Flying Universities: Educational Movements in Poland 1882-1905 and 1977-1981, a Socio-Historical Analysis

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FLYING UNIVERSITIES: EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENTS IN POLAND

by

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A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Sociology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1997

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Western Michigan University, 1997

In Poland in 1977, a group of intellectuals formed an independent educational enterprise under the name “Flying University.” Interestingly, the original “Flying University” was organized by a group of radical professors nearly a century earlier, at a time when the Polish state disappeared from the political map of Europe. I was interested in seeing whether the two were the same, as their common name would suggest, or if they differed in any respect. I attempted to answer this question by focusing on the so-called universities’ memberships, ideologies, and objectives.

I have followed the method of interpretive historical sociology (Skocpol, 1979) which allows a meaningful interpretation of events by stressing the importance of their respective historical setting. I have relied mostly on secondary sources and provided my own translation of the Polish material included in this study. Theoretically my study was informed by New Social Movements and Resource Mobilization paradigms.

I concluded that the two Flying Universities should be considered as distinct developments. Despite sharing in the ethos of Polish intelligentsia, and invoking both the philosophies of Polish Romanticism and so-called Warsaw Positivism, they differ significantly with respect to their specific aims, social origin, membership and others.
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INTRODUCTION

In 1978 in communist Poland, a group of fifty eight Polish intellectuals signed a declaration establishing the Society for Scientific Studies better known as the Flying University. The declared goal of this enterprise was to extend the concept of the university-type lectures into the areas of knowledge that rested outside the official curricula of Poland’s state universities. The Flying University existed alongside several other small oppositional movements in Poland at the time when the country was experiencing yet another deep economic, social and political crisis. From its beginning, the university enjoyed social support and several thousands of young people benefited from its activity by attending the lectures. Despite the continuous harassment from the communist authorities, the Flying University managed to survive until 1981 when, in the aftermath of general Jaruzelski’s martial law, the majority of the faculty became imprisoned. This educational movement became well-known in Poland and abroad and yet it was not the first such development. The precursor of the Flying University was a series of clandestine academic courses organized in Warsaw in 1882 by Jadwiga Szczawińska, a young Polish scholar. The first Flying University took place at a time when Poland was divided among her neighbors whose hostile policies threatened the country’s culture, traditions and, at times, even physical survival. Despite the considerable danger, the first Flying University attracted the support of several distinguished professors and thousands of students. This first
clandestine Polish university existed until 1905 when, on the wave of liberalization, it acquired the legal status of an educational society and was allowed to continue its activities in the open. These two clandestine educational movements are the focal points of this study.

Since the focus of this study is two social movements, I will frame my discussion of the Flying University phenomenon within the framework of the social movement theory. Specifically, I will utilize the concepts and ideas that are the focus of the New Social Movements (NSM) theory and to a much lesser degree the Resource Mobilization (RM) theory as the theoretical bases for this study. I think that since the NSM theory is predominantly a cultural analysis, it is well fitted for the study of Poland’s Flying Universities. The cultural analysis seems particularly fitting in the attempt to understand why a social movement is organized by focusing on the motivational characteristics of movement actors that have to do with the actors’ system of values, beliefs and ideologies. The RM theory, on the other hand, seems to be of utility when considering the effects of the social, economic and political realities that influence movements’ actions, aims or strategies. In this study these aspects will be discussed.

Some sociologists (Crighton and Mason, 1986; Misztal, 1990) suggest that the social movements that emerged in Poland between 1976 and 1985, the Flying University included, possessed many characteristics of the “new” type of social movements emerging in the West. I will not try to determine whether the Flying University of 1978-81 can be called a “new social movement” in the same vain as the
social movements in the West. I believe, however, that the similarity between them is significant enough to apply the NSM theoretical categories to the Polish movements. I will briefly discuss the utility of some NSM concepts in the analysis of some aspects of the Polish Flying University phenomena.

Other theorists (Calhoun, 1993; Scott, 1990) question the assumption of the NSM theory that views some characteristics that are associated with contemporary social movements as unique and "new." Again, it is not the purpose of this study to revive arguments regarding the arbitrary nature of the time boundaries adopted by the NSM theorists. I believe, however, that the examination of older social movements in light of these "new" characteristics can be useful and worthwhile. My discussion of the Flying University that started its activity in 1882 will, therefore, be conducted utilizing the insight of NSM theory. Here, as with the "new" Flying University, the RM theory insight will be also be utilized to a limited degree.

As for my methodological approach, I will follow the path of interpretative historical sociology (Skocpol, 1979), one of the three commonly used strategies within the historical sociological genre. By utilizing this approach, I hope to illuminate the actions of the individuals engaged in the Flying Universities in the proper historical context. I hope that by paying careful attention to the context of social actions, which is as much cultural as it is economical or political, the understanding of the historical and contemporary social phenomena can be enhanced. Because of this understanding, my discussion of the nineteenth century Flying University will be conducted within the context of the political, economic and social situation of Poland at the time of
partitions (1795-1918). I will, of course, use the same approach in my discussion of the second Flying University by elucidating the political, social and economic circumstances that surrounded its formation. Since the illumination of the intentions and actions of individuals in the proper historical setting is the main focus, the questions concerning the testability of any specific theoretical framework or discovering causal relationships is not an aspect of this study.

The fact that a group of Polish intellectuals in 1978 invoked the name “Flying University” for their undertaking is intriguing. The conscious decision to choose the name of a clandestine university that took place nearly a century earlier suggests that this group of intellectuals had in mind the same thing. But were they really the same? This study is an attempt to answer that question. To accomplish this task I have focussed on three aspects of both Flying Universities: the social base, the ideology and the objectives. With respect to the social base, the social class origin, political orientations, and demographic characteristic are discussed. As for the ideological aspects of Flying University, the focus is on the ideas represented in the philosophy of Polish Romanticism and the so-called Warsaw Positivism, the traditional values contained in the ethos of the Polish intelligentsia as well as the ideas of oppositional movements in communist Poland. To answer the question concerning the objective of both Flying Universities, national independence, education, moral and ethical standards, social change, reforms, political power will be considered as possible answers. With respect to the question concerning the aims of both Flying Universities, I will consider a whole range of possible answers beginning with providing education,
moral and ethical standards, collective identity and solidarity and ending with such diverse goals as social reform, safeguarding of the national spirit, political power or creation of an independent sphere of social life.
THEORY

This socio-historical study's main focus is to provide a meaningful interpretation of Poland's Flying Universities. The New Social Movements (NSM) and to lesser degree the Resource Mobilization (RM) theoretical frameworks form the theoretical basis for this study. The theoretical concepts help with the presentation of material in a more systematic fashion, but they themselves are not the objects of my analysis or subject to testing. For these reasons, I will concern myself with a brief presentation of this theories. This chapter will also contain a description of the interpretive historical sociology, the methodological approach utilized in this study.

New Social Movements

The NSM theory can be viewed as the result of the intellectual discourse of a small group of European sociologists and philosophers that include Alain Touraine (France), Alberto Melucci (Italy), Manuel Castells (Spain) and Jurgen Habermas (Germany). The theory rooted in the continental European traditions of social theory and political philosophy, was a response to the inadequacies of classical Marxism in analyzing contemporary forms of collective action (Buechler, p.296). The main failure of classical Marxism according to the NSM theorists was the presumption that all politically significant social action will be derived from the fundamental logic of capitalist production. Marxist interpretation meant that all significant social actors
will be defined by the class relations rooted in the process of production, and that all other social identities as secondary at best (Buechler, p.296). The NSM theorist rejected Marxist economic reductionism by pointing to other logics of action based in politics, ideology and culture. Accordingly, they argued that social actions are not only defined by class (if at all) but rather by such categories as gender, ethnicity, sexuality, etc. The NSM theorists pointed to the woman's movement, the Civil Rights movements, ecology movements, nationalist and ethnic movements, all with social actors who could be defined in other terms than class.

The non-class based source of identity of the movements actors does not explain by itself the use of the "new social movements" as the designation of contemporary forms of collective action by the NSM theorists. There are other characteristics, that in their opinion, make these phenomena "new" in a qualitative sense. These characteristics have to do with the new location of social movements, new forms of organization and modes of action as well as with new ideologies and aims. Another defining element that sets NSM theory apart from other frameworks is the new model of social totality in which the social movements are believed to operate.

One of the hallmarks of the new social movements is their new location. While the "old" movements are believed to be located within the political sphere of the state and economy the "new" movements occupy predominantly the domain of "civil society" or the social and cultural sphere. The new location of the contemporary social movements reflects what is believed to be the expansion of the technocratic state into all areas of social life, a process Jurgen Habermas (1982, p. 35) calls an
"inner colonization of the life-world." Alain Touraine (1985) connects the new location of the new social movements to the public space - Öffentlichkeit - which in contemporary society underwent a substantial redefinition:

...private life becomes public and social scientist who announced some years ago that, after a long period of public life, we were withdrawing into private life, did not see that the main political problems today deal directly with private life - fecundation and birth, reproduction and sexuality, illness and death, and, in a different way, with home-consumed mass media. (pp.778-779)

Touraine (1985, p. 774) argues that the logic of capitalist production is also responsible for a new location of social movements activity since the capitalist system means not only the production of material goods but also the "production of symbolic goods, that is, of information and images, of culture itself." Thus the expansion of capitalist production into the cultural realm resulted in the expansion of social movements into those new areas as well.

The new arena of social movements reflects the shift from the traditional political conflicts to ones that are cultural in nature. Thus, a considerable number of new movements concern themselves with the personal and intimate aspects of human life or what Klaus Eder (1982, p.11) calls the "paradigm of the life world." The focus here is on personal actualization, happiness, and the search for identity. According to Jean Cohen (1985), seeking political power is no longer the main goal of social movements. She describes the new aim of social movements as the "rising issues concerned with the democratization of structures of everyday life and focussing on forms of communication and collective identity" (1985, p.667). The "limited" character of the objectives of the new social movements is also suggested by
Touraine (1985):

They do not pretend to transform society; they are liberal or libertarian, and try
to lower the level of social control and integration. They fight for a society
defined by its diversity, adding ethnic or moral pluralism and free enterprise.
(p.777)

The argument of the apolitical character of new social movements concerns is being
raised almost as often as the fact of their heterogeneity. In fact, there is a great variety
of movements ranging from anti-nuclear, ecology, human rights, women’s rights in
additions to various movements concerned with all aspects of intimate and personal
life. The act of participation in a collective action as an expression of an actors’ values
is viewed by many movement actors as an end in itself (Scott, p. 121).

