

Everyday life in the academic space and its axiological dimension

Keywords

academic space, everyday/non-everyday life, axiological dimension

Abstract

The paper considers the issues of everyday life (in conjunction with non-everyday life) in the academic space and its axiological dimension. Reflections on academic everyday life were embedded in the context of description and explanations of understanding, on the one hand, the academic space as a certain social space and, on the other hand, the phenomena of everyday and non-everyday life in general meaning.

Introduction

For anyone who has linked up their professional life with an organization located in the area of higher education – which is a higher school (regardless of whether it is a university or a different type of a higher school), reflecting on its functioning in the broad sense and one's own operation in its structures is an integral part of everyday life. What we know about university and about us – its actors, what we see, what we experience, what we care about, what we see as opportunities, but also developmental threats (for individuals and societies), contributes to an area known as "academic education". This reflection on education becomes an important aspect of our life, not only professional, but often personal one and also a manifestation of a broader reflection on man and the world which he lives in.

Engaging in this reflection, it is worth looking a little closer at what makes up everyday life in the academic space and attempt to identify its axiological dimension. It is appropriate inasmuch as this particular dimension has for centuries been inscribed in the mission of universities (and even other higher schools should not forget about it), the duties of scholars and tasks of students, and

other co-participants in the academic space. Academic excellence, freedom of scientific research and study, scholars' ethical responsibility deriving from discovering and proclaiming the truth about reality, the integration of science, education and the sphere of values, combining intellectual education of students with teaching them a dignified, honest life, constitute fundamental principles of those organizations that are based on tradition and cannot (should not) betray it¹, organizations and people gathered around it, who should continue to be the "eyes of the world", to see all its problems and make the world become a better and fairer place to be in.

Let us then try, at the beginning, to mark – at least generally – the academic space and, more importantly, the essence of everyday life in this space.

1. The academic space – a short sketch by analogy

The concept of space, and a social space in particular, is used both in everyday language and by representatives of various academic disciplines, as well as by representatives of various professions (e.g. urban planners, architects) in a variety of meanings, and in different ways. However, this concept is frequently used to determine the "space or area distinguishing itself with some outstanding, socially conditioned features"², under which a certain territory or space, occupied or developed by a given social group, is hidden. The academic space is such a space developed by a social group. It has a functional dimension, because its "forms perform certain social functions conditioning human behaviour by the quantity, quality and availability of space in which they can satisfy their own needs", as well as a symbolic one "because it is marked by emotions, feelings and values"³ that also condition human action.

Outlining the academic space⁴ one can refer to Zygmunt Bauman's discussion in a chapter of his book *Liquid life* entitled "Seeking shelter in Pandora's box, or fear, safety and the city". Although they refer to a different space,

¹ See: J. Brzeziński, *The experience of European universities and the future organization of higher education in Poland*, [in:] H. Żytkowicz (ed.), *The idea of university at the end of the millennium*, Warszawa 1997, p. 101.

² *Encyclopaedia of sociology*, Vol. III, Warszawa 2000, p. 241.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁴ Using the phrase "academic space", I refer the word "academic" to the space of various organizations of higher education, not only with academic authority and powers, being aware, on the one hand, of the differences in their missions, strategies, traditions, etc., and, on the other, the similarities resulting from the challenges of the present, the "marketization" of universities and expectations of the educational market, etc.

going well beyond its borders and beyond what they mark outside the academic space, some of the statements accurately reflect the meaning of the academic space and analogies are all too visible. For in the academic space, as it is in the city (referred to in Bauman's considerations), "friends and enemies, and especially elusive and mysterious strangers escaping clear assignments"⁵ mix today in the academic "crowd". One example of these strangers were people who have recently entered the grounds of the University of Warsaw (and not only), and participated in a happening (if you can describe so the behaviour and indiscriminate shouts of masked individuals, mostly students of other universities) of not fully known message (reported by a number of the media)⁶.

It is not surprising in this context that in numerous academic spaces some forms of "defensive trenches" – using Bauman's terminology – are used, such as cameras penetrating the entrances and hallways, (round-the-clock) protection as well as decisions of academic authorities of a number of academic organizations to allow the police to enter the premises without the need for the rector's consent to this entry (only after informing the authorities).

Organizations of higher education – similarly to cities – constitute a space where strangers live "together in physical proximity, while maintaining their strangeness to each other (...) and (...) a community of strangers is inherently a space of inevitable unpredictability"⁷, which poses a certain risk of ambiguity of reactions, attitudes and behaviours. And even if staying in this shared academic space after some time eliminates the feeling of alienation, it will never eliminate it entirely from the relationships, which the people filling this space enter, and thus it will not eliminate the unpredictability or even a trace of feeling of anxiety with regard to this ambiguity. Still, we cannot fail to notice yet another fact – referring to the analogy from Bauman's considerations – that the academic space is a form of a public space which promotes "both modern ambitions of neutralizing differences, as well as post-modern efforts to emphasize these differences by distinguishing and extracting them (...), which appreciates the creative and life-giving value of diversity and recognizes the need for the active dialogue between differences", which allows – as says Nan Ellin, quoted by Bauman – «the variety (of people, actions, and beliefs, etc.) to flourish»⁸ and thus alleviate anxiety and uncertainty.

