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Is there a room for proper scientific discussion in the area of controversies and competing scientific theories? A polemic

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Czy w obszarze kontrowersji i istniejących konkurencyjnych teorii naukowych nie należy dopuścić do odpowiedniej naukowej dyskusji? Artykuł polemiczny

Streszczenie

Od wielu lat rywalizują teorie auto- i allochtoniczna pochodzenia Słowian oraz ich zwolennicy. Badania z ostatnich lat (genetyczne, antropologiczne, a także lingwistyczne) potwierdzają wczesne zaistnienie Słowian na ziemiach polskich oraz ich stałe zasiedlenie tych ziem. Wbrew temu w niektórych środowiskach, zwłaszcza wśród archeologów, tezy o autochtoniczności Słowian traktowane są jako błędy merytoryczne. Bezpośrednim powodem napisania tego artykułu jest fakt zablokowania upowszechnienia wydanej już książki z historii kultury fizycznej.

Rzecz dotyczy dwóch kwestii – 1) sposobu funkcjonowania nauki i dochodzenia do prawdy, gdy zderzają się konkurencyjne paradygmaty (w perspektywie socjologii nauki); 2) pochodzenia Słowian, bezpośrednich przodków dzisiejszych Polaków, co wydaje się szczególnie ważne zarówno dla

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polskiej historii, jak i dzisiejszej tożsamości. Zdaniem autora zwolennicy koncepcji allochtonicznej ignorują wiedzę wynikającą z badań i publikacji ostatnich lat, toteż zostały przytoczone publikacje – skrótowny przegląd literatury przedmiotu.

Słowa kluczowe: słowiańskie starożytności, zachodni Słowianie, rywalizujące teorie, paradygmat, nowa wiedza.

Abstract

Auto- and allochthonous theories of the origin of the Slavs and their supporters have been competing for many years. Recent research (genetic, anthropological and linguistic) confirms the early appearance of the Slavs on Polish lands and their permanent settlement in these lands. Contrary to this, in some circles, especially among archaeologists, the theses about the indigeneness of the Slavs are treated as substantive errors. The direct reason for writing this article is the fact that the dissemination of an already published book on the history of physical culture has been blocked.

The article concerns two issues – 1) the way science functions and the way to find the truth when competing paradigms collide (from the perspective of the sociology of science); 2) the origin of the Slavs, the direct ancestors of today's Poles, which seems particularly important both for Polish history and today's identity. According to the author, supporters of the allochthonous concept ignore the knowledge resulting from research and publications of recent years. Therefore, publications have been cited - a brief review of the literature on the subject.

Keywords: Slavic antiquities, Western Slavs, competing theories, paradigm, new knowledge.

Introduction

The inspiration for writing this article came from the fact that His Magnificence, Rector of the University of Rzeszów banned the dissemination of an already published book entitled *Ewolucja rekreacji na ziemiach polskich* [*The Evolution of Recreation on the Polish Territory*]. The book in question was written by Grzegorz Bielec, PhD, and Prof. Wojciech J. Cynarski, who are both employed at the Institute of Sciences on Physical Culture at the aforementioned university. Their work was reviewed by Prof. UJD (Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa) Eligiusz Małolepszy, PhD Habilitatus, a specialist in the history of physical culture. The aforementioned publication focuses on the history of physical culture, and in particular physical recreation. This book¹ was assessed by the Institute Council, an agreement on its publication was signed, the publishing process was finished, and when the whole edition was printed, the aforementioned decision to cancel the whole edition arrived. The matter is without any precedence. The author used an opportunity to publish his article in "Sport and Tourism Central European Journal" in the rubric devoted to biograms, discussions, polemics, reviews, publication reviews, reports.

¹ G. Bielec, W.J. Cynarski, *Ewolucja rekreacji na ziemiach polskich*, Wyd. UR, Rzeszów 2022.

The author claims that the aim of science is to pursue the truth understood in the classical way.² It is placed in the oath taken during one's PhD nomination. Therefore, despite certain risk related to the reluctance of some environments to change deeply-rooted views on given areas of reality (called paradigms), this effort was made in the name of truth about the very origins of the Polish nation and its history dating back to the times before the establishment of the Christian, Polish statehood. The authors decided to discuss the matter beginning with ancient earliest beginnings.