The medium of action itself changes from the political mobilization to direct
action in the social sphere and to cultural innovation and life styles. The protest action
is often symbolic and takes the form of behavior that challenges the accepted norms of
conduct. This often is expressed in pursuing alternative life-styles that attempt to
redefine social norms and values. Alberto Melluci (1994) draws attention to the
women’s movement where symbolism acquires special significance. In his words the
symbolism

introduces the values of the useless [“useless” in view of the male dominated
society] into the system, the inalienable right of the particular to exist, the
irreducible significance of inner life that no history is able to record but by
virtue of which individual experience becomes the ultimate core of experience.
(p.121)

Much of the new movements activity finds expression in daily routine of everyday life
rather than through the conventional forms of protest. There are exceptions, however,
like the institutional forms of activity of Europe's Greens. But even here, the political agenda of the Greens is more typical of "new politics" (Crighton and Mason, 1986, p.157) with issues that are social, psychological or cultural in nature rather than of the "old politics" with issues concerning economic growth, distribution and security. One very important characteristic associated with the modes of action of the new movements is the non-violent nature of the social protest action.

With respect to the ideologies of the new social movements, they are seen as transcending the traditional dichotomy of "right" and "left" of the ideological and political spectrums. In fact, the new movements are concerned with a broad themes of freedom, life democratization, anti-authoritarianism and autonomy; the "new politics" of the new social movements. Cohen (1985) observes that ideologically the new social movements abandoned the revolutionary dreams of their predecessors. The movements limit themselves to reorganizing the relations between the state and society and not to directly challenging the authority or legitimacy of the state. The self-limiting character of the new movements in Cohen words means that they "struggle in the name of autonomy, plurality, and difference, without, however, renouncing the formal egalitarian principles of modern civil society or the universal principles of the formally democratic state" (p.669). Another important feature is linking ideology to the personal experience of the movements' actors. Scott (1990, p.21) observes: "the personal is linked to the political both empirically - oppression shapes interpersonal relations - and morally - political commitment ought to be translated into behavioral changes."
The fragmentation of social movement ideologies has important consequences with respect to the social base of new movements. Scott (1990, p.31) suggests that the broad spectrum of the movement’s concerns allows for a high degree of political and ideological tolerance within the movements and contributes to a broad social base support. The Greens, the ecological movement in Germany can serve as an example. Anna Hallensleben who studied Germany’s Greens observed: “The Green Lists were quickly successful precisely because they did not have a political programme, nor did they have to carry any ideological ballast rich in conflict potential” (cited in Scott, 1990, p.84). As for other characteristics of the social base of the new movements, the new movements find support among the predominantly young and educated or the “new middle classes”(Habermas, 1982, p.33; Offe, 1985, p.831). The well educated are also joined by individuals from the marginalized and stigmatized groups (Offe, 1985, p. 667; Touraine, 1985, p.782). In Touraine’s words, these groups “are often more able than the ‘silent majority’ to analyze their situation, define projects, and organize conflicts which can transform themselves into an active social movement” (1985, p.782).

The organizational structure of new movements are characterized by being decentralized, fragmented, diffuse or lacking formal organization all together. The emphasis is on grass roots efforts and local autonomy. A considerable role in new movements is played by the informal, invisible networks that operate prior to any even rudimentary social structure. Melucci (1994, p.127) suggests that there exists a bipolar pattern of functioning. On one hand, there are hidden networks of small
groups submerged in daily life where individuals and information circulate freely (the "latency" period). The minimum level of unity is provided by the professionalized nuclei, the umbrella organization. On the other hand, during the "visible" phase or the period of high mobilization, the invisible networks come out into the open to confront political authority on a specific issue. Some authors (McAdam, 1994, p.44) suggest that the long-standing oppositional subculture and some already established organization ("movement halfway houses") play the role of the organizational and cultural "midwives" in the "birth" of new movements.

The new social movements are seen by the NSM theorists as being manifestations of some qualitative shift in the nature of the Western capitalist, or more generally industrial, society (Scott, 1990, p.7). The new, historically specific social formation is being referred to interchangeably as post-industrial, programmed or information society, depending on what specific qualities are emphasized. In Habermas' terms, the "life-world" or the social and cultural sphere undergoes "inner colonization" by the "system" or the state and capitalist sphere of production, with a net result of "culturally impoverished and unilaterally rationalized praxis of everyday life" (1982, pp.35-36). For Touraine, one of the characteristics of what he calls programmed society is the shift in the capitalist production from the production of material goods to production that also includes information and symbolic goods, languages, and information. Touraine, just like Habermas, sees the technocratic state that invades all areas of social life as the pronounced feature of contemporary society that obliterates the traditional private-public dichotomy. For Touraine, however, the
main focus is the disappearance of the principles and rules or what he calls “metasocial guarantees of social order” that used to guide the social life (1985, p.778). Touraine (1985, p.779) invokes the question posed by Markuse: “when gods are dead, when guilt and redemption lose their meaning, what can we oppose to utilitarianism and hedonism”? For Touraine, this is where the new social movements enter the scene. It is the egotism of the utilitarian consumer society rather than the Big Brother that becomes the new target of the new social movements.

There are many advantages that the NSM theory have over earlier theoretical frameworks of collective action. For one, the theory gives the proper attention to the cultural and social aspects of social movements. It focuses on such categories as values, beliefs, solidarity, consciousness, commitment, i.e. the noninstrumental reasons without which the participation of actors in social movements would be difficult to understand. The new focus of the NSM theory with respect to social movements takes the analysis a step back to the point where the motivations of the movements actors take shape. This is crucial. Scot (1990, p.122) writes: “...understanding processes in which preferences are formed is central to a sociologically adequate account of social movements, and furthermore this can only be achieved if we recognize the significance of movements as cultural as well as political phenomena.”

The NSM theory rejects the view that society moves toward ends of which the members of society are unaware. It recognizes the capacity of social actors to consciously and purposefully intervene in the functioning and self-production of society, a process Touraine calls historicity. The new social actors are not only
interested in the resources that make their life possible, but most of all they fight for
control over the resources and cultural codes and definitions that give life its specific
quality and meaning. It enlarges the field of social movement aims to behaviors that
are expressive of the values of the social movements' actors, consciousness-rising,
providing collective identity, creation of alternative life-styles etc. These categories
can not be easily if at all rendered operational in a rational utilitarian framework.

The NSM theory unquestionably possesses some qualities or characteristics
that make this approach better tool for the understanding for the social movement
phenomena. It has, however, some weaknesses as well. For one, its assumption that a
we are witnessing a dawn of a “new” historically specific social formation referred to
as either post-industrial, programmed or information society, opens the theory to a
justifiable criticism from more historically oriented sociologists. Craig Calhoun
(1993,) for example suggests that it my be premature to talk of the end of modernity:

If we are to discern a postmodernity, a change of tendency, or a trend, we need
more clearly to know what we may be moving beyond. State power and
capitalism have not ben transcended; neither has competitive individualism
passed away nor the world of merely instrumental relations become inherently
more spiritual. Many of the grievances and dissatisfactions that drove the
movements of the early nineteenth century remain. (p.418)

Calhoun points to several movements that took place in the late eighteenth and early
nineteenth century that fit many of the characteristics of the “new” social movements
of the present times. He also suggests that all movement in their nascent period, and
that includes nineteenth century labor movements, tend to fit certain aspects of the
also notices that many characteristics of new social movements can be generalizable to older movements. He further points out that the cultural nature of social movement is a pre-condition for any collective action and, therefore, it is as characteristic of old as well as of new social movements. Also, as Cohen (1985, p.703) rightly observed the fact that civil society (concept often employed by the NSM theorists) existed in the West at least since the seventeen century implies institutional and cultural continuity with the past.

Another major criticism against the NSM theory is that while it brings out important aspects of social movements for analysis it completely excludes the focus of other frameworks. Thus such "objective" variables as organization, interests, resources, opportunities and strategic calculations do not receive adequate attention from the NSM theorists. This of course misses important aspects of social movements activity that takes place outside the sphere of ideas, beliefs, values or consciousness and which has to do with the everyday functioning of the movement. Also, as Scott (1990, p.116) aptly observes, the "exclusively culturalist interpretations of social movements ignore the political and institutional dimension." The example of Germany's Greens or US Civil Rights movement shows that the new social movements are as much cultural as political phenomena. Here the concerns with the form of organization and legitimate institutional activity, the question of access to political institutions and political power assume central importance alongside the concerns with values, beliefs or identity and life-style.
Resource Mobilization

Resource Mobilization paradigm originated in the United States and could be seen as a theoretical response to the inadequacies of the earlier frameworks particularly the collective behavior approaches of the Chicago School or structural functionalism. While the earlier approaches treated social movements as an irrational outbursts by deviants, the results of structural strain or anomie, the RM approach viewed social movements as an effect of rational and calculated decisions by the movements actors. The RM approach was a theoretical response to the social movements of the sixties and seventies which, in the words of Jean Cohen (1985, p.673), “were not responses to economic crises or breakdown....” and “involved concrete goals, clearly articulated general values and interests, and rational calculation of strategies.” These aspects of social movements are the focus of the RM theory.

One of the great contributions of the RM theory to the understanding of the contemporary social movements is the theory’s attention to the role of resources in the process of movement mobilization. Unlike the earlier approaches, which emphasized the increase in strain as conducive to the social movement mobilization, RM theory seeks the mobilization potential in the increase of resources and opportunities for collective action. The actions of the social movements actors are believed to involve cost/reward calculations and the movement mobilization is tied to the availability of resources, especially cadres and organizing facilities. Jenkins (1983, p.530) observed that RM theorists argue that “grievances are relatively constant, deriving from the
structural conflicts of interests built into social institutions, and that movement form because of long-term changes in group resources, organization, and opportunities for collective action.”

The importance of professional cadres for mobilization of the movement is particularly emphasized in McCarthy and Zald’s (1973) “entrepreneurial model” of resource mobilization. According to these two theorists, it is the energetic individuals or “entrepreneurs” (university professors and students, social activists etc.) that are responsible for the manufacturing of grievances in an effort to mobilize support of broad collectives and to fit the available resources: “the definition of grievances will expand to meet the funds and support personnel available” (McCarthy and Zald, 1973, cited in Jenkins, 1983, p.530). According to Jenkins (1983, p. 531) the “entrepreneurial model” received support from studies focussing on movements of deprived groups such as farmer workers as well as from studies of more resourceful movements as women’s liberation or the radical ecology movement.

The RM theory’s strength is that it takes seriously the questions concerned with the necessary material and other resources that play a role in the mobilizing potential and continuing existence of the movement. These, according to Freeman (1979, pp.172-175), involve “intangible” assets like the already mentioned specialized cadres of movements activists who provide legal and organizing skills as well as the unspecialized labor of movements’ supporters and “tangible” assets like money, facilities and means of communication. Interestingly, a large portion of these assets do not necessarily come from the movement’s participants but rather are obtained from
outside supporters including the government or private institutions as well as the media. This of course paints a very different picture of social movements from the descriptions by the earlier theoretical frameworks. Jenkins (1983) describes this change:

Social movements have therefore shifted from classical social movement organizations (or classical SMOs) with indigenous leadership, volunteer staff, extensive membership, resources from direct beneficiaries, and actions based on mass participation, towards professional social movement organizations (or professional SMOs) with outside leadership, full time paid staff, small or nonexistent membership, resources from conscience constituencies, and actions that “speak for” rather than involve an aggrieved group. (p.533)

This of course does not mean that the “elite interests” are not important in formation of some movements. For example, Jenkins (1983, p.531) cites the 1980 study by M. Useem of the antibusing countermovement in Boston who found that relative deprivation created by elite challenges to traditional privileges was important in explaining the participation independent of the solidarity level.