⁵ Z. Bauman, *Liquid life*, Kraków 2007, pp. 115-116.

⁶ G. Szymanik, *It was the revenge of the nationalists*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 21 February 2013.

⁷ Z. Bauman, *Liquid life...*, op. cit, p. 121.

⁸ Ibid., p. 123.

Using an analogy, this time by another author, one can see that being a dimensional form of organizing social relations, a university "is full of stories and myths, ways of regulating communication and exchange. (...) It is a field of struggle between tradition and modernity. (...) It is a space where ideas, action and the body interpenetrate (...)"⁹. This interpenetration, crossing of different vectors of direction, speed, time, or bodies, is also emphasized in Michel de Certeau's deliberations, where he writes that "space is an effect produced by actions giving it direction, describing it in detail, introducing the dimension of time and allowing it to exist as a multifunctional unity of conflicting programs or conventional bonds. (...) In contrast to a place, space is devoid of explicitness or stability «of its own»"¹⁰. The academic space is such a space.

Everyday life "takes place" in this space by giving it a real dimension, since everyday life, being as inevitable as the weather and becoming the subject of a struggle taking place "here and now", is set in time and space, regardless of whether a life scenario – according to Roch Sulima – "is the dacha place, where I join a weekend-and/or-holiday circle and cultivate the garden; the supermarket I visit once a month, the urban allotments outside the window where I have been going for walks for thirty years, my children's school (...), my neighbours who belong to «overhead» alcoholic communities in Saska Kępa [a district of Warsaw, a translator's note]"¹¹ and finally, extending the thought of the same author, a university, where diverse people, performing a variety of roles and dealing with a variety of items, undertaking a variety of ranges of their activities, experiencing a variety of mental states and trying to find their place within this diversity through route and map planning of moving in this space, meet nearly every day¹². So what is everyday life?

⁹ T. Rajanti, *The City of Social Space*, [in:] J. Kulpińska (ed.), *Between institutions and everyday life*, Łódź 1991, p. 241.

¹⁰ M. Certeau de, *To invent everyday life. (L'invenzione del quotidiano). The arts of activity*, Kraków 2008, p. 117.

¹¹ R. Sulima, *Anthropology of everyday life*, Kraków 2000, pp. 7-10.

¹² See: M. Brosz, *Gospodarowanie przestrzenią mieszkalną [The management of living space]. Poszukiwanie koncepcji ładu przestrzeni indywidualnej jako jej odtwarzanie [The search for the concept of individual space order as its reconstruction]*, [in:] T. Maślanka, K. Strzyczkowski (eds.), *Między rutyną a refleksyjnością [Between routine and reflexivity]. Praktyki kulturowe i strategie życia codziennego [Cultural practices and strategies of everyday life]*, Warszawa 2012, p. 210.

2. What is everyday life? A few words on everyday life

According to Jadwiga Mizińska, asking about everyday life is like St. Augustine's statement "«I know, what time is, until you ask me»"¹³, despite the fact that, as she argues, there is "a great flood of academic, philosophical, sociological, psychological, and pedagogical literature on everyday life"¹⁴, and yet these are not the only areas for which everyday life often becomes a subject of research. Among these there are the historical sciences, where it is noted that everyday life – as emphasized by Elżbieta Tarkowska referring to the views of researchers in this area – belongs to two categories of phenomena: these are "on the one hand, the conditions of existence, i.e. the living conditions (sources of revenue, cost of living, housing, food, clothing, communication), and on the other hand – the spiritual and moral sphere (cultural life, entertainment, attitudes, feelings, moods and attitudes)"¹⁵. Outlined as such, everyday life is characterized by repetitiveness, lack of reflection as well as a kind of "dullness", and it is described (researched) by historians as such.

Relatively wide research into everyday life has been conducted by sociologists, mainly representatives of the so-called third sociology, whose precursor, according to Piotr Sztompka, is Georg Simmel, and which shows to "people both realistic constraints (limits of «freedom from»), resulting from the fundamental to the human species entanglement in a network of relationships with other people, as well as opportunities of creative participation in society (the potential of «freedom to») resulting from the unique location of each of us in such networks of relations"¹⁶.

Characterizing everyday life, Sztompka considers as its constitutive characteristics the fact that it is always the life with others and in their presence, that these are "repeatable events, sometimes even regular, rhythmic, routine ones", that it often takes ritual forms, dramatized and performed according to a certain scenario, that it engages all of our physicality, but also potentiality (strength and abilities and emotions), that it is located in space (home, in a street, at school, university), that episodes of this life have certain time frames and consequences resulting from this fact, as well as certain permanence, that

¹³ J. Mizińska, *Disinheritance from everyday life. An essay on the pedagogical implications of Hertha Müller's works*, [in:] M. Dudzikowa, M. Czerepaniak-Walczak (eds.), *Education. Concepts – Processes – Contexts*, Gdańsk 2010, p. 53.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ E. Tarkowska, *Everyday life as an interdisciplinary category*, [in:] *Education...*, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁶ P. Sztompka, *Daily life – a subject matter of the latest sociology*, [in:] P. Sztompka, M. Bogunia-Borowska (eds.), *Sociology of everyday life*, Kraków 2008, p. 23.

it is often automatic and non-reflective in nature, that it is characterized by spontaneity based on imagination and transgression¹⁷.