During his inaugural lecture at the University of Rzeszów, which was devoted to freedom of speech in science, the Minister of Education and Science, Przemysław Czarnek, emphasised what follows, "The constitutional legislator guarantees everyone artistic freedom, scientific research and publishing its results, freedom of education and benefiting from cultural heritage."³ Is this freedom of publishing research results granted in that case?

What stood behind the decision to ruin the results of the research conducted by the whole group of scholars? Why did the textbook for students require such an exceptional intervention? Did it? Is acting like this a good way to impose one's scientific domination? Is it not better to run polemics in scientific periodicals with the use of substantive arguments? There should be more questions devoid of answers in this article. Similarly, the authors' question about the reason of this decision, i.e. what was badly/ wrongly written was left without a straightforward answer. The author of this article thinks that the main reason was the discrepancy between certain theses present in the book and the paradigm accepted by some scientific environments.

From the point of view of sociology of science, explored among all by Robert Merton and Thomas Kuhn,⁴ one has to take into account social conditions and difficulties regarding the change in a paradigm, i.e. commonly accepted way of scientific conduct and interpretation of certain facts. There is, for example, a psychological issue of cognitive dissonance. That is why, despite new scientific findings, one sometimes finds it difficult to agree that things are different than they used to believe. It happens that someone sticks faithfully to a given version of a scientific description in an irrational way. And how does it relate to the attitude of openness and to the imperative of pursuing the truth?

² W. J. Cynarski, Z. Reguli, *Participation in cultural dialogues based on the classical theory of truth*, "Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology" 2022, vol. 22, no. 4, pp. 1–6.

³ P. Czarnek, *Wykład inauguracyjny prof. dra hab. Przemysława Czarnka*, "Gazeta Uniwersytecka UR" 2022, nr 3, p. 18.

⁴ T. Kuhn, *Struktura rewolucji naukowych (The Structure of Scientific Revolutions)*, translated by H. Ostromecka, PWN, Warszawa 1968.

Imre Lakatos used a concept of a research programme.⁵ Among competing theories (research programmes) wins the one which can explain a given area of reality in a better way. A falsified theory is rejected, or, alternatively, modified. In case of existing controversies or total lack of certain knowledge (description, explanation), various theories or hypotheses are considered equal and wait to be confirmed or rejected in the course of research. It is possible to use empirical or logical evidence.

Competing theories concerning the origins of Western Slavs

For many years, the origins of Western Slavs, also called Lechites due to the name of Lechitic languages used in linguistics (which particularly concerns the ancestors of contemporary Poles and Polabian Slavs), have been a bone of contention among various specialists, divided into the supporters of the autochthonous and allochthonic theories. In a nutshell, the first group thinks that the ancestors of contemporary Poles have been living on the territory of contemporary Poland even for several thousand years, whereas the latter believes that Slavs arrived there only in the 6th – 7th centuries AD.

The author supports the autochthonous theory confirmed by archeological studies and publications by Prof. Józef Kostrzewski (1885–1969) / the research programme of this scholar showing that at least since the time of Biskupin settlement (archeological Lusatian culture) the immediate ancestors of contemporary Poles have been living on the Polish territory all that time.⁶

The competing, allochthonic theory points to a late arrival of Slavs to this territory – from Pripyat and also from other directions. This concept is in accordance with the idea of Grand Germania propagated by Gustaf Kossina (1858–1931). In Kosiński's opinion, G. Kossina's views and Nazi, Pan-Germanic ideology of Slavs propagated by him and still persisting among many Polish researchers result in presenting Slavs as latecomers, strangers who suddenly appeared in Europe in the 6th and 7th centuries – primitive, illiterate people without any ancient past, etc.⁷ People who were able to produce ceramics and other artifacts of poor quality, as those more beautiful ones must have been created by Celts and Germans.

⁵ I. Lakatos, *Pisma z filozofii nauk empirycznych*, (translated by W. Sady) PWN, Warszawa 1995.