There are of course other characteristics that distinguish the RM approach from earlier perspectives. For example, the RM approach recognizes that social movement are faced with a number and choice of strategic tasks. According to McCarthy and Zald (1997, p.152), these include “mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite publics into sympathizers, and achieving change in targets.” Another difference is that the movements are seen as very sophisticated phenomena with complex systems of communication and multilevel organizational structures and wide range of preferences. McCarthy and Zald (1997, pp.153-154) distinguish between social movement (SM), social movement organization (SMO) and
social movement industry (SMI) and between narrow and broad preferences, millenarian and evangelistic preferences, and withdrawal preferences. The RM theory’s value lies in recognizing these differences between movements or between different levels of movements and in providing a framework in which these different and sophisticated aspects can be analyzed.

The RM theory in many respects represents an approach that is based in the logic of economics. The analysis is exclusively conducted in terms of costs/rewards and means/end goals framework. The decisions of the movement’s actors, according to the RM framework, stem from the rational and utilitarian logic and the social movements themselves are viewed as an extension of institutionalized action. These characteristics, in the opinion of many critics (Cohen, 1985; Jenkins, 1983; Scott, 1990, and others), are responsible for the theory’s obvious strengths that improve our understanding of social movements in comparison to the earlier theoretical frameworks. The recognition that social movements are normal phenomena in society and that participants are rational beings that plan and evaluate their actions are obvious strengths of the theory. But there are weaknesses as well.

The main criticism toward RM theory is that while it helps us to understand the organizational dilemmas facing social movements, it leaves out the question of meaning that collective action has for movement participants. RM fails to notice that social movements operate in a specific cultural context which is the source of many motivational categories for the participants. Scott (1990) recognizes the obvious limits of the RM framework which is
handicapped by its continual adherence to economic models of human agency, and says little about the content and context of social movement activity. A sociologically adequate theory of mobilization would have to identify the sources of solidarity which are preconditions for collective action by accommodating expressive, habitual, and affective as well as instrumental orientations for action. This is only possible if we recognize the significance of cultural, as well as purposeful, aspects of social movement activity. (p.111)

Touraine (1985) is similarly skeptical about RM approach in studying social movements since it bypasses the issue of the social relations in which the movement participants are enmeshed. Touraine, just like Scott, points to the motivational aspects of social movements that go beyond the logic of instrumental rationality:

The notion of resource mobilization has been used to transform the study of social movements into a study of strategies as if actors were defined by their goals and not by the social relationships--and especially power relationships--in which they are involved. Such a transformation is sometimes acceptable when apparently radical or ideological movements are actually instrumentally oriented interest groups. But in too many cases, this notion is used to eliminate inquiries about the meaning of collective action as if resource mobilization could be defined independently from the nature of the goals and the social relations of the actor, as if all actors were finally led by a logic of economic rationality. (p.769)

The above quotes suggest that RM theory’s exclusive focus on strategic and instrumental rationality of collective action misses the important question of why people get involved in the social movements in the first place. This question is especially valid since, as Gusfield (1994, p.61) points out, the new social movements do not display a clear relationship to utilitarian interests. The shortcoming of the RM theory in this respect is highlighted by the so-called “free rider” problem which

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1Free-rider problem of the RM approach stems from the idea that on the basis of the calculations of individual interests and the costs and benefits of contributing to secure “collective goods” (benefits available to all group members regardless of their
suggest that collective action lies outside the rational interest of an average person. The solution to the "free-rider" problem cannot be found within the narrow costs/benefits type of analysis adopted by the RM approach. The problem, as Cohen (1985, p.687) suggests, disappears if we broaden the analysis to include the considerations of collective identity, solidarity, consciousness, norms and values. These categories, however, which are central to the NSM approach, go beyond the RM framework.

Both, NSM and RM theories do further our understanding of the social movements. They both offer a new perspective on the way social movements are organized, how they sustain their active existence or why they form in the first place. Their weakness stems from the fact that they exclude the focus of the other framework. The two frameworks seem incompatible because of their exclusive focus on different aspects of social movements and their internal logic. This is also their weakness. If combined, however, because they illuminate different aspects of social movements, they complement each other rather well.

Method

The historically oriented sociological studies can be found among the works of the pioneers of the discipline like Alexis de Tocqueville, Karl Marx or Max Weber. In more recent times, the works of such distinguished scholars like Immanuel Wallerstein, (contribution) it would be more rational to ride free and let the others to make sacrifices.
Reinhard Bendix, Barrington Moore, Jr., Norbert Elias, Charles Tilly or Theda Skocpol brought renewed attention to historical sociology as an important intellectual field. This excitement about historical sociology continues in the nineties because of this genre’s continuous relevance and potential as a method of sociological inquiry.

Dennis Smith (1991) gives the following reasons for using the methods of historical sociology in the present time:

It [historical sociology] has the potential to demonstrate by its achievements the practical value of investigating the past and carrying out systematic comparisons across time and space, drawing out similarities and differences, tracing long-term processes, seeking out causes and pursuing effects, indicating the way people shape and are shaped by the institutions which bring them together and keep them apart. Hopefully, it may offer a route to increased understanding an more effective action through rational, critical and imaginative inquiry. (p.84)

Theda Skocpol identifies three general strategies commonly employed in historically oriented sociological research: a “one model strategy”, analytical historical sociology and interpretive historical sociology (1979, pp.362-391). A sociologist who follows the first strategy uses one general theoretical model to one or more instances covered by the model. In the past, this was the method of choice for structural functionalist research. Neil Smelser’s Social Change in the Industrial Revolution exemplifies this strategy. The second strategy is to explore alternative hypotheses in an attempt to discover causal regularities that account for specifically defined historical processes or outcomes. Barrington Moore’s Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy is an example of a work that utilizes such a strategy. In my study, I will employ the third strategy describe by Skocpol: the interpretive
historical sociology.

The strategy of interpretive historical sociology is to use theoretical concepts to develop meaningful historical interpretations, and it can be applied to one or more case studies. Rather than being concerned with testability of a theoretical model or with establishing causal relationships (as in the two other strategies), studies in this genre, to use Skocpol (1979) characterization, “stress the portrayal of given times and places in much of their rich complexity, and they pay attention to the orientations of the actors as well as to the institutional and cultural contexts in which they operate” (p.371). Another defining feature of this strategy is the use of a narrative story-telling typical of the historical novel, which makes the works of interpretive historical sociology extraordinarily vivid and full (p.371). Reinhard Bendix’s Nation-Building and Citizenship exemplifies this approach.

The socio-historical method has two other attractive characteristics. For one, it does not require an orthodox use of its strategies and a novel way of combining various strategies is not uncommon (Skocpol 1979, p.362). Another advantage of using the socio-historical method is the fact that it does not insist on redoing the primary research. Skocpol (1979) explains:

..., a dogmatic insistence on redoing primary research for every [socio-historical] investigation would be disastrous; it would rule out most comparative-historical research. If a topic is too big for purely primary research - and (emphasis original)- if excellent studies by specialists are already available in some profusion - secondary sources are appropriate as the basic sources of evidence for a given study. (p.382)

I will rely mostly on secondary sources such as historical analyses, biographical
dictionaries and encyclopedias. As for the primary sources, I will also utilize various writings by the members of the Flying University (both "old" and "new"). Since a significant portion of these documents is in Polish, I will supply the English translation.
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This chapter has as its focus the historical context that surrounded the formation of Poland’s first and second Flying Universities. The two time periods described in this chapter are: the period of partitioned Poland (1795-1918) and more specifically the times after the January Uprising of 1863, and the time of communist Poland from 1945 until the late 1970s. Several excellent works in both English and in Polish on the subject of Poland’s history already exist, therefore I did not think it necessary to emulate these comprehensive studies. Instead, I limited myself to focusing on selected events, people, and ideas of the two time periods that, in my view, were indispensable in understanding the Flying University phenomena. In my rather brief summary of the history of Poland in the two distinct time periods, I relied on several excellent studies that included Norman Davies’ God’s Playground: A History of Poland, Adam Zamoyski’s The Polish Way: A Thousand-year History of the Poles and their Culture, Oscar Halecki’s History of Poland, and Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski’s Najnowsza Historia Polityczna Polski. Okres 1864-1914 [Contemporary Political Polish History. Period 1864-1914]. I have relied on primary sources to a lesser degree. These included primarily various writings (articles, essays, memoirs) by the participants of the Flying Universities like Ludwik Krzywicki, Hanna Buczyńska-Garewicz, Adam Michnik and others. I based my discussion of ideological currents in Poland at the respective time periods on information from the following
works: Poland, The Last Decade by Adam Bromke, Letters from Prison And Other Essays by Adam Michnik, articles: "Reflections on a Program of Action" by Jacek Kuroń, "Alternatives to Romanticism: The traditions of Polish Positivism and KOR" by Stanislaus A. Blejwas, and on the already mentioned book by Davies. I am solely responsible for quotes that have not been translated previously into English.

Russian Partition

The story of the Flying University began in 1882 in Warsaw, Russia or rather in what the Polish people referred to as Zabór Rosyjski (the Russian Partition). Poland, as an independent state, had not existed since 1795, when the country was invaded and partitioned by its three powerful neighbors: Russia, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian empire. The Poles made several desperate attempts to regain their independence (1794, 1830, 1848, 1863), but each time suffered a costly defeat to the stronger enemies. The uprisings not only failed to bring the desired freedom to the Poles, but caused increased repressions and a further loss of any signs of autonomous existence. This was particularly true in the Prussian and Russian partitions.

To gain some rudimentary understanding of the causes behind the formation of the first major undertaking of the clandestine education known as the Flying

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2In 1815 the Congress of Vienna which convened to decide the new order in Europe after the defeat of Napoleon established “Kingdom of Poland”, a minute state made of part of the Polish territories annexed by Russia in 1795. The new Polish state, despite having Russian Tsar as its king, enjoyed limited autonomy. After the defeat in 1864 of January Uprising of 1863, the kingdom was incorporated to the Russian Empire and its semi-autonomous institutions were completely destroyed.
University, one must go back in time to the year 1864. The January Rising of 1863 was crushed by the Russian armies, and a wave of police terror began to sweep the country. Executions of captured insurrectionists were almost a daily event and jails and prisons quickly filled beyond capacity. The Tsarist authorities transported tens of thousands of Poles to prison camps in Central Russia and Siberia. Several thousand estates belonging to the Polish gentry were confiscated by the Tsarist government and over 35 million rubles were collected in penalties imposed on other estates or individuals accused of participating in or aiding the uprising (Pobóg-Malinowski, p.16). The partitioner, however, did not stop at punishing Poles for the uprising. The Tsarist government was determined to bring Poland to its knees and transform the Poles into “good Russians” and loyal subjects of the Russian Tsar.