Looking at the anatomy of everyday life the same author points at the fact that they are social events of various elements, dimensions and aspects, among which the participants of events entering direct or indirect interactions with each other, their number which changes the nature of these interactions, and the presence in the environment of persons-witnesses of these interactions changing not only the nature of the interaction, but also the course and nature of the event, require special attention. Another important dimension here is the social context defining the content of the event, the examples of which are family life, professional life, leisure and social life, consumption, health and illness, education, sports, religion and/or politics. Sztompka writes: "we know very well what different social events in these different contexts look like: how differently we behave, how different we look, how differently we dress, what different language we speak, and what different «atmosphere» there is, a different emotional tone, how completely different things matter in apparently similar relationships (...)"¹⁸.

The events of everyday life occurring in a variety of contexts have – as already mentioned – their own location, their typical place of occurrence and space typical for themselves, in which events of content similar to each other occur. In contexts and locations also occur social occasions "«model»" for them, such as weddings, baptisms in the context of the family and the home, matches in the context of sports and the stadium, lessons or lectures in the context of education, school or university. The events of everyday life also have a kind of course, their specific procedures. They do not proceed freely, but their progress is often arranged in a sensible order, a sequence of events, each previous and subsequent of which fits into a scenario intentionally outlined.

A characteristic feature of these everyday events, social occasions, procedures is their symbolic dimension taking the form of social rituals, personal in nature – the everyday one (e.g. exchange of bows), the public one (for example, laying wreaths, military parades), the exclusive one (reserved only for the initiated/insiders). These social elements of everyday life are often accompanied by a certain type of theatricalization or dramatization¹⁹.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 24-25.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁹ See: P. Sztompka, *Life...*, op. cit., pp. 27-30.

The aspect of time indicated among the characteristic features of everyday life is clearly emphasized by some authors. Mikołaj Lewicki says: "After all, everyday life is a consequence of consecutive days. It is unconsciously associated with repetition, reconstruction of the social order, or, speaking more neutrally, a coordination of social activities at the level of relatively small units of time. Everyday life intuitively seems to be away from, if not in opposition to, designing or the activity of planning, expecting and controlling the future"²⁰. Roch Sulima adds that the meaning of everyday life "is in any moment «just ahead of us» (...). Everyday life is «now» from the perspective of the nearest «future». There is no return to everyday life. It immediately «dissolves» and «solidifies» in a myth, in what is «inexpressible»"²¹.

Paying attention in our considerations to everyday life one cannot help but relate – even in a very abbreviated form – to non-everyday life, which, like the first one, inevitably accompanies us. Pondering upon whether there is also non-everyday life, Marian Golka tries to juxtapose certain traits of everyday life with what could characterize non-everyday life. Thus – according to the author – everyday life can be juxtaposed with festivity, its commonness with officialdom, its routine nature with peculiarity, its trait of repeatability with uniqueness and the trait of privacy with the public dimension of non-everyday life²².

Characterizing the criteria for distinguishing everyday from non-everyday life in social life, the factors extending the sphere of everyday life and those that (to a minor, still lesser extent) point out non-everyday life and reflecting upon the consequences of the hypertrophy of everyday life, M. Golka makes it clear, that we are dealing with a kind of disappearance and certainly a significant reduction of days (moments) regarded as unique, events accompanied by a feeling of "attention, uniqueness, elation"²³. We are dealing with a trivialization of space, a lack of attention to uniqueness, elegance even in clothing, a general departure in interpersonal relations from observing the forms of politeness, ritual, with acquiescence of mediocrity of expressing one's thoughts in different situations and the use of vulgar language in public space, as well as a language of contempt and hatred. "Increasingly, we are experiencing indifference, a lack of emotion, maybe even emotional coldness,

²⁰ M. Lewicki, *Calculations of everyday life. Life (in networks of relations) with debt*, [in:] *Between routine and reflexivity...*, op. cit., p. 51.

²¹ R. Sulima, *Anthropology...*, op. cit, p. 7.

²² M. Golka, *Does non-everyday life still exist?*, [in:] M. Boruni-Borowska (ed.), *The colours of everyday life. A sociological analysis*, Warszawa 2009, p. 66.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

a distance from the majority of people and events, even those that otherwise are unique and meaningful in their consequences"²⁴.

Against the background of the current discussion, it is worthwhile to "embed" the content regarding everyday life in general and everyday life (as well as non-everyday life) in the academic space²⁵.