⁶ Cf. J. Kostrzewski, *Kultura prapolska*, II wyd., Instytut Zachodni, Poznań 1949; idem, *Zagadnienie ciągłości zaludnienia ziem polskich w pradziejach (od połowy II tysiąclecia p.n.e. do wczesnego średniowiecza)*, Poznań 1961; idem, *The question of the continuity of the population of the Polish lands*, PWN, Poznań 1963; P. Jasienica, *Słowiański rodowód*, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa 1978.

⁷ T. Kosiński, *Rodowód Słowian. Nowe spojrzenie na jeden z najbardziej fascynujących problemów w dziejach Starego Kontynentu*, Bellona, Warszawa 2017, s. 10–11.

In the light of the latest empirical studies, it is relatively easy to demonstrate the falsity of this allochthonic concept. First of all, this concept can be regarded as false and rejected taking into account the findings of genetic research of an international team led by Prof. Peter Underhill (Stanford University, USA). The very same conclusions can be drawn from other genetic and archeogenetic research (concerning both the male transition line, i.e. haplogroup Y-DNA, and the female one – mt DNA).⁸

⁸ Cf. A.A. Klyosov, *DNA Genealogy, Mutation Rates, and Some Historical Evidence Written in Y-Chromosome, Part I: Basic Principles and the Method*, "Journal of Genetic Genealogy" 2009, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 186–216; idem, *DNA Genealogy, Mutation Rates, and Some Historical Evidence Written in Y-Chromosome, Part II: Walking the Map*, "Journal of Genetic Genealogy" 2009, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 217–255; A. Klyosov, G.T. Tomezzoli, *DNA genealogy and linguistics. Ancient Europe*, "Advances in Anthropology" 2013, no. 3, pp. 101–111; P.A. Underhill, N.M. Myres, S. Rootsi, M. Metspalu, L.A. Zhivotovsky, R.J. King, A.A. Lin, C.E.T. Chow, O. Semino, V. Battaglia, I. Kutuev, M. Järve, G. Chaubey, Q. Ayub, A. Mohyuddin, S. Qasim Mehdi, S. Sengupta, E.I. Rogaev, E.K. Khusnutdinova, A. Pshenichnov, O. Balanovsky, E. Balanovska, N. Jeran, D. Havas Augustin, M. Baldovic, R.J. Herrera, K. Thangaraj, V. Singh, L. Singh, P. Majumder, P. Rudan, D. Primorac, R. Villems, T. Kivisild, *Separating the post-Glacial coancestry of European and Asian Y chromosomes within haplogroup R1a*, "European Journal of Human Genetics" 2010, vol. 18, pp. 479–484, published online 4 November 2009; A. Juras, M. Dabert, A. Kushniarevich, H. Malmström, M. Raghavan, J.Z. Kosicki, E. Metspalu, E. Willerslev, J. Piontek, *Ancient DNA Reveals Matrilineal Continuity in Present-Day Poland over the Last Two Millennia*, "Plos One" 2014, vol. 9, no. 10, e110839; P.A. Underhill, G.D. Poznik, S. Rootsi, M. Järve, A.A. Lin, J. Wang, B. Passarelli, J. Kanbar, N.M. Myres, R.J. King, J. Di Cristofaro, H. Sahakyan, D.M. Behar, A. Kushniarevich, J. Šarac, T. Šaric, P. Rudan, A. Kumar Pathak, G. Chaubey, V. Grugni, O. Semino, L. Yepiskoposyan, A. Bahmanimehr, S. Farjadian, O. Balanovsky, E.K. Khusnutdinova, R.J. Herrera, J. Chironi, C.D. Bustamante, S.R. Quake, T. Kivisild, R. Villems, *The phylogenetic and geographic structure of Y-chromosome haplogroup R1a*, "European Journal of Human Genetics" 2015, vol. 23, pp. 124–131, published online 26 March 2014; M. Noińska, *Genetyka populacyjna a problem etnogenezy Słowian*, "Studia Rossica Gedanensia" 2016, nr 3, pp. 143–156; Z. Juhász, E. Dudás, H. Pamjav, *A new self-learning computational method for footprints of early human migration processes*, "Mol Genet Genomics" 2018, vol. 293, pp. 1579–1594; A. Juras, P. Makarowicz, M. Chyleński, E. Ehler, H. Malmström, M. Krzewińska, Ł. Pospieszny, J. Górski, H. Taras, A. Szczepanek, M. Polańska, P. Włodarczyk, A. Szyca, A. Lasota-Kuś, I. Wójcik, M. Jakobsson, M. Dabert, *Mitochondrial genomes from Bronze Age Poland reveal genetic continuity from the Late Neolithic and additional genetic affinities with the steppe populations*, "American Journal of Physical Anthropology" 2020, vol. 172, no. 2, pp. 176–188; S. Zdziełowski, *Co wiemy o ciągłości zasiedlenia obecnych ziem Polski na przełomie neolitu i epoki brązu?*, 2020; <https://naukawpolsce.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C81896%2Cco-wiemy-o-ciąglosci-zasiedlenia-obecných-ziem-polski-na-przełomie-neolitu-i> [access: 17.11.2020]; idem, *Co wiemy o ciągłości zasiedlenia obecnych ziem Polski na przełomie neolitu i epoki brązu?*, 2020; <https://www.gov.pl/web/nauka/co-wiemy-o-ciąglosci-zasiedlenia-obecných-ziem-polski-na-przełomie-neolitu-i-epoki-brązu> [access: 17.11.2020]; L. Papac, M. Ernée, M. Dobeš, M. Langová, A.B. Rohrlach, F. Aron, G.U. Neumann, M.A. Spyrou, N. Rohland, P. Velemínský, M. Kuna, H. Brzobohatá, B. Culleton, D. Daněček, A. Danielisová, M. Dobisíková, J. Hložek, D.J. Kennett, J. Klementová, M. Kostka, P. Křišťuf, M. Kuchařík, J. Kuljavceva Hlavová, P. Limburský, D. Malyková, L. Mattiello, M. Pecinová, K. Petrišáková, E. Průchová, P. Stránská,

