynd’s opinion of *The American Soldier*, cited by Mills (1959):

These volumes depict science being used with great skill to sort out and to control men for purposes not of their own willing. [...] With such socially extraneous purposes controlling the use of social science, each advance in its use tends to make it an instrument of mass control, and threat to democracy.

It is noteworthy that neither Ossowski nor Bauman informed their Polish readers about the contents and character of *The American Soldier*; they wrote about the book as about things that were then known from hearsay. Neither Ossowski nor Bauman attempted an independent interpretation of the work, and it is certain that at least Ossowski knew the book firsthand. In the case of both authors, it was basically not about criticism of Stouffer’s research and work; it was only an argument in the critique of a certain model or style of engaging in sociology; *The American Soldier* appeared as an “empirical type” of the style, something like the Church of the Gesù in Rome for baroque sacral architecture. We might call it the humanist critique, because the connotations of the term “leftist criticism” are rather too strong and too unequivocally political. Both Ossowski and Bauman, it would seem, were speaking less of American sociology and more about sociology in Poland. They did not criticize it directly, but very indirectly: using quotations from American sociologists, they criticized its American prototype. It was as if people who did not like the baroque churches built in Poland criticized them not by pointing out that their ornamentation offends harmony and moderation, but by quoting the opinions of Italian critics of the Roman prototype. In Poland at the time, Stouffer’s name (like Lazarsfeld’s) symbolized empirical sociology, which for some meant “modernity” and for others “the invasion of sociological Americanism.” The name was given to a kind of research and appeared in the unpleasant plural “Lazarsfelds and Stouffers.” In sociology, world theories, methods, and names are tools in local struggles. This was precisely such a case.

Conclusion

In the case of *The American Soldier*, as in the case of many other works, the Mertonian principle of incorporation by obliteration operates. The methodology and general findings of this work have grown into the fabric of sociological knowledge, and for Polish sociologists, particularly the younger generation, the general awareness that Guttman scalogram and relative deprivation are connected with Stouffer's research on the American military in World War II has worn away. Although only the smallest number of currently active sociologists have ever had *The American Soldier* in their hands; the ideas, methods, and conclusions of this book reached them indirectly, by means of a multistage process of academic communication. The same happens with many classic sociological works, which are more often "known" than read; that is, they "are known" without being read.

When empirical sociology formed in Poland at the turn of the 1950s to 1960s, *The American Soldier* was presented not only as a great achievement but also as persuasive proof of sociology's vast potential. In his lectures on methodology at the beginning of the 1960s, Stefan Nowak reminded his audience that, thanks to this research, the American leadership was able to learn what soldiers preferred for the coming time of peace, and the government was thus able to prepare university places for millions of former soldiers wanting to study. This made an impression on the students. In the literature, it is pointed out that Stouffer's research helped plan and conduct, with as little conflict as possible, the great operation of demobilizing a couple million soldiers. Stouffer worked out a point system that made it possible for a soldier to be discharged on the basis of four criteria: length of service in the army, length of service abroad, participation in battle, and number of children (waiting for their father's return). It turned out that among the soldiers who were not released in first order, the decided majority considered the system to be just (Stouffer et al. 1949b: 520-548). This is one of the most well-known examples of a point system as a method for distributing indivisible goods (Lisowski 2012). Today in Poland, after the outburst of Solidarity and the implosion of the communist system, we know that sociology cannot manage to foresee systemic discontinuations as well as it can predict mass individual decisions (Sulek 2009). We also know how difficult it is to design a method for distributing goods that will also be accepted by those who do not receive them, or receive them in diminished quantity. Nevertheless, Stouffer's research and work became part of the scientific legend, a symbol of an innovative and successful social study.

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