3. Everyday life in the academic space

Although certainly having its own characteristics, everyday life in the academic space, resembles everyday life in general with many of its features, the everyday life experienced and lived by other social groups located in other social spaces or those created by them. Similarly, it is the case with non-everyday life, which in the life of academic (university) communities takes a similar form and dimension to the one described by M. Golka.

In students' understanding everyday life mostly comes down to routine activities, events and repetitive tasks that are carried out according to a specific plan and do not yield any surprises. It is also something common, ordinary, familiar and close, taking the form of some rituals performed every day. It is the monotony caused by doing the same every day, too, and sometimes also boredom. The following responses are a good illustration of the above statements: "Everyday life is a phenomenon that I encounter every day. These are the situations and events that affect my daily life, at any time. This phenomenon is a common, but also very personal and unique one that depends on me, but also on the influence of my surrounding and the people I meet, but also those whom I do not know", "Everyday life for me is something accompanying me every day. These can be different types of activities, actions, but also schemas, objects, the company of certain persons, etc. Everyday life is something I am well familiar with, something common for me", "Everyday life is regular, ordinary, it can sometimes be tedious and overwhelming", "Everyday life for me is the monotony of every day. It is getting up in the morning, preparing for

²⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

²⁵ Everyday life will be shown through the prism of how it is perceived and experienced by some of the main co-creators of this space – students. In this part reference is made to the survey conducted among the students of Kazimierz Wielki University and University of Technology and Life Sciences in Bydgoszcz, of various years of graduate and postgraduate studies, different courses and specializations. Due to the fact that a non probabilistic selection was applied in the survey, in particular a selection based on the availability of respondents (see: E. Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research*, Warszawa 2008, p. 211), it has a limited range and students' everyday life cannot be judged on its basis – neither was it the intention behind carrying out the survey. However, I want to thank the 163 students, who shared their thoughts with me and pointed out to me what is our, largely common, everyday life, for participating in the survey.

classes, going to university – a sudden come back from it, because half of the classes have been cancelled, and then there is dinner and going to bed”.

What is typical of a large part of the surveyed is their emphasizing, in understanding everyday life, the participation of people (those who are known, but also the unknown ones), and stressing specific actions (or areas of activity) such as work, study, responsibilities, tasks, entertainment, etc., for example “Work, home, children, school, housework, preparing for exams”, “Everyday life means for me actions repeated every day, routine, ordinary days, television, the Internet, leisure, classes, studying, meeting friends”, “For me, everyday life means getting up in the morning, going to school, talking with relatives, shopping, preparing meals, sports”.

Very few people indicate a certain symbolic dimension of everyday life, writing: “Everyday life means carrying out activities necessary for existence. It is experiencing problems, struggling with one’s own weaknesses. It is also sharing affection and happiness with others”.

In the context of the academic space, there are also such statements, in which everyday life is associated with something unpredictable, as pointed out in the passage devoted to considerations on the academic space. The following statement renders it accurately: “Everyday life is something you cannot predict, since every day is different and new. Students’ everyday life is not gray, there is always something cool happening”.

Everyday life in the academic space is most often shown by students from the perspective of participating in classes (lectures, classes, and other forms of instruction), preparing for them and daily meetings (contacts, relationships, conversations) with other people (students, lecturers, scholars). There are also other regular occupations, activities and events such as taking part in the events related to academic life, visiting the cafeteria, copy shops, participation in scientific circles, struggling with exams and organizational matters. Everyday life in the academic space also means the stress accompanying many situations and the job, without which a large part of students – as indicated by them – could not undertake their studies, and sometimes tedious commuting to the university. The following responses are an exemplification of the previous statements: “Everyday life in the academic space means various kinds of responsibilities, participating in education by going to the university, reading literature, preparing for classes, taking exams, meeting other students”, “For me, everyday life in the academic space means lectures, classes, lots of free periods, social life, getting to know other students, waiting to be surprised by teachers (e.g. cancellation of classes) or any other type of surprise”, “Everyday life in the academic space is lectures, classes, studying books that are almost never available in the library, learning about the world, expanding one’s knowl-

edge and noticing new points of view”, “In my opinion, everyday life in the academic space consists of travelling on a bus, being stuck in the traffic, attending lectures with a heavy bag, often until late hours. These are also the long hours spent in the library”.

Non-everyday life is understood in the academic space in an interesting and, at the same time, surprising way. In their responses students confirm in a way what was pointed out by Marian Golka cited previously, emphasizing phenomena, events, and activities that do not happen every day, thus bearing the marks of uniqueness, rarity, festivity, peculiarity, occasionality²⁶. These include most cultural and scientific events at university (May students’ festival, the days of science, events, lectures of famous people from the world of science and culture, conferences, competitions), different types of social and charity actions unexpected in nature. Also examination sessions constitute for students non-everyday life in the academic space. Tests and exams, which, while “embedded” in academic everyday life because of their location in the structure of the academic year, bear the marks of non-everyday life (“From my perspective non-everyday life is the time of the examination session because it is a period in which students’ lives are dramatically changed. We do not attend classes, and our time is filled with being focused on one activity, i.e. studying”).