The same derives from new linguistic research;⁹ from older and more recent anthropological research;¹⁰ from the analysis of historical sources (chronicles);¹¹ and finally from interdisciplinary analyses and following the way of logical deduction.¹²

In his impressive work entitled *Słowiańskie starożytności* (*Slavic Antiquities*) (796 pages, including numerous quoted written sources), a Slovak scholar, Paweł Józef Szafarzyk, pointed to “the continuity of Slavic settlement in Europe” writing that “[...] nations of the Slavic origin are ancient inhabitants of Europe, who [...] since prehistoric times [...] have been settled here.”¹³ This author proves this thesis quoting numerous historical sources. The oldest ones are stories about Veneti people and Serbs, whose names are considered to be the earliest. “Amber and Veneti people collecting it have been known to the Greeks since time immemorial.”¹⁴ Timaeus uses a Finnish/ Estonian name of *Wannoma* for the land of Veneti (*Wann*)¹⁵ people. The name *Vindi* is earlier than *Venedi*. Cornelius Nepos and Plinius used both names respectively. Later on, Claudius

L. Smejtek, J. Špaček, R. Šumberová, O. Švejcar, M. Trefný, M. Vávra, J. Kolář, V. Heyd, J. Krause, R. Pinhasi, D. Reich, S. Schiffels, W. Haak, *Dynamic changes in genomic and social structures in third millennium BCE central Europe*, “Science Advances” 2021, vol. 7, no. 35.

⁹ Vide: M. Alinei, *An alternative model for the origins of European peoples and languages: the continuity theory*, “Quaderni di Semantica” 2000, vol. 21, pp. 21–50; idem, *The Slavic Ethnogenesis in the framework of the Paleolithic Continuity Theory*, 2020; https://www.academia.edu/11751155/The_Slavic_Ethnogenesis_in_the_framework_of_the_Paleolithic_Continuity_Theory (57 pp.) [access: 24.04.2021]; P. Jondáček, A. Perdih, *A novel view of the origins development and differentiation of Indo-Europeans*, [in:] *Zbornik seste mednarodne konference Izvor Evropejcev*, 2008; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265073475_A_NOVEL_VIEW_OF_THE_ORIGINS_DEVELOPMENT_AND_DIFFERENTIATION_OF_INDO-EUROPEANS?; W.J. Cynarski, *Linguistic and anthropological look at Lechitic-Slavic warriors and their contemporary descendants*, “The Linguistics Journal” 2020, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 32–49.