There were a number of measures designed specifically to do that. Among other things, all Polish autonomous administrative and political institutions, government committees, the Polish justice system and banking were dismantled by the Russians. Fourteen thousand Poles were removed from administration and government posts (Pobóg-Malinowski, p.19). Severe repressions were also directed toward the Catholic Church, one of the main pillars of Polish culture and tradition. The Church’s estates were confiscated, seminaria and monasteries were either closed or under tight government control, and many priests and bishops were transported to Siberia. By 1870, all 15 Polish Catholic bishops were removed from their posts and the central governing body for the Church in Poland was established in Petersburg (Pobóg-Malinowski, p.20). In 1870, the Tsarist government issued a decree that the
Catholic liturgy was henceforth to be said in Russian (Zamoyski, p.315).

The gravest attack, however, was directed toward Polish culture and the system of education where russification became the prime goal of official policy throughout the Russian partition, and it played a key role in the Tsarist strategy to eradicate the Polish national consciousness from the minds and the hearts of Poles.

The policy of russification adopted by the Russian government under the rulership of Tsar Aleksander II toward the Poles had several components. First, there was the censorship, which, with twelve separate agencies assumed the proportions of a major industry. The effect of the work of the censorship in Polish lands was according to Norman Davies “strangulation of all works in non-Russian languages” (p.98). All works by the Polish Romantic poets and novelists were prohibited for publication and entire passages that referred to Poland’s history were removed from books and articles in Russian by the censors. None of the dramas of venerated Polish writers Krasinski, Mickiewicz or Słowacki could be staged in Warsaw (Davies, p.98). Second, the system of education was completely transformed to serve as a primary tool of russification. Russian became the official language of instruction and schools’ curricula were severely curtailed. Subjects such as Polish literature and Polish history were nearly completely eliminated (Cywiński, p.23). Several measures were implemented to eradicate the Polish language which was to be replaced by the language of the Russian occupation army. For example, Polish in school curricula was listed as a “foreign language” and Polish teachers had to use Russian as the means of instruction for teaching Polish to Polish children (Davies, p.99). The Russian language
became a required subject while Polish became an elective (Pobóg-Malinowski, p.19). The children were forbidden to use their native tongue in the school buildings even in private conversation (Walicki, p.337). By 1869, the two most important Polish institutions of higher learning, the Royal Warsaw University and the Szkoła Główna Warszawska (Warsaw's Main School) were closed by the Russian authorities (Davies, p.100). The authorities were also conducting personnel policies that had dire consequences for the quality of education. Russian teachers were actively recruited to teach in the schools in the partition and they were steadily replacing Polish educators. These new recruits were often individuals unable to secure employment in native Russia because of being ill qualified to teach or of low morale. Not surprisingly, the quality of education at all levels declined dramatically in Poland (Pobóg-Malinowski, p.19).

The hopeless political situation of Poland was a part of the picture. The situation in the economy in the Polish lands controlled by Russia at the time after the January Uprising was, in contrast to the political situation, in much better condition. This was not the sign of the good will of the Russian occupiers but the result of industrialization and the fact that Poland became de facto a part of Russia. Industrialization in the Polish lands was not as rapid as in Western Europe but it was nevertheless impressive and it preceded the industrialization of Russia. As an example of the rapid pace of industrialization may serve the fact that the number of steam engines in use in the Polish territories of the empire increased twenty five times between 1853 and 1885 (Zamoyski, p.310). The economic boom in the Polish
territories annexed by Russia was due in large measure to the protectionist policies adopted in the 1870s by the Tsarist government. Since the Polish lands became part of Russia the internal trade barriers disappeared and the huge Russian market became open to the goods manufactured in the Russian partition. As a result, the value of the Kingdom industrial production increased by over six times between 1864 and 1885 (Zamoyski, p.310).

The changes in the rural areas of the Russian partition were even more dramatic. In 1864, toward the end of January Rising, the Tsarist government issued a decree abolishing serfdom in the Polish territories. It soon became apparent that behind this decision was not the Tsar’s concern for the Polish peasants but the intent to destroy the szlachta (Polish gentry), an economic stratum and principal defender (along with the Catholic Church) of the Polish national spirit, culture and tradition. The Tsarist agrarian policies in the Polish lands were in effect as harmful to the gentry as they were to the peasants. While the reforms caused economic ruin for thousands of szlachta, it also placed the village affairs under the spell of Tsarist bureaucracy (Michnik, p.256). The szlachta estates were often sold to the Russian landowners or awarded to Tsarist officials. The emancipation reform did not benefit the majority of Polish peasants who were given too little land on which to survive. In effect, the number of landless peasants increased by 400 per cent during the twenty five year period following the emancipation reform (Zamoyski, p.314). These poor peasants (alongside the declassed szlachta) were forced to migrate to the cities where they joined the swelling ranks of urban proletariat. The declassed szlachta formed the
backbone of the Polish intelligentsia.

The social changes taking place in the Polish lands, urbanization, rapid growth of the proletarian class in addition to the substantial population growth [population of Warsaw alone grew from 160 thousand in 1860 to over half a million thirty years later, Pobóg-Malinowski, p.24] exacerbated an already difficult situation in education. Because the number of school-age children in the cities increased while the Tsarist government did not intend to open new schools and refused to grant permits for private schools, thousands of Polish children were not receiving any education at all (Ceysingerówna, pp.95-97).

The Educational Counter-movement and the Birth of Flying University

The policy of russification with respect to education adopted by the Tsarist government in the Polish lands was designed toward two major objectives. On one hand, it was aimed at weakening or, if possible, even extinguishing the flame of the Polish national consciousness, Polish culture and traditions. The young generation of Poles were being taught how to love and obey the Russian Tsar and his functionaries. They were taught to admire the Russian literature and Russian history. What they were not being taught was the history of their own nation, its literature, and traditions. On the other hand, the policy of Russification was creating huge obstacles for the normal functioning and development of education that would fulfill the aspirations of the young generation of Poles. In this environment, slowly but consistently, the unofficial system of education developed.
At first, the main form of clandestine education was a secret student associations at the high-school level. According to Polish historian Bohdan Cywiński, the first such associations or “kółka uczniowskie” (“students’ circles”) took place in the Russian partition in the early 1880s (p.32). These students’ initiatives were usually composed of a small group of friends but some were much larger and had more sophisticated organization with its own governing body, elections, newsletter and several levels of initiations as a security precaution (Cywiński, p.33). The main goal of these organizations was self-education in subjects that were excluded from the official high schools’ curricula. These included, not surprisingly, Polish history and literature but also Western European positivistic and scientific thought. Thus, alongside works by Polish historical writers or poets like Niemcewicz, Lelewel, Mickiewicz or Krasinski, there was Spencer, Darwin, Marx, Taine and Buckle. Works by these authors were either forbidden by the censorship or simply not available in school libraries, so it was an ambition of each circle to create its own secret library of these rare and forbidden books. The circles were the sole initiatives of students themselves but on some occasions they were aided by one of their teachers (Cywiński, p.34).

The rapid urbanization and population growth caused thousands of poor children to be excluded from the official system of education. Those children who were attending official schools were not, however, in a much better position; the education they received was a substandard education at best. It was not uncommon that a child attending official school for seven years could not read in Polish (which was not taught) nor in Russian (Ceysingerówna, p.96). Faced with this tragic situation
many individuals, despite the risk of imprisonment and large fines, initiated on their own private teaching. In towns and cities devoted teachers held private lessons in their own homes, while in villages campaigns to educate peasants were disguised as "Bee-keeping Societies" and "Sports Associations" (Davies, p.236). These various initiatives were growing at an unprecedented rate. In Warsaw, the clandestine elementary education achieved a more permanent and organized form in 1984, when at the initiative of Cecylja Śniegocka Towarzystwo Tajnego Nauczania (Society for Clandestine Education) was organized. The Society had a centralized organization with sophisticated networks of communication to warn of any dangers, was founded from private donations and employed a relatively large number of teachers. By 1905, the society provided education for about half the number of all children attending official schools (Ceysingerówna, p.100).

The situation in the Russian Partition with respect to higher education was equally difficult. The Polish universities were closed by the Russian authorities and in their place a Russian university in Warsaw was organized. The level of education at the Russian university in Warsaw was low and many subjects, in accordance with the official policy of russification, were not taught at all. The only other option left for the Polish students was to go study abroad at one of the universities in Western Europe, but that option was expensive and, therefore, open to very few. The situation was particularly difficult for women who were not even allowed to attend the Russian universities. This situation changed dramatically when in 1882 an illegal underground Latający Uniwersytet (Flying University) was organized.
The beginnings of the Flying University were modest and consisted primarily of a few study groups that were led by individual professors. Only later, in 1885, at the initiative of Jadwiga Szczawińska, a young scholar, the “university” acquired a more organized and systematic character. The university developed its own program of studies, had a budget and a centralized organization and a board of trustees. The lectures were held at private apartments and the location was frequently changed; hence the name “Flying University.” The university was divided into four departments: social sciences, philology-history, pedagogy, and physical sciences. The full term of study was calculated to last five to six years with eight to eleven hours of lectures per week. The faculty of the Flying University included distinguished scholars like the sociologist Ludwik Krzywicki, the philosopher Adam Mahrburg, the historian Władysław Smoleński, the geographer Waclaw Nałkowski, professor of literature Ignacy Chrzanowski, and others. In all, more than thirty professors participated in this undertaking.

Both faculty and students of the Flying University risked considerable punishment for participation in this illegal venture that included imprisonment, deportation to Siberia and large fines. Despite these risks, the attraction for participation in the university was enormous. Historian Bohdan Cywiński (1985, p.53) found that the number of students wishing to attend the university in the academic year 1889/90 reached nearly a thousand, way beyond the capacity of the university. The total number of graduates between 1885 and 1905 is estimated at five thousand (Cywiński, p.53).
The Flying University was at its beginning humorously called by some the "Uniwersytet babski" ("chicks' university") because of its exclusive female student body (Cywiński, p.48). This situation was the result of the women's emancipation ideologies that were coming to Poland from Western Europe and the fact that many women were left with sole responsibility to earn a salary to take care of their families (since their husbands or fathers were deported to Siberia). However, very soon after its beginning, the university attracted a substantial population of male students. They flocked to the university because it offered lectures on the subjects excluded from the curricula of the official schools. Furthermore, it quickly became apparent that the level of academic excellence was higher than at the Russian University in Warsaw. One of the graduates of the Flying University was Maria Skłodowska Curie, later to be the world renowned chemist and physicist and twice Nobel Prize winner (Davies, p.235).