Non-everyday life also means Rector’s and Dean’s days (time off studying announced by respective university authorities), and – what comes as a surprise – the cancellation of classes due to the absence of teachers. The last manifestation “exposes” a paradox of non-everyday life in the academic space. It would seem in fact that it happens very rarely (which would be a satisfactory situation) constituting an element of non-everyday life, while in fact it happens far more often (if not too often), more than once surprising students in the proverbial “last minute”, upsetting them, disorganizing their day schedules (as evidenced by a sarcastic statement that reads as follows: “Non-everyday life in academic life means going through classes as planned – from beginning to end in 100%”), and at the same time allowing them to spend time in such a way that makes them happy (“Non-everyday life in academic life means that there are some days off during a semester, for example, due to the absence of lecturers, which we as students take over freely for our own purposes”).

²⁶ These and other marks of non-everyday life, such as enclavisation, marginality, and speculativeness are also addressed by D. Mroczkowska, L. Rogowski, R. Skrobaccki in the text on *Unusual everyday life/usual non-everyday life – a look at the dilemmas of the sociology of everyday life*, [in:] S. Rudnicki, J. Stypińska, K. Wojnicka (eds.), *Society and everyday life. Toward a new sociology?*, Warszawa 2009, p. 96.

For a number of students non-everyday life is also associated with all of this, which does not refer directly to the social space of university, but to different aspects of its operation and results from the fact of "being a student", for example, public/religious holiday breaks, semester breaks, winter/summer holidays (e.g. "The holiday period is when you can forget about studying and there is time to do the things that during the year there was no time for").

Understood, indicated and experienced by students in this way, everyday life (but also non-everyday life accompanying it) in the academic space²⁷, outside the dimensions that are assigned to everyday life/non-everyday life somehow in the very nature of things (as mentioned earlier), also has an axiological dimension.

4. The axiological dimension of everyday life in the academic space

Axiology is very much such a science, such an area of reflection on man and his world, especially the values whose nature it examines and determines their bases, "the standards and criteria of evaluation and the hierarchy of values". It also takes an interest in their ontological status, ways of learning and implementing²⁸. The issues of axiological interest and references are still present in many areas of human life, one of which is education, which – as stated by Urszula Ostrowska – "from the very beginning is a process deeply rooted in the world of values of the anthropospheric *universe*, beyond which it cannot be truly fulfilled"²⁹. This fact of everyday educational life being deeply rooted and penetrated by this anthroposphere concerns education at different levels and in different types of schools, including higher education.

Everyday life in the academic space, its various manifestations and determinants are largely saturated with values that give this everyday life deep meaning and significance by marking a framework, routes and maps within which and along which the people that co-create this space move. Such a characteristic framework, in the very nature of things penetrated by values, is (should be) the university itself as an organization and as a *koinonia*, i.e. a specific community goals and values, among which, for centuries, "the game of scientific truth"

²⁷ Emphasizing everyday life/non-everyday life experienced and perceived by students in the academic space I am aware of the constraints of the fact of referring in the survey only to one of the educational (social) entities that make up this space. An interesting and complementary picture of everyday life/non-everyday life in the space referred to would be a reference also to other entities in that space.

²⁸ U. Ostrowska, *Axiological foundations of education*, [in:] B. Śliwerski (ed.), *Pedagogy*, Vol. I: *The foundations of educational sciences*, Gdańsk 2006, p. 394.

²⁹ U. Ostrowska, *Axiological contexts of contemporary education*, [in:] E. Kubiak-Szyborska (ed.), *Multidimensionality of educational contexts*, Bydgoszcz 2011, p. 17.

has been considered as the most important, as one that – according to Janusz Goćkowski – is the “keystone of the axio-normative order” of the koinonia and striving for it motivates the ingenuity and cognitive activity of both scholars and students, teaching them “proper understanding and treatment of orders/ requirements of responsibility for the word said and accepted”³⁰. The values of seeking truth, acquiring knowledge and wisdom are not (and should not be) questioned, even if today we are wondering, watching closely the academic space and the subjects moving within it, whether a scholar is still a seeker of truth, or rather a manufacturer of knowledge commissioned by companies and/ or a “supplier of goods to a supermarket of knowledge”, which is used by contemporary students accepting (and often expecting only this) that everything in their studies would be “in small amounts, easy, useful and painless”. Even if we wonder whether by any chance modern science is not people’s science (both scholars and students because “(...) university [as well as other types of higher schools – added by E. K-W.] is (...) the best place of meeting teachers being able to convey their knowledge, (...), and students who are able, willing and ready to enrich their minds with this knowledge”³¹), forgetting the obligation to care for principles and attaching weight to honours, promotions, publicity, social relationships, believing that a temporary profit and prosperity are really important, adhering to the radar orientation, which gives you more rewards and enables you to avoid punishment³².