¹⁰ J. Czekanowski (ed.), *Wstęp do historii Słowian. Perspektywy antropologiczne, etnograficzne, archeologiczne i językowe*, 2ndedn., Poznań 1957; J. Piontek, B. Iwanek, *Ludność kultury łęczkiej i kultury pomorskiej a problem pochodzenia Słowian*, Muzeum Archeologiczne, Gdańsk 2010; J. Piontek, *Etnogeneza Słowian jako problem badawczy antropologii fizycznej*, “Nauka” 2020, no. 1, pp. 151–182.

¹¹ P.J. Szafarzyk, *Słowiańskie starożytności*, PTPN, Poznań 1837/2003; P. Makuch, *Od Ariów do Sarmatów. Nieznane 2500 lat historii Polaków*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2013; A. Leszczyński, *Dawne źródła historyczne łączące Wenedów, Wandalów i Słowian*, “Forum Historyczno-Spoleczne”. Rocznik PTH O. w Gorzowie Wielkopolskim 2016, nr 4, pp. 11–27.

¹² Cf. W.J. Cynarski, A. Maciejewska, *The Proto-Slavic Warrior in Europe: The Scythians, Sarmatians and Lekhs*, “Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology” 2016, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 1–14; H. Haarmann, *Auf den Spuren der Indoeuropäer. Von den neolithischen Steppennomaden bis zu den frühen Hochkulturen*, C.H. Beck, München 2016; B.A. Dębek, *Słowiańskie dzieje*, Bellona, Warszawa 2018.

¹³ P.J. Szafarzyk, *Słowiańskie starożytności*, op. cit., p. 38.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 79.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 82.

Ptolemy and others also mentioned Veneti people. On the other hand, Pliny the Elder mentions Serbs in his work of 79 AD, and other writers follow.¹⁶

Summary

Thus, in the author's opinion, the current autochthonous theory of Slavic origins seems to be already well-/ sufficiently proven. What is more, a series of logical proofs could be given to unambiguously show the merit of the autochthonous theory of Proto-Slavic and Slavic settlement in Central Europe at least from the times of the early Bronze Age.¹⁷ A German linguist, archeologist and historian, Harald Haarmann, points to the fact that Slavs used to inhabit the territories of contemporary Germany and Poland already around 2000 BC.¹⁸ Therefore, why cannot the book published in Rzeszów refer to these scientific findings of the last ten years? Or maybe the aforementioned book can be published in another scientific publishing house?

The author has also prepared a separate book on the matters he has been studying for the last years. Will he succeed in finding a scientific publishing house willing to publish his book? And is it really worth fighting for the truth concerning the history of our ancestors? The author's answer to the last question is affirmative – it is worth it as it is worth being faithful to oneself and being an honest scientist. It does not mean that the researcher does not make mistakes in details. However, generally, it is relatively easy to demonstrate the compliance or lack of it with the aforementioned research results (*vide*: Bibliography).

¹⁶ Ibidem, pp. 76–134.

¹⁷ Cf. P. Jasienica, *Słowiański rodowód*, op. cit.; A. Leszczyński, *Dawne źródła historyczne...*, op. cit.; W.J. Cynarski, *Propinquity of Scythians and Slavs. Remarks on the state of knowledge of Slavic ethnogenesis*, "Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology" 2018, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 1–7; idem, *Heritage of Proto-Aryan ancestors and noble warriors in Central Europe*, "Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology" 2018, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 11–24; idem, *Linguistic and anthropological look...*, op. cit.; idem, *A Polemic about the Slavic Origins in Polish Lands*, "Journal of Anthropological and Archaeological Sciences" 2021, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 430–434; idem, *The Ancestors of Today's Poles with the Haplogroup R1a*, "Sociology and Anthropology" 2021, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 19–25; idem, *The Ancestors of Today's Poles: A Contribution to Pre-Polish Antiquity*, "Journal of Anthropological and Archaeological Sciences" 2022, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 801–808. JAAS.MS.ID.000251; (formerly as a preprint: idem, *A Contribution to Pre-Polish Antiquity*, "Research Square", 12 Oct 2020, <https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs-88193/v1.pdf>).

¹⁸ H. Haarmann, *Auf den Spuren der Indoeuropaer...*, op. cit.

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