The Flying University existed as an illegal institution until 1906 when, on the wave of liberalization in education that followed school strikes in the Russian partition, it was transformed into the semi-legal Towarzystwo Kursów Naukowych (Society for Academic Studies or TKN). Although harassed by the authorities and never granted university status, the Society survived until 1918 when Poland regained its sovereignty. In 1919, the work and traditions of the Flying University and TKN continued as a public university: Wolna Wszechnica Polska (Polish Free University).

Between Romanticism and Realism

The objective condition of Poland, a large state that after eight centuries of
existence disappeared from the political map of Europe, had enormous consequence on the prevailing ideologies that were being advanced by Polish political activists, philosophers and writers during the partition period. At first, the idea of regaining an independent state was on the very top of every ideological agenda. The idea of a sovereign nation was not new; its genealogy could be traced to the Polish Commonwealth of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In fact, according to historian Andrzej Walicki (1982, p.4), the ideas of national sovereignty and the right to national self-determination appeared in Poland earlier than in any other European country.

The idea of national sovereignty was espoused the most by the Polish gentry, who were more numerous in Poland than in any country in Europe. The ideal of the state was based on the republican and democratic principles. The gentry was responsible for creating already in the sixteenth century a conception of the state in which the king became answerable to society for observing the limitations of his power. The limits on the power of the monarch was guaranteed by the Polish constitution and the king himself was chosen in a general election from among the gentry class. The citizens of the Polish “Gentry Republic” enjoyed privileges and liberties that were unparalleled in Europe during those centuries. American historian R.H. Lord writes about the progressive character of the political system in Poland of the time:

The old Polish Commonwealth was an experiment of highly original and interesting character. It was a republic both in name and in fact, although nominally it had a king as its first magistrate. It was the largest and the most
ambitious experiment with a republican form of government that the world had seen since the days of the Romans. Moreover, it was the first experiment on a large scale with a federal republic down to the appearance of the United States. In the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries this republic was the freest state in Europe, the state in which the greatest degree of constitutional, civic and intellectual liberty prevailed... (cited in Walicki, p.13)

The political program of the leaders of the nation both in exile and in Poland was to recover the state from the occupying powers through the armed risings. The idea of armed resistance was also rooted in the traditions of the old Republic. Historian Norman Davies rightly observed:

Every Pole who wished to take up arms against the partitioning powers was conscious to a greater or lesser degree of the ancient Right of Resistance and the example of confederations. If the nobleman of Poland-Lithuania had once felt justified in their frequent resort to arms against their own, highly democratic government, how much more could their sons and grandsons sense the justice of their struggles against foreign tyranny. The new insurrectionary was the old rokoszanin [emphasis original] writ large. Resolved to overthrow the established order by force, he invariably made demands for the recreation of an independent Polish state. (p.33)

The idea of insurrections was promoted by the emigre Polish political leaders and it was one that captured the imagination of the Polish Romantic poets and writers who became the spiritual leaders of the nation; the “governors of souls”.

The Polish Romantic poets and writers established the mission for the generation of Poles to come. This mission consisted of individual sacrifice, of conspiracy, suffering and martyrdom. All this for an idea, since Poland had no concrete existence. In the Romantic canon, courage and honor were elevated to the highest values, while individual life had significance only when it could be a sacrifice on the altar of FREEDOM. Freedom itself became, in the writings of the Romantics,
synonymous with Poland. The ideas were expressed in the writing of Adam Mickiewicz, who by some is considered the greatest Polish Romantic poet:

...And Finally Poland said: “Whosoever will come to me shall be free and equal, for I am FREEDOM”. But the Kings when they heard were frightened in their hearts, and said...”Come, let as slay this nation”. And they conspired together...And they crucified the Polish Nation, and laid it in its grave, and cried out “We have slain and buried Freedom”. But they cried out foolishly...

(cited in Davies, pp.8-9)

The poets did not long for freedom just for Poland, their voice was against the slavery of all nations. Their word was an inspiration for thousands of Polish volunteers in armies of other enslaved people. In fact, as Norman Davies (1982, p.35) observed, Poles took part in all of Europe’s revolutionary confrontations. They fought in large numbers on the barricades in Paris in 1848; in Italy and in Hungary in 1848-9; and in the Paris Commune of 1871. Polish officers led armies of other nations toward their freedom. Jarosław Dąbrowski found a hero’s death as the Commander-in-chief of the forces of the Paris Commune, Józef Bem commanded the Hungarian Insurrectionary Army and Ludwik Mierosławski headed revolutionary forces in Posen, then in Sicily and later in Baden. Mickiewicz himself lived up to his word. He died in Turkey in 1854 while trying to organize a Legion for service against Russia in the Crimea.

The insurrectionary heroic fight against the forces of foreign imperialism and despotism both in Poland and abroad proved largely unsuccessful. The latest defeat of the January Rising of 1863 was particularly painful. It signaled the dawn of another dominant ideological trend known in Poland as “Positivism” or “Realism”. Modeled
after Western positivistic thought, it professed a strong commitment to the empirical science and rational thought and was against institutional religion, superstition and romantic idealism in literature and politics. The proponents of positivism, at least the majority of them, did not give up the idea of an independent Poland, but they argued that it was, under their present circumstances, an unrealistic and too costly idea.

Positivists condemned the ideas of endless sacrifices and armed risings advocated by the Romantics:

Our great poets--Mickiewicz, Krasiński, Zaleski--have contributed to this [pitiful state] by directing peoples minds to golden dreams, prophecies and supernatural phenomena, tearing them away from reality. The latest uprising has thought us a great lesson; we have had a difficult education. The noose, conflagration, Siberia, the general repressions at home and exile abroad ought to sober us up completely and bring it home to us that it is not in poetry and clairvoyance or in higher mission that political calculations lie...

(Łukaszewski, cited in Michnik, 1985, p.227)

Positivists made a distinction between the state and the nation. The leading proponent of Polish positivism, Aleksander Świętochowski, argued that a nation can develop successfully even in a stateless condition. In 1881, he wrote: “A nation deprived of political independence ceased to be a state, but not a nation” (cited in Blejwas, 1989, p.200). A year later, in his 1882 article “Political Directions” Świętochowski stated:

...the mere loss of their political institutions would, from the liberal standpoint, not seem a misfortune to us at all. For the happiness of the people, in our opinion, is not strictly dependent on their power and independence but on their participation in universal civilization as well as on their advancement of their own civilization. (cited in Olszer, p.119)

Positivists suggested that since the state is in the undisputed control of one area of
social and political life, all attention has to be focussed on the civic and private
initiatives of individuals and associations in areas not taken up by the state.
Świętochowski wrote: “Besides questions beyond our control, there are questions we
can determine, certain areas where we are permitted to work independently” (cited in

The program of positivists was called “praca organiczna” (“organic work”) or
“praca u podstaw” (“work at the basis”). It meant working patiently at the creation of
an economic and commercial infrastructure, developing industry and creating a strong
middle class. It was a program of national revival that called for equal status of
minorities, female emancipation and for the more active role of women in society. It
was a program of cultural and economic progress and of maintaining national identity
through a host of initiatives that emphasized education and learning. Świętochowski
wrote: “Industry, commerce, agriculture, learning, art, literature, education, new
institutions and organizations, in a word, the entire area of work is an object of
research, directions and planning” (cited in Blejwas, p.198).

The program of the Romantics was a maximalist one; they demanded
independence or nothing at all. Positivists were much more moderate in this respect.
They bargained only for what they thought was within their reach which excluded the
independent state.

The political program of the Warsaw positivists found considerable support in
society after the fall of the January Uprising in 1864. The society, who suffered great
loses and was on a daily basis subjugated to the persecution from the Russian invaders,
was physically and psychologically exhausted. The entire generation of Poles seemed for the time resigned to their fate of not having an independent state. By 1890s, however, the popularity of the positivistic ideology was on the decline. The argument that the nation’s fate could be changed through the legal and open activities was especially under attack. Furthermore, opponents of Positivism argued that ideology that accepts the political status quo can serve as an excuse for those whose loyal service to the Tsarist government advances their own selfish interests and the interests of the invader. The political direction suggested by Positivists was becoming less and less popular among a new generation of Poles coming of age. This young people did not experience themselves the tragedy of the uprising and were not infected by the disease of resignation from the dream of an independent Poland that seemed to debilitate their parents.

Positivism was also attacked by the supporters of socialism, an ideology that was becoming more and more popular among a large numbers of Polish intelligentsia. Socialists, despite the intellectual debt to Positivism, condemned the former for emphasizing legalism and social harmony both contrary to class conflict and imminent social revolution (Blejwas, p.200). The socialist ideology was itself seen as a relevant response to the growing social inequalities and social problems that resulted from the growth of the capitalist system in Poland. In 1882, the first Polish socialist group “Proletariat” under the leadership of Ludwik Waryński was organized and in 1892 Polish Socialist Party or PPS appear on the political scene. PPS from its very conception had been strongly committed to the cause of Poland’s freedom and to its
national values. The Polish socialist movement forged a very strong link between the
national question and the social question, and therefore it eagerly embraced the
Romantic dream of an independent Poland and the conviction that the nation’s fate
will be resolved on the military battlefields.

Poland Under Communism

After World War II, Poland laid in ruin. The devastation was enormous. Six
million Polish citizens, including three million Polish Jews perished, killed on the battle
grounds or in concentration camps. The cities were destroyed in more than fifty
percent, with the capital Warsaw turned into a pile of rubble by the German armies
following the 1944 uprising. Despite the enormous sacrifices on the battleground in
the fight against the Nazi armies Poland did not enjoy the spoils of the victorious allies.
Following the 1945 Yalta Agreement between the United States, Great Britain and the
Soviet Union, Poland together with most of the other Central and Eastern European
countries was abandoned to its eastern neighbor. Poland became the “satellite” of the
Soviet Union. Polish borders were shifted westward with a net loss of over thirty
percent of the territory that constituted pre-war Poland. With the “help” of the Soviet
troops, and without a mandate from the population, the communist government was
installed in Warsaw.

The communist system imposed on Poland from outside proved ill suited to
this predominantly Catholic country with deeply cherished democratic traditions. The
communists who in the period between the World Wars constituted a negligible
political force now with the backing of the Soviet army were consolidating political power in their hands. The impression of political pluralism was maintained by the existence of three other political parties, remnants of the pre-war Polish Socialist Party (forcibly incorporated in 1948 into the communist party), Polish Peasant Party and of National Democratic party. These parties’ leadership was forcibly removed and the parties themselves were severely truncated and subordinated to the communist party. Their role in effect was reduced to that of “window dressing.”