The values of truth (discovering it), gaining knowledge and wisdom do not, however – as it seems – have their due place in the academic space, at least in the everyday life indicated by students. This is supported by the fact that, in the minds of students disclosing this everyday life in the academic space, these values do not appear as a significant element. Although there are students who in academic everyday life take the greatest pleasure in finding out interesting, inspiring things in lectures and the ability to search for and broaden their knowledge about the world, develop their interests, gain experience (“broadening knowledge and using it in practice, confronting knowledge from different sources, reading various scientific books, reaching goals, obtaining gratification”, “It is pleasant in a student’s daily life to take part in creative classes,

³⁰ J. Goćkowski, *University and tradition in science*, Kraków 1999, p. 51.

³¹ J. Brzeziński, *Reflections on university*, [in:] J. Brzeziński, Z. Kwieciński (eds.), *Psychological and educational aspects of the systemic turning point*, Toruń 2000, p. 210.

³² See: J. Goćkowski, S. Marmuszewski, *The identity and tradition in science as a cognitive and social problem*, [in:] J. Goćkowski, S. Marmuszewski (eds.), *Science. Identity and tradition*, Kraków 1995, pp. 9-10. It happens so not without the law in force, which often conditions such, and not other behaviour, quite remote in their intentions from what universities and scholars were appointed to centuries ago.

stimulating thinking and willingness to delve deeper into the topic, even in moments of relaxation”), yet they do not constitute such a large group, such as might have been expected, and the value of truth itself does not appear in their responses directly (one could try to guess it only indirectly).

Certainly, the truth and the variety of ways of reaching it is not the only value defining the axiological dimension of academic everyday life, but its relationship with the essentiality of university as an organization and as a *koinonía* is significant enough to emphasize its importance. What is also important is its relationship with the other values forming the framework of the academic space and everyday life happening in it, such as freedom and university autonomy, pluralism of views, tolerance for differences, respect for human dignity, ethical responsibility for the word said and accepted, for undertaken actions included in the missions and strategies of individual universities, even if they now give way to – what many authors today draw attention to³³ – academic managerism (assets, liabilities, costs, benefits, monitoring relationships, calculability), academic consumerism (the usability of knowledge, demand-and-supply relationships, an academic business deal, readiness for immediate response to new expectations) and academic re-stratification (the useful and market value as a criterion for assessing classes, courses, departments, etc.).

The axiological dimension of everyday life in the academic space is revealed to us also when we “move” our attention from the plane of seeking the truth about the world onto the relational plane in this space, and what for each social space is constitutive, that is, the relationship between the executors shaping this space and this very space, the relationship between users and the resulting space and the relationship between the implementers and users, therefore all the processes of exchange of information, social communication, participation and conflicts³⁴. Man’s everyday life is filled with his relationships with others, in the existence of which values and evaluating are “built-in”, regardless of whether we think about them in individual or overindividual terms.

Relationships are largely a source of contentment, pleasure, satisfaction felt every day by their participants. This is confirmed by students themselves, when asked about what causes them the greatest pleasure in academic everyday life, indicating mostly the opportunity to meet and spend time with their friends from university, the opportunity to meet interesting new people (both students and lecturers/scholars), or simply the opportunity to contact others

³³ See among others interesting texts in: A. Kobylarek, J. Semków (eds.), *University education in conditions of a cultural shift*, Wrocław 2008.

³⁴ See: *Encyclopaedia of sociology*, Warszawa 2000, p. 243.

who are of the same age and share their views ("The greatest pleasure for me is to participate in interesting classes and getting to know inspiring lecturers and other university staff, as well as students", "The opportunity to be with people of similar age, with similar views and preferences").

The relational plane can be also a source of disappointment, resentment and a sense of dissatisfaction or violation of personal dignity – about which U. Ostrowska wrote so interestingly in her work *Students facing dignity. Between necessity and contestation* (2004) – especially when the values of respect for another human being somehow "disappear" from these relations ("What annoys me most in academic everyday life is the attitude of some lecturers to students who (i.e. lecturers), thinking that they are at a higher position, do not show respect to others"), when a human being (a student in this case) appears to them as an object of influence ("What bothers me most in academic everyday life is that a student is treated as a sub-category", "It annoys me that students are not treated in everyday life as equals, e.g. by potential employers or lecturers"), when we observe around us in this everyday life "a lack of empathy and even hostility in others", when we meet with injustice for example in assessment. In everyday relationships the reasons for dissatisfaction and nervousness are also such elementary things as a lack of respect for students' time ("What annoys me most in everyday life is a lack of respect for time. While we are all students, we do not loll in bed all day long, in spite of appearances. Many people work, and lecturers, by their being late, missing classes, deprive us of each and every smallest particle of our free time", "What annoys me is a lack of organization, punctuality in the life of university. It disorganizes a day schedule of a person so pedantic and liking concrete things like me").

