



STANRZECZY

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Polish Peasant from the perspective of a century

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There are not many works to which sociologists owe as much as to *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*. Although a hundred years have passed since the publication of the first two volumes of this extensive book, it remains not only one of the most influential classics of sociology but also a mysterious work, in part forgotten and underutilised. Today there can be no doubt that the analyses contained in the book were constitutive for such subdisciplines as the sociology of migration, deviance, and social change. The work also played a fundamental role in establishing the methodology of qualitative research, including the biographical method, and in particular, the analysis of letters, official documents, and press clippings. The appearance of *The Polish Peasant* changed how applied sociological concepts were defined and to a large measure determined the critical nature of the contemporary social sciences. As Norbert Wiley observed, it was the first sociological work to have a clearly democratic and egalitarian character, and to treat ethnicity methodically as a cultural and not biological category. Eli Zaretsky, the editor of a popular, abridged version of the book, noted that *The Polish Peasant* was the first work to treat ethnicity as a worthy object of systematic study. It also contained the elaborated concepts of values, attitudes, and personality that lie at the basis of many theories claiming to provide a multidimensional explanation of the nature of human beings and the complexity of social control mechanisms. At the same time, William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki's book remains enigmatic; the authors' real input into their joint publication, their manner of connecting the work to their earlier research, and the problematics they formulated are all in dispute. The significance for theory of *The Polish Peasant* is overshadowed not only by the professional difficulties Thomas encountered while working on the book but also by the appearance of competing sociological theories, such as symbolic interactionism and the voluntaristic theory of action,

which for long years dominated American and European sociology.

Today, ongoing revisions of the above-mentioned theoretical currents as well the growing role of the qualitative method of social research in creating sociological theories could be an opportunity to revive interest in *The Polish Peasant*.

In inviting scholars to send texts inspired by the work of Thomas and Znaniecki, we are seeking answers to the following questions, among other topics:

- How did the earlier work of the two authors affect their collaboration and joint research undertaking?
- Can Thomas and Znaniecki's theory and methodology still be a valuable source of sociological knowledge today? How can it contribute to expanding the techniques of social theoreticians and researchers?
- How was *The Polish Peasant* received in Poland and elsewhere in the world?

Aside from texts concerning interpretation of the work, we are interested in all articles inspired by the ideas of Thomas and Znaniecki, or referring to their roles in social theory in general.

/// Please submit your proposal including all authors' names, email addresses and affiliations and an abstract of around 500 words to redakcja@stanrzeczy.edu.pl by **23 July 2018**. The editors will decide upon acceptance or rejection of the proposals by **31 July 2018**.

/// Selected authors are invited to submit their manuscripts (max. 40.000 signs including tables, figures, and references) until **7 January 2019**. All manuscripts will be peer-reviewed. Publication is planned for June 2019.

/// For any queries, please contact Prof. Michał Kaczmarczyk (wnsмка@ug.edu.pl), the guest editor of the issue.