The tactics use by the communists in this endeavor were further alienating the society. These tactics were based on police terror, intimidation, fraud, lies and deceit. All non-communist pre-war political leaders who survived the war were either killed, imprisoned or forced to exile. An example of communist tactics was the case of a group of sixteen of Poland’s prominent political and military leaders including General Okólicki, the commander of Home Army (AK) and delegates of the legitimate Polish government in exile. These individuals were invited to talks by the communists, then were kidnaped to Moscow and imprisoned. The majority of them, including General Okólicki, did not return to Poland alive. A similar fate met thousands of officers and soldiers of AK, many of whom were executed, sentenced to long prison terms or transported to prison camps in Russia. The remnants of AK forces who managed to avoid arrests fought with the Soviet and Polish communist forces until 1948 when the last hopes of changing the political status quo finally died. While the legitimate Polish political figures were being forcibly removed from the political and social scene, many important posts in the security apparatus, armed forces and even the government were
in the immediate post-war years occupied by Russian communists delegated for that purpose from Moscow.

The Catholic church, a major authority for the Polish society as a defender of the nation, its culture and tradition, was also under attack. By 1953, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland, together with nine bishops and hundreds of priests were imprisoned. The church property was confiscated and the church matters, including appointments of new priests, were subordinated to the party-state apparatus. The communist also created a lay “Catholic” organization PAX to destroy the Church from the inside. Despite these measures, and faced with public outrage, the communists were unable to completely destroy the Catholic church in Poland, which remained the only independent institution in the country.

With respect to economic matters, the country was slowly recovering from the devastation of the war. This was associated with tremendous efforts and hardships of the entire Polish population which after the nightmare of Nazi occupation desired a normal life. The society’s effort often did not bring the anticipated results. This was in large due to the mismanagement, incompetence and corruption of the party-state elite. The so-called vanguard of the working class was in fact becoming a class of its own with its own internal rules, values and privileges that mocked the real working people. So while the party-state elite lived comfortably, the society at large was experiencing decline in the standard of living, chronic shortage of consumer goods and worsening of work conditions. The working people of Poland, who were reaching the point of total exhaustion and who were told to work harder by the party, were stripped
of the only mechanism through which they could address their grievances, their unions. The worsening economic situation resulted in several major workers' unrests. Two of the workers' upheavals in 1956 in Poznań and in 1970 on the Baltic cost were brutally suppressed by the police resulting in dozens of dead and hundreds wounded.

The cultural and educational spheres were equally suffering under communism. The tight political control and indoctrination was preventing Polish culture and education from a normal development. The ideological straightjacket imposed by the communists meant severe restrictions on publications, theater production or school curricula. The universities lost their autonomy and imposed severe limits on scholarly research. During the worst period of the Stalinist era, entire scientific disciplines like sociology were banned due to the suspicion that they were responsible for the spread of the "bourgeois ideology" (Szacki, 1990, p.88). The omnipotent state office of censorship relentlessly pursued anything that even remotely deviated from the official "party line" or the official interpretation of historical or current events. Those who in any form attempted to criticize the communist system in Poland or any issue with regard to the Poland's relations with the Soviet Union risked persecution. Despite these risks, there were several protests against censorship and against the cultural policies of the government organized by groups of Polish intellectuals and students. One such protest in 1968 evolved into mass student protest and resulted in the expulsion of several professors from the universities and the arrests of over three thousand students. A few of the students' leaders received long prison sentences. The ideological restriction placed on culture in Poland was, however, still less severe than
in other countries of the "Soviet block" and sporadically the periods of liberalization occurred.

The 1970's were a decade that began with workers' unrest following sharp price increases of food items. As in 1956, the workers' blood was spilled and political crisis as before was largely defused by the changes in the leadership party. Władysław Gomułka, an old communist leader who himself was brought to power following the 1956 crisis, was replaced by a younger member of the Central Committee of the Party, Edward Gierek. As in previous times, where the party leadership was under severe criticism, the period of liberalization followed. The party leadership not only engaged in self-criticism, a very rare event in the history of the communist rule, but it seemed genuinely affected by the workers' concerns. For the first time, the workers were allowed to voice their grievances publicly. The liberalization meant a freer flow of information and loosening of censorship. Writers, poets, movie directors that were previously in "disfavor" were again allowed to publish their books and poems or make their films. There was also an improvement in state-church relations.

Predictably, Gierek's "economic miracle" as well as the liberalization in social life were short lived. Gierek's economic plan which relied mostly on heavy purchases of Western technology and consumer goods while retaining the central planning mechanism combined with corruption and mismanagement by the ruling party-state elite brought Poland back into economic crisis. In 1976, strikes in factories were followed by police repressions and thousands of workers were arrested and imprisoned. The ideological war resumed with attacks on the Church and new
proposals to strengthen ideological indoctrination in schools. The work of state censorship was greatly intensified and many journalists and writers were prevented for publishing their articles and books. The 1975 proposal coming from the party leadership to amend the Polish Constitution so it would be more in line with its Soviet counterpart was the strongest sign yet that the “thaw” had ended.

By 1976, these and other measures undertaken by the government were causing understandable protest in society. There was also a growing feeling of resentment and disappointment among workers and intellectuals. The workers protested against constant price increases and demanded a mechanism to address their grievances. The intellectuals were protesting against censorship, state control over universities and complete elimination of academic freedom. While the workers were engaged in strikes or battling police on the streets, various intellectual circles were preparing organized oppositional activity.

Democratic Opposition and the Second Flying University

Among the first of oppositional efforts was the Komitet Obrony Robotników (Workers’ Defense Committee or KOR) established by a group of intellectuals and geared to provide legal and material help to persecuted workers and their families. A year later Latajacy Uniwersytet (Flying University), a series of underground academic lectures began its activity. These two oppositional groups are perhaps the most famous, but there were many others. Among the oppositional groups there were the Confederation of Independent Poland or KPN, Movement for the Defense of Human
and Civil Rights or ROPCiO, Students Solidarity Committee or SKS, and The Movement to name just a few. There were independent publishing houses like NOWa, “Klin” (Wedge), The Polish Publishing House, The Publishing House of the Third of May Constitution and others. The proliferation of oppositional movements was taken very seriously by the communist regime. From the very beginning of their existence, these groups were faced with counter movement actions undertaken by the regime. The repertoire of methods used by the regime to combat the opposition included firing from jobs, heavy fines, confiscation of publications and equipment, frequent arrests, refusals of passports, imprisonments and even beating.

The Flying University began as a series of academic lectures in November of 1977, the result of joint initiative of students from Students Solidarity Kommittee (SKS) and several young professors from the University of Warsaw. Two months later, it was more formally organized as Towarzystwo Kursów Naukowych (the Society for Academic Studies or TKN). The declaration establishing TKN was signed by fifty-eight intellectuals whose names were well known in Polish society and the academic world. During the course of its existence around eighty people, among them over forty university professors, became members. (Anderson, Appendix A). Besides academes, TKN members included poets, novelists, literary critics, journalists and others.

Unlike the first nineteenth century Flying University, TKN did not attempt to provide a complete academic education. Rather, it offered a number of courses on subjects excluded from the state universities’ curricula and in the areas, to use
Buczyńska-Garewicz’s words, “where the distortion of official propaganda were extremely severe” (1985, p.28). These areas were the social sciences and humanities: sociology, history, philosophy and literature. There were also lecture that dealt with economic matters and with the official language of propaganda. The university did not limit itself to lectures; publishing of writings on subjects prohibited by the censorship as well as publishing of literary works that were banned in Poland was also undertaken.

Similarly to its predecessor, the second Flying University conducted lectures in private apartments and each time the place of lecture was changed. Also the time and place of each lecture were kept secret and only communicated by person-to-person contacts. To avoid repressions against the students, there was no official registration and no student history, no exams, no grades, and no diplomas. Although it is difficult to arrive at a precise number of students “attending” the Flying University, it is estimated at several thousand (Anderson, 1995, p.1). TKN suspended its activity at the end of 1980 on the eve of the democratization and liberalization process initiated by the Solidarity Movement. A year later, many former TKN members (at least 80%, according to Bartoszewski, 1984, p.85) became imprisoned by the Jaruzelski regime in its campaign to destroy the movement.

Self-limiting Revolution

The ideological divisions between political Right and Left or between conservative and democratic ideological outlooks, so characteristic the pre-war period,
were no longer relevant after the communists took power in Poland. The distorted
version of Marxism-Leninism become the official doctrine of the one party state.
Those who dared to think that other ideological directions were also possible pretty
soon found themselves proven wrong by the communist political police. Socialism
was the official direction of the future Polish society and this direction was insured by
the Soviet military might.

Communist ideology, at least at the beginning, was not without an appeal for a
portion of the intelligentsia and intellectuals. After all, it was the promise of a better
tomorrow, of a society based on equality and justice. Many of the intellectuals
believed that as with every revolution the violence and suffering was regrettable but
unavoidable. Several leading intellectuals of the pre-war period including writers
Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz and Czesław Miłosz were seduced by the revolutionary
promises of the new order. In fact, there was a number of intellectuals who were
closely associated or sympathetic to the pre-war socialist movement and wished to
play a role in building of the new just society. These people had still fresh in their
minds the horrors of the war which they traced to capitalism and fascism. Their
rendezvous with communism was, however, short lasting. The communist, by 1948
felt secure enough to tighten the ideological grip and demanded from the intellectuals
strict conformity to the official ideology. Many intellectuals who could not accept
serving the system at the price of their personal integrity and honesty left the country
(Miłosz was among those who left) or went into internal exile which meant no more
books, articles or interviews.
The communist camp itself had in its ranks a number of intellectuals who genuinely believed in the possibility of a humanistic and just socialist society and who tried, in the words of philosopher Leszek Kołakowski (1983, p.60), to “graft democratic values and intellectual honesty on the tree of communism.” They were known as the “Revisionists.” The Revisionists broke the cycle of lies and secrecy about the reality of life in Poland; they exposed with honesty the brutality, poverty and hopelessness that existed under the communist regime in Poland. Adam Ważyk, a Revisionist poet, wrote in 1955:

There are people overworked
There are people from Nowa Huta
who have never been to a theater
There are Polish apples which Polish children cannot reach,
There are boys forced to lie,
There are girls forced to lie,
There are old wives turned away from their homes by their husbands,
There are weary, dying of tired hearts,
There are people slandered, spat upon,
There are people who wait for justice
There are people who wait very long....
We make demands...
for rooms with windows
for walls which do not rot
for clean truth
for the bread of freedom
for burning reason
We demand these every day
We demand through the Party. (cited in Halecki, p.244)

The efforts of the revisionists, however, were in vain. As the economic crisis in Poland deepened and the communist regime showed that its preferred methods of dealing with social dissatisfaction was through police repressions, vicious propaganda
and tightening of censorship even these communist intellectuals lost their hopes that
democratic socialism could be constructed in Poland. The communist system in
Poland was simply incompatible with democracy. By the time the workers’ blood
dried out from the street of the coastal cities in 1970, Revisionism was dead and a
number of communist intellectuals joined the opposition movement. Strangely
enough, those communists joined the Catholic intellectuals who under the protective
umbrella of the Catholic Church tried to bring about the much needed democratization
in Poland.