Relationships between students and scholars have been devoted a lot of space in numerous studies. Showing in them such a real picture of relationships as can be seen in universities, a picture of partner relationships, and thus a picture of a dialogical encounter of man with another man, saturated with autonomy and independence while, at the same time, with mutual respect, openness, kindness, empathy, and co-responsibility was called for and repeatedly cited as the most beneficial both in individual and social partnerships³⁵. Today, looking from the perspective of everyday life in the academic space one could wonder whether this partnership is still only a postulate, or maybe paradoxically just a "lofty, but empty slogan" evoked when we want to fill this space with valuable content against its daily practices, in which "detached from life and incompetent teachers, unpunctual or even missing classes without notice, often not al-

³⁵ See *inter alia*: E. Kubiak-Szymborska, *University teachers vs. students. Between partnership and ostensible contact*, Bydgoszcz 2005.

lowing students to express their own views, unjust in assessment, highlighting their superiority"³⁶, are not uncommon and are an integral determinant of such everyday life.

Yet partnership in the current situation of so often emphasized, postulated, or even required common concern of teachers and students about the successful implementation of the projected outcomes of education – knowledge, skills and social competence – or more broadly, the key competences “from the point of view of life activity in an open society of the third era of globalization”, called by Maria Czerepaniak-Walczak competences “to cope with life, to cope with the situation of mobility and dealing with the changing environment”³⁷, seems to be absolutely essential. It is difficult to imagine achieving results in any area without being aware of them both on the part of teachers and students, without being aware of common goals, which express them. It is also hard to imagine the realization of the projected effects without interaction or cooperation between the key actors of academic education, based on mutual trust and respect, mutual kindness, and above all, the sense of co-responsibility for the final results.

The value of responsibility (co-responsibility) is strongly emphasized nowadays in the everyday life of the academic space. For example, discussions on the social responsibility of universities, in particular the issues related to the activities carried out in support of responsible education of managers and the framework of social responsibility of schools of higher education organized by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education convince about this. Discussions, in which this social responsibility of universities is understood as simultaneous teaching about responsibility and responsible teaching, is closely connected with the improvement of the quality of education and adapting the skills of future graduates to the needs of the labour market.

The social responsibility of universities in the scope of common concern of all actors of academic education for the quality of learning outcomes is associated, to a significant degree, with their honesty and integrity, and – broadly speaking – decency in carrying out their duties. At this point, however, it is impossible not to see the “shortcomings” of everyday life in the academic space associated with that area of axiological thought, the shortcomings observed for many years, whose dimensions increase with the increase of the rate of enrolment at the tertiary level. They relate to the well known and condemned by

³⁶ The wording is taken from the survey carried out.

³⁷ M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, *Axiological aspects of the Bologna Process, questions about its rationale and objectives in the context of the academic education of teachers*, [in:] J. Kostkiewicz (ed.), *Axiology in training teachers*, Kraków 2008, pp. 29-30.

a large part of the academic community (and at the same time difficult to eliminate) manifestations of all forms of dishonesty and misconduct, both on the part of scholars, researchers, university teachers and students.

These manifestations, "lying" on the side of those creating science, were pointed at many years ago (in spite of which they are still valid) by Alexander Kohn, who included in them, among others, counterfeiting data, collecting data from observations which were never carried out or even comparing this data with that from non-existent scientific works; trimming (data smoothing) or manipulating data so that it looks better (for example, increasing the number of treatment groups), "juggling" data to develop or select only the data that best fits the hypothesis established and skipping the rest, plagiarising ideas, concepts, or copying fragments of other scholars' works without citing their names³⁸.

Manifestations of misconduct or dishonesty "lying" on the side of students are not less numerous, nor are they matters of "lighter weight". These include, among others, widespread plagiarism of fragments of other people's work regardless of whether it is a small term paper or a thesis and the practice of buying graduate or postgraduate theses, sometimes even PhD. dissertations from the so-called *writers*. Such theses are bought by working students (of intramural and extramural courses), those for "whom the lack of a diploma is in the way to hold various, often political, functions and positions, as well as those who already have a job, but they need a diploma, so as not to lose it. (...) Those who simply would not manage to write a thesis themselves also benefit from the help of *writers*"³⁹.

Just like the sphere of everyday life in the academic space is permeated by values, it is also in the sphere of non-everyday life that these values can and should be sought. They lie both in the indicated by students (and regarded as manifestations of non-everyday life in the academic space) cultural and academic events on campus, meetings with famous people from the world of science or culture or social activities organized in aid of various third parties. Initiatives of this type, although festive or occasional in their nature, open people to the views and beliefs of others, teach tolerance for difference and diversity, as well as sensitize and induce people to support those in need. They also allow students – when faced with diversity – to understand – as pointed out a few years ago by Lech Witkowski⁴⁰ – what is right in the surrounding real-

³⁸ A. Kohn, *False prophets. Fraud and error in science and medicine*, trans. by P. Zaborowski, Warszawa 1996, pp. 17-18.

³⁹ B. Mikołajewska, *The Diploma Bazaar*, „Polityka” 18 January 2003.

