

Dorota Maj, Marcin Pomarański, Report from the National Scientific Conference ‘New Social Movements’ (11–12 May 2016, Lublin, Poland)

Social and political movements are one of the main research areas of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University’s Department of Political Movements. It was the primary reason for which new trends in this area have become a subject of interest in a series of research conferences organized in Lublin. Earlier versions of the research project included problems of social democracy, liberalism, conservatism, Christian democracy, national movement, populism, extremism, hacktivism, feminism and environmentalism. The 2016 edition of the event which took place on May 11–12 was entitled ‘New Social Movements’.

The event organized under the direction of Professor Maria Marczevska-Rytko had three primary goals: 1) attempts to systematize and evaluate the experience of new social movements in social sciences; 2) diagnosis of current status and future prospects of the issue in Poland as well as worldwide; 3) indication of challenges and vulnerabilities of ‘new social movements’ category. The invitation sent by the organizers to Polish scientific community met with great interest and response. As a result, more than 40 experts representing major academic centers came to Lublin. This large group of speakers gathered in Lublin has allowed for multi-faceted analysis of environmentalist phenomenon during the conference panels.

The formal opening of the conference was made by Professor Iwona Hofman – Vice Dean of the Faculty of Political Science and Professor Maria Marczevska-Rytko – Head of the Department of Political Movements. During the opening ceremony, Doctor Dorota Maj presented the last scientific achievements of the Department of Political Movements appearing in three collections: social and political movements, electronic direct democracy, and religious systems in the modern world.

During the ceremonial plenary session, seven lectures had been presented. This part of conference was inaugurated by Professor Maria Marczevska-Rytko from the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, who spoke on the issues of new social movements in the context of globalization. In the next orations, these issues were clarified with detailed examples. Professor Jarosław Macała from the University of Zielona Góra focused on the German PEGIDA movement. He presented the movement’s origins, leadership and social base as well as methods of action favored by its members and supporters. Professor Piotr Kimla from the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, on the other hand, analyzed the example of ‘Effective altruism’ movement, and Professor Ryszard Michalak of the University of Zielona Góra – anti-Islamic movements in the Nordic countries: Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Another lectures, presented in accordance by Professor Małgorzata Myśliwiec from the University of Silesia and Professor Krzysztof Łabędź from the Jesuit University Ignatianum, covered the problems of new political parties in Spain after 2008 as well as new social movements in urban areas of Cracow. Professor Wojciech Ziętara from the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska presented the closing lecture for the plenary session, which was dedicated to the genesis of ‘the Green movement’ in Western Europe.

After the plenary session, the speakers and other participants debated in six thematic panels. In the first one, the discussion circulated around the issues of American secessionist movements in the 20th century, new political movements in Spain, anti-immigration movement in Germany, populism in Austria and Celtic ethnonationalism. The problems of hacktivism, political dimen-

sion of the Twitter, or postmodern philosophy of Jiddu Krishnamurti covered the problematic of the second panel. Participants of the next three panels focused on the wide range of issues connected with social and political movements in Europe as well as in the USA, including environmentalism, multiculturalism, libertarianism, the demands of national liberation and peace movement. The participants of the final panel were attempting to approach the new social movements from the media perspective, especially in the Polish context.

An integral part of the conference was a trip to Kazimierz Dolny, which has become not only an opportunity to visit one of the most beautiful cities in the Lubelskie Voivodeship, but also a chance to continue the scientific discussions in the less formal surroundings as well as to integrate the social sciences circles.