The Catholic intellectuals grouped around the Tygodnik Powszechny (The
Universal Weekly) and a tiny parliamentary circle of five Roman Catholic Deputies
Znak (The Sign) followed an ideological program of “neo-positivism” formulated in
the late 1950s by the leader of Znak Stanisław Stomma. The program envisioned
hopes that the system could be reformed from above and it took into account the
objective political reality in Poland. As such, it resembled the programs of
Revisionists and it echoed the ideas expressed already in the nineteenth century by the
Warsaw positivists. Blejwas (1989) explains:

The neo-positivists justified their position on geopolitical and national rather
than on ideological and systemic grounds and with the expectation of
continued expansion of Polish sovereignty. Like the Warsaw positivists, the
neo-positivists rejected and deprecated the political idealists, an echo of the
former “all or nothing mentality.” Like the revisionists, they hoped for the
democratization of the Party’s exercise of power through legal means and
reform from above. (p.202)

Like the Revisionists, the Catholic intellectuals, in the face of failure of their attempts
to bring about the desired changes by putting pressure on the party, chose to abandon
their neo-positivist ideology. This change of direction by the Catholic intellectuals was signaled in the article by Stomma published in 1976 in the West entitled “The tragedies of Polish Realism” in which the author voiced his great frustration with past political activities. Stomma argued that since their repeated efforts at compromise find no response, there is no other way but resistance (Bromke, 1981, p.5).

By the middle of the 1970s, oppositional intellectuals in Poland embarked on the course of action that based on new ideological and strategic assumptions. The new programme of large part of the oppositional movement in Poland were formulated in 1976 by historians Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuroń. In his essay entitled “New Evolutionism” Michnik suggested that the only option for the democratic opposition in Poland was “The road of continuing the struggle for reform, the road of evolution which expands the area of civic and human rights” (1985, p.142). Michnik proposes reform of the system not from “within” by attempts to change the party but from “without” by directly working with the society. He writes:

I believe that what sets today’s opposition apart from the proponents of those ideas of reform in the past is the belief that a program for evolution ought to be addressed to independent public opinion, and not to totalitarian power. Such a program would offer advice to the people regarding how to behave, not to the government regarding how to reform itself. Nothing instructs the authorities better than pressure from below. (p.144)

Michnik does not seek to overthrow the government but rather he wants the society immediately and directly to take over its own destiny in certain spheres of life. He sees the road to democratization as a “gradual and piecemeal change, not violent upheaval and forceful destruction of the existing system” (p.143). Michnik hopes for a
proliferation of independent institutions in society which would become a partner in
negotiation with the government and would advance the evolution of public life
toward democracy. It is here, in the sphere of social life, that Michnik envisions the
arena for oppositional action: "... the democratic opposition must be constantly and
incessantly visible in public life, must formulate alternative programs" (p.147).

Michnik argues that the opposition’s strength lies in diversity of its
participants, “people from various traditions and social strata: former revisionists
(including the author of this article), former neo-positivists, and those who became
ideologically aware after the events of 1968” (p.147). He sees the workers, the
Catholic Church and the intelligentsia, the three most important groups in society, as
the three principal agents of change. Each of these groups have a specific role to play.
Michnik views the workers as the most important group, whose role is the formation
of independent institutions representing the interest of workers (p.144). The Church,
according to Michnik, becomes the main defender of human rights and human freedom
and dignity (p.145), while the intelligentsia’s duty is to think through alternative
programs of action and to defend moral and political principles (p.147).

Jacek Kuroń, similarly to Michnik, recognizes the limits to the social action in
Poland, a result of the country’s geopolitical situation. He, however, does not limit
himself to the discussion of the present but sketches an outline of the political system
of the future independent Poland. For Kuroń, the future of Poland lies in a socio-
political system known as a parliamentary democracy. He quotes in full The Letter of
the 59, an open letter to the government signed by leading intellectuals that
enumerated the principles which should form the basis of the socio-political life in Poland. These principles: freedom of conscience and religious observance, freedom of work, freedom of speech and information, freedom of research, and freedom of association are according to Kuroni, a necessary condition for the national sovereignty of Poland. The system of parliamentary democracy is for Kuroni not an ideal one, but it still far better than the totalitarianism which he sees as the main reason for Poland's deep socio-economic crisis. He describes the latter:

In a totalitarian system the power and the people are separated. All power—to initiate, to think, to decide—rest exclusively with the Government. The people are destined to become an amorphous mass, with no personal rights of any kind. The system puts our national survival in jeopardy and if by national sovereignty we mean the nation's ability to decide its own future, the system is bound to destroy it. (p.54)

Kuroni suggests that the society cannot afford to wait until the time when the external independence of Poland becomes a reality but rather it must begin a national self-defense through an open organized protest that unites the country and becomes a social movement (p.60). He envisions a social movement that is also based on democratic principles and where autonomy, independence and an initiative that comes from the rank and file are of paramount importance. Kuroni's provides some examples in his definition of a social movement:

A social movement is a form of joint action in which every participant realizes his aims by acting in a small, independent group. These small groups are united by a common purpose. They may arrive at a sufficient measure of agreement to undertake an action together, and may join to form an organization on a permanent basis or just for a duration of an action. In certain circumstances social movements may appoint governing bodies of their own. Those may either be elected by all the members or else, in some cases, one of the constituent groups may declare itself a committee for a specific purpose.
But always the small participating group retain the right to act on their own initiative. (p.60)

Kuroń distinguishes between four major social movements in Poland: peasant movement, workers movement, the Catholic movement, and the movement of intellectuals. The peasant movement fights the restrictions placed by the state on private farms, while the workers movement that struggles to protect the interest of the workers. The movement of the Catholic Church opposes the system which restricts individual freedom, a fundamental concept of Christianity. It also defends freedom of conscience and the dignity of the individual and struggles for the universal values on which the Polish national culture is based. Finally, the movement of intellectuals creates national culture and defends the independence of thought and research (pp.61-63). This was a program of a self-limiting revolution, which, unlike all other revolutions before, did not seek to overthrow the government.
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The rebirth of the Flying University in 1977, nearly a century after its predecessor, may seem a surprising development. After all, the historical circumstances had changed and, in contrast to the earlier period, Poland had regained statehood. From this perspective, one has to wonder whether, despite the common name, the two so-called “universities” are the same, partly similar or outright different. To address this question, I undertake a comparison between the two Flying Universities with respect to their social bases, ideologies and objectives. Biographical information in this chapter are based mainly on information from Jan Borowiec (Ed.) Encyklopedyczny Słownik Sławnych Polaków [Encyclopedic Dictionary of Famous Poles], Bohdan Cywiński’s Rodowody Niepokornych [The Genealogies of the Indomitable], and C.M. Anderson’s A History of the Flying University in Poland, 1977-1981.

Social Base

The comparison between the membership of the two Flying Universities seems to uncover some “parallel” features. Both universities were organized and run by the members of the intelligentsia, a social stratum that emerged in Poland and in Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century. Since, in my opinion, the understanding of both Flying Universities would be difficult without some knowledge about the
Intelligentsia, the subject deserves some attention. This brief description of the Polish intelligentsia is based on the book *Polish Society* by Adam Podgórecki and articles, “The Polish Intelligentsia. Past and Present” by Jan Szczepański, “The Life and Death of the Old Polish intelligentsia” by Aleksander Gella, and “Inteligencja I Naród” [Intelligentsia and Nation] by Józef Chałasiński.

Intelligentsia in Poland appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century. Polish historian Aleksander Gella (1971, p.1) defines the nineteenth century intelligentsia as a “culturally homogenous social stratum of educated people united by charismatic feelings and a certain set of values.” Two important factors, socio-economic and political, were responsible for the creation of this stratum in Poland. First, the country was undergoing industrialization and urbanization and the Duchy of Warsaw (a tiny Polish state that existed from 1806 till 1815) created by Napoleon and later the Congress Kingdom needed educated people for its bureaucratic apparatus, educational system, trades and the like. The second factor that created the Polish intelligentsia was associated with the changes that were taking place in agriculture. The landed magnates were adopting modern agricultural techniques that eliminated the services of the landless gentry, whose number was increasing. These landless gentry families were forced to start a new life in the cities. The number of landless gentry was again increased after the January Rising of 1863, when the Tsarist government

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3 The term *inteligencja* (intelligentsia), according to historian Aleksander Gella (1971, p.4), was first used in Polish literature by Karol Libelt in 1844. It appeared in Russian literature two years later in works of V.G. Belinsky. Later the term become adopted by other languages of the world.
confiscated thousands of gentry estates. It was this declassed and landless gentry that formed the bulk of the intelligentsia. Deprived of their estates, they entered various intellectual occupations, seeking to retain their position in society by means of education.

The political factors were the ones primarily responsible for shaping the characteristics of the Polish intelligentsia. The loss of sovereignty by Poland meant that safeguarding national culture, tradition and learning came to the fore as the most pressing concern of the intelligentsia. Not surprisingly, those who assumed the leadership role in this stratum were not the men of professional skills but the men of ideas. Polish sociologist Jan Szczepański (1962) explains:

The most influential and important among the nation’s educated people became those who took the ideological leadership in the effort to regain independence, who maintained the cultural and social forces necessary to this purpose, who kept alive the nation traditions, developed the nation’s values and educated the new generation for the struggle for national goals, maintained and developed the Polish language, literature, arts, and science, created new social and political ideas, searched for possibilities and analyzed the forces within the nation that might be decisive for the restoration of Poland. (p.408)

Thus the writers, poets, philosophers and other scholars became the leadership group within the intelligentsia and provided the ideas, norms, values and modes of behavior or the “ideal type” for the entire stratum. Under the adverse conditions the intelligentsia achieved a high degree of charismatic leadership and the leaders of the intelligentsia became the spiritual and moral leaders of the nation, a fact that explains their symbolic title “governors of souls.”

The characteristic of the Polish intelligentsia, one that differentiates it from
intelligentsia of other countries, was the social origin of the stratum. Although, the people from other social classes participated in the Polish intelligentsia, individuals of gentry class origin were the overwhelming majority. A team of Polish sociologists that in 1960 conducted studies of the nineteenth century Polish intelligentsia found that out of the sample of 860 individuals, only 8 percent came from the bourgeoisie, 4.5 percent from the lower middle class, 2.5 percent from the peasantry and 1 percent from the working class (Szczepański, p.409). This class composition, of course, was not without effects on the value system and cultural patterns of the intelligentsia.