⁴⁰ See: L. Witkowski, *Meta-axiological reasons behind the educational reform*, [in:] L. Witkowski (ed.), *Education and humanities*, Warszawa 2000, pp. 41-50.

ity, to discern what is different, what it means to be different, what otherness is, what it means to understand otherness and the other, and enable them to know their way around in what is theirs, as well as to attempt to build some space for themselves or to find their own place in a common space, which is the academic one.

However, there are also such manifestations of non-everyday life that in the axiological dimension induce some reflection. These include for example – the already mentioned – examination session time (exams, written tests) and the concentration on the processes of learning or self-education accompanying it. In itself, the examination session time is nothing special. It has been a permanent part of the organization of the academic year at every university for years, generating a variety of behaviours and emotions, often at extremely distant poles. However, it considered to be non-everyday life and being associated with festivity, extraordinariness, and uniqueness it still breeds (similarly to other events of unusual character) certain expectations, not only in the sphere of very good preparation for exams, but also within the outer “shell” that accompanies an examination situation, which is even the clothes worn by people participating in an exam.

In this regard, one might say that the sphere of a good habit of coming dressed in one’s Sunday best for an exam has disappeared. Rarely (very rarely indeed) does it occur to students (and even many teachers as well) to make the examination day different, even in this small element, emphasizing its being non-everyday life. And even if we take into account the fact that academic circles have little to do with the characteristics of the post-modern Polish everyday life (e.g. office, corporate, shopping everyday life), in which “workers are made to wear business outfits, a kind of *mimicry* of everyday life (...)” – as writes Anna Zadrożyńska-Barącz⁴¹ – yet it seems that the days of course lectures, or other forms of classes, which are a mark-synonym of everyday life should – ignoring all other aspects – stand out from the examination day.

Reflection of axiological nature cannot be missing when we think of the said examination session – as an element of non-everyday life, yet closely connected with everyday life – in terms of the previously mentioned honesty and integrity in the behaviour and actions of both teachers and students. For widespread “cheating” during final term tests and examinations, which often happens with teachers’ silent consent, can be called misconduct and dishonesty. This is accurately reflected in the words of one of the students of a private university, coming as one of the last in the rankings of Polish schools of

⁴¹ A. Zadrożyńska-Barącz, *Everyday life – non-everyday life – holiday*, [in:] M. Dudzikowa, M. Czerepaniak-Walczak (eds.), *Education. Concepts – Processes – Contexts*, Gdańsk 2010, p. 47.

higher education, who says: "Teachers give us a choice between a written examination, oral examination or a test. We choose the written examination so that we can cheat (...) Almost everyone does it"⁴². Unfortunately, these kinds of "choices" do not apply only to the university which the statement comes from.

Conclusion

Taking into consideration the issues of everyday life in the academic space and its axiological dimension, attention was drawn to, on the one hand, (using the inspection of students as one of the actors in the social space of a university) important manifestations of this everyday life (and, in its context, also non-everyday life), while on the other hand, to the fact of permeating everyday life and non-everyday life with the world of values in which academic education is "immersed". It was certainly impossible to draw attention to all the values that concern academic education and academic space, and therefore only some important ones – as it seems – for the existence and everyday functioning of academic communities, communities that at the present time include not only teachers and students, but also employers and other stakeholders remaining in the immediate university surrounding, were signalled. These broadly understood communities can and should properly manage higher education, which requires in conditions of knowledge-based economy (civilization of knowledge) and digital civilization⁴³, as well as the expansion of *for-profit* entities, to take bold action, risk and experimentation, while maintaining what was once inscribed in noble missions of all universities, and what for centuries has constituted their prestige and importance, i.e. values.

Paying attention in the text to certain "shortcomings" or dilemmas related to compliance with certain values of everyday and non-everyday life and in the academic space was not about dazzling with the reprehensible behaviour of the actors of education, but rather about drawing their attention and inducing them to ponder about the world of values, which everyday life and non-everyday life are undoubtedly rooted in. Without these second thoughts and without this readiness for changes, everyday life and non-everyday life in the academic space will be somewhat poor and frail, while those co-creating and experiencing it will be less happy and benefiting less satisfaction from mutual coexistence.

⁴² K. Oponowicz-Żylik, M. Wlekły, *You cannot drop out*, *Gazeta Wyborcza Magazine*, „Duży Format” 28 February 2013.

⁴³ T.T. Kaczmarek, *The global economy and global crisis*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 92-98.

Depicting the characteristic features of everyday life and non-everyday life in the academic space, reference was made to their inspection made by students, co-creating it and being the main actors, who almost every day experience many of their symptoms. Manifestations of this everyday and non-everyday life bring them pleasure and satisfaction, but they also provide reasons for experiencing conditions of discontent and are a source of some tension and stress.

Within the everyday life and non-everyday life outlined by students in the academic space, an attempt was made to identify its axiological dimension. Values significant for education or a wider academic space indicating, on the one hand, conditions necessary for the fulfilment of these values inherent in everyday life and non-everyday life but, on the other hand, failures still existing on some levels, preventing or impeding the full flourishing of values on the foundation of which the activity of all schools of higher education, not just universities, has been (and still should be) based for centuries, were recalled here.

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