

In this Issue

This sixth issue of the *Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology* has an international focus, highlighting articles discussing China, Afghanistan, and France. We feature two articles on China. Krzysztof Kozłowski explores various features of the Chinese economy, and various types of private property forms prevailing there, and concludes that the reason it is so hard to decipher what kind of capitalism prevails in China is that there is no single model of Chinese capitalism but only *models* of Chinese capitalism, all contained within the same system. The future, he says, will be shaped by the peculiar interaction of China's new capitalist institutions with the country's old traditions still grounded largely on Maoist experiences.

Stefan Gardawski, meanwhile, looks at contemporary China from a different, more personal angle. Himself working in production and import, Gardawski travels to China frequently, and he reports here on his conversations and interactions with Chinese businesspeople and workers. Gardawski allows us to hear the laments of Chinese employers about labour shortages and, consequently, rising wages. The implications about the growing strength of Chinese labour, with their ability to extract higher wages, underpin the title of the piece concerning the 'end of the Chinese labour market as we know it'.

If China, according to Kozłowski, contains within it diverse models of capitalism, not fully at peace with themselves, French capitalism is also marked by contradictory tendencies, according to Michel Goyer. Building on the 'varieties of capitalism' literature, Goyer argues that France has economic institutions endemic to a 'liberal market economy' existing side-by-side with those prominent in a 'coordinated market economy', resulting in a system marked by what he calls 'institutional hybridization'. The central contradiction here that between rigid labour markets, typical of a CME, with a prominence of transferable skills usually seen in an LME. This, says Goyer, results in companies unable to reap the full benefits of either model. Although statism is usually seen as key to French political and economic forms, Goyer argues that the

French state has contributed to this debilitating hybridity by stifling the development of the institutional capacities of trade unions, which are central to the emergence of coordinated market economies. State intervention in the post-war period until the mid-1980s reduced the tensions inherent in a hybrid model, while never quite solving the underlying institutional disorder.

Turning to Afghanistan, meanwhile, Joanna Modrzejewska-Leśniewska offers an original interpretation of the problems facing that country as being based on a variant of the so-called 'Dutch disease', which holds that negative consequences usually result from large increases in a country's income as a result of the discovery of a national resource. Although Afghanistan does contain a large amount of natural resources much-needed for the world economy, the 'resource' Modrzejewska-Leśniewska focuses on is opium. She offers a useful history of stumbling Afghan efforts at modernization, showing how opium gradually came to be the cash crop of choice for whatever state was in power. The Taliban tried to ban poppy cultivation in 2000, but this only led to a rise in prices and a mushrooming in production, which continues to this day. Poppy cultivation and opium production now dominate the country, despite western occupation for over a decade now, leaving few obvious prospects for improvement.

Katarzyna Górak-Sosnowska offers an interesting glimpse into the world of an emerging Islamic consumer culture, challenging the stereotypical view of Islamic culture as repressive and hostile to consumerism. The author points out to the fact that modern consumer culture in the Islamic world is shaped by pressures of global popular culture, yet it is deeply embedded in the traditional values of the local communities.

We also publish here a compilation of some writings completed by the late Tadeusz Kowalik in his final years. The article covers a chapter from a book *Economic Systems. Effects and Defects of Reforms and Systemic Changes* (*Systemy gospodarcze. Efekty i defekty reform i zmian ustrojowych*) and a book www.polskatransformacja.pl (also available in English under the title *From Solidarity to Sell-out*). It is intended to show Kowalik's assessment of the balance of reform efforts in Poland over the first fifteen years of postcommunist transformation, arguing that Poland unnecessarily adopted a model that exacerbated unemployment, rural and urban poverty, and high levels of inequality, despite alternatives being available. He presents here a wealth of data on the extreme class-based nature of the transformation, arguing that the outcome was a result not of the interplay of market forces but of the conscious choices of knowledgeable actors, who chose to promote greed, corruption and cronyism, and to oversee the denigration of Polish industrial assets. High GDP growth would

have been attainable with a much more rational, and kinder, process based on only moderate changes in ownership structures, he shows, using late 1990s data to bolster his case.

We devoted the previous issue of WFES to the memory of Tadeusz Kowalik, who died in 2012, and promised to continue the interaction with his ideas. The article we deliver shows Kowalik at his shrewdest and most passionate, at the height of his powers. In order to fully commemorate the great Polish economist, we have chosen to parallel the compilation article by an extensive review of *Systemy gospodarcze, efekty i defekty reform i zmian ustrojowych*.

We invite readers to respond to this ongoing debate on the sociological impacts of transformation, focusing not just on Poland and 1989, as Kowalik does here, but on all kinds of transformations going on in our globalized world today, as do the other contributions in this issue. In the meantime, we wish you stimulating reading with our sixth issue of the *Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology*.