Because the gentry constituted the bulk of intelligentsia, the culture of the gentry was the basis for the culture and ideology of the new stratum. The intelligentsia of the nineteenth century was for one thing strongly democratic, the result of the deeply rooted liberal traditions of the gentry. During the period known in the historic literature as the “Republic of the Gentry” (1454-1764), the class enjoyed great liberties and privileges. The gentry, who were more numerous in Poland than in any other country, believed that only they are the citizens of the nation and they had built their gentry state on the model of the ancient Roman Republic. The Polish gentry considered themselves to be equal regardless of economic differences among them and their sense of personal freedom was, according to Gella (p.11), far greater than among the gentry of Poland’s neighbors. The intelligentsia inherited the love of freedom and the equalitarian ideology of the gentry. But, in contrast to the dominant ideas of the “gentry democracy,” the intelligentsia wanted, in their effort to awaken the national consciousness of the peasants, to extend the full right of citizenship to that class as
Politically, the intelligentsia represented many orientations from the revolutionary left to more or less the conservative right. The study by Szczepański's team of sociologists found that in the sample of 860 representative of the intelligentsia of the nineteenth century, 46 percent held democratic and liberal views and 45 percent were conservative, while the remaining 9 percent were socialists and populists (1961, p.409). However, toward the end of the nineteenth century the association of the intelligentsia with socialist ideologies increased and the representatives of the stratum played a prominent role in the first Polish socialist parities: Proletariat founded in 1882 and Polish Socialist Party founded in 1892. Gella (1971, p.13) even talks about the "marriage" that took place between the left and the most influential and active representative of the intelligentsia. In fact, for the intelligentsia, the need for social changes existed alongside the drive to regain national independence. It is characteristic of the Polish intelligentsia that even the revolutionary elements among them linked the idea of social revolution to the goal of national independence. This fact explains why the communist ideology never totally appealed to the intelligentsia or the society at large.

The values of the intelligentsia were derived from the best traditions of national history. Besides the idea of freedom, these were the knightly virtues of honor, courage, and fidelity. These values were required on the battlefield and in daily life as well. According to the study by Szczepański's team, out of the sample of 860 men, 32 percent participated in the armed uprisings and about 20 percent were imprisoned or
deported to labor camps (Szczepański, pp. 409-410). Szczepański suspects that the actual percentage of individual from the sample that participated in the uprisings was higher, since there was no pertinent information regarding 37 percent of the sample.

The idea of honor was linked to patriotic duty of fighting for freedom and of preserving the cultural wealth for other classes and for the future. The intelligentsia lived by the strong feeling of a mission and responsibility for the entire nation. Patriotism was a chief component of the intelligentsia value system as was education. The emphasis was especially on humanistic education, since as Gella (1971, p. 17) rightly points out “the natural sciences were could not supply motivations for the actions that were treated (at least by the leaders) as a moral duty. Since the “ideal type” of intelligentsia was shaped by the poets, writers, historians and artists rather than by businessmen and technocrats the attitudes of the intelligentsia tended to be antipragmatic, idealistic and sometimes even irrational.

The first Flying University was a creation of a leading representative of the Polish intelligentsia. The biographical description of the entire faculty goes beyond the scope of this work, so I focus on just a few individuals whose names are most often associated with the Flying University and whose teaching and writings made the lasting impression on their students.

**Ludwik Krzywicki (1859-1941)**

One of the leading figures at the Flying University was Ludwik Krzywicki. Born in an impoverished Polish gentry family, he studied math and medicine at the
University of Warsaw (by then a Russian university) from where he was expelled for conspiring against the Russian school superintendent for Poland, Apuchtin. He emigrated to Lipsk where he studied economy and then anthropology and sociology in Zurich and Paris. During emigration, he was intensely engaged in socialist movements as a member of the socialist parties Proletariat and Narodna Volia. He was also co-editor of the Polish socialist emigre journals *Class Struggle* and *Before Dawn*. He participated in a group effort to translate Marx’s *Kapital* into Polish (published in Lipsk). In 1886, he returned to Poland and became a faculty member of the Flying University. Krzywicki, was one of the few professors of LU that attracted many young students because of his scholarly excellence as well as his social philosophy (Cywinski, p.52). In Poland, Krzywicki was editor or co-editor of the political, social, scientific, and literary journals *Truth*, *Universal Weekly*, and of the Polish Socialist Party’s *Daily Emissary*. He was also active in the illegal Circle of Workers Education. After 1918, when Poland regained its independence, Krzywicki became a professor at the University of Warsaw and a year later he was elected President of the Free Polish University, that continued traditions of the Flying University and TKN. He was forced into retirement from the university because of his political beliefs. Krzywicki published many books and articles in the fields of sociology, anthropology, political economy as well as books and articles on social, moral and ethical issues.

**Wacław Nałkowski (1851-1911)**

Nałkowski, like Krzywicki, was born in a family of the impoverished Polish
gentry. He studied geography at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and at Lipsk University. After 1885, Nałkowski taught at the Flying University and, like Krzywicki, wrote for many liberal-democratic and socialist journals. He is considered to be one of the best Polish methodologists and theoreticians of modern geography. Nałkowski authored several textbooks for the study of geography along with other books on cultural and social themes. Nałkowski was one of the most distinguished members of the Polish intelligentsia at the turn of the century. He was committed to the ideology of the early Polish positivists with its strong beliefs in science and education. He attacked clericalism and obscurantism.

Jan Władysław Dawid (1859-1914)

Born in a wealthy gentry family, he studied Law at the university of Warsaw and psychology and pedagogy at the universities in Halle and Lipsk. From 1884 when he was back in Warsaw, he taught at the LU and contributed to the philosophical, scientific and literary journals Ateneum and Voice (Editor). Dawid was intensely committed to training cadres of young teachers and educators.

Adam Mahrburg (1855-1913)

Born in a land-owning family whose estate was confiscated by the Russians after the January Rising of 1863, Mahrburg studied philosophy and history at Petersburg University and psychology at the University of Lipsk. After 1890, he returned to Warsaw where he began teaching at LU. Mahrburg wrote a textbook,
Study Guide for Self-Education, specially designed to serve students who wished to study at home. He was also a contributor to several scientific and socially oriented journals.

Ignacy Chrzanowski (1866-1940)

Probably the youngest faculty member at LU. He studied Polish and Slavic philology at the Universities of Warsaw and Wrocław. In 1892 he studied at the universities in Berlin and the Sorbonne as well as the College de France in Paris. After coming back to Poland, Chrzanowski taught at the Flying University and contributed to many literary journals. In 1899, he became the editor of Ateneum, literary journal on whose pages appeared articles by the best known of Warsaw’s intellectuals. Chrzanowski was involved in the fight for Polish school (school strikes of 1905) that forced Tsarist authorities to relinquish some of its grip on the system of education. After Poland regained its independence, he taught at the Jagiellonian University from which in 1931 he was forced to retire for political reasons. He is the author of many significant works on the history of Polish literature. Chrzanowski was a prisoner of Nazi concentration camp in Sachsenhausen and Oranienburg together with other professors of the Jagiellonian University of Kraków.

Piotr Chmielowski (1848-1904)

One of the oldest members of the Flying University, Chmielowski studied philosophy and literature at Warsaw’s Main School and at Warsaw University. He
received his Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Lipsk. Chmielowski contributed to several journals like the acclaimed *Ateneum* and *Weekly Review* (journals associated with the group of intellectuals known as Warsaw Positivists) and co-founded *Kasa im. Mianowskiego* (private foundation to support scientific studies, research and publications). He was co-editor of many dictionaries and encyclopedias as well as author of works on history of Polish literature, philosophical and theoretical essays, textbooks, and translations. Chmielowski is considered by many to be the co-creator of the Polish positivist movement.

**Edward Abromowski (1868-1918)**

Abramowski, a philosopher and psychologist, was a co-creator in 1888 of the socialist party Proletariat II (the first Proletariat was destroyed by the Tsarist authorities) and later involved in organizing the Polish Socialist Party. He was actively engaged in the workers movement and founder of the workers party Workers’ Union. Long before Markuse, Abramowski propose the idea of “moral revolution”, that was a prerequisite to social revolution.

The leading members of the post-war intelligentsia were responsible for the creation of the second Flying University. Again, the description of the entire faculty of this enterprise go beyond the scope of this thesis so my attention is directed toward the most active members of the university.
Hanna Malewska (1911-1983)

She studied history at Catholic University in Lublin (KUL). During the Nazi occupation, Malewska was active in the secret underground education and in 1944 as an AK soldier took part in the Warsaw Uprising. After the war, she was active in the Catholic movement and was in 1946-56 a member of the editorial board of the Catholic *Universal Weekly* and between 1957-73 editor of another Catholic journal *Sign*. She was an accomplished author of many historical novels. In her writing, she focused on the role of individuals in the process of historical change. She also concerned herself with the ethical, moral and socio-political problems that arose as the young generation succeeded the old one.

Wisława Szymborska (1923-)

She studied sociology and literature at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Since 1953, she was a member of the editorial board of *Literary Life* and managed her own sections of poetry and elective books. She is an accomplished and popular poet and her poetry is characterized as being personal, reflective, intellectual as well as moral. In her poetry, she focuses on the everyday life of the individual and on the individual’s relationship to history. In his 1983 anthology of the Postwar Polish Poetry, Czesław Miłosz wrote: "... I expressed certain misgivings as to Szymborska’s ‘playing with ideas borrowed from anthropology and philosophy’, which might easily, I contented, make poetry dependent on intellectual fashion and encourage preciosity."
Perhaps this is true of the weaker of her poems, but her best do not deserve that reproach, and her subsequent evolution as a poet placed her quite high among her contemporaries” (p.109). In 1996, Szymborska was awarded Nobel Prize for literature.

Stanisław Barańczak (1946-)

Barańczak studied literature at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and was active in 1968 student movement. He was a member of the literary circle Trials and regular contributor of literary and socio-political journals Texts, Odra and Universal Weekly. In 1976, he was a founding member of KOR and with J. Andrzejewski, J. Bocheński and K. Brandys co-creator of Register, an oppositional underground literary publication. He was dismissed from Poznań University for his oppositional activities and denied a passport after Harvard University in 1976 offered him the chair of Polish Literature. He was a victim of numerous arrests and harassments by police, and since 1976 on the list of writers prohibited to be published in Poland. Since 1981, Barańczak has been a professor at Harvard, coeditor with Cz. Miłosz and Zb. Herbert of Literary Notebooks, a literary journal published in Paris. Barańczak is a distinguished scholar and an acknowledged translator of British, American and Russian literature. He is a leading representative of Polish New Wave literary current that emerged at the end of the sixties as a protest against soc-realism. He is also a co-creator with Zb. Herbert and Cz. Miłosz of Moral Restlessness, a literary current which deals with moral and ethical dilemmas of the contemporary man.
He is the author of thirty books and nine volumes of poetry.

Jan Józef Lipski (1926-1991)

He studied philosophy at Warsaw University. During the Nazi Occupation, he was active in the underground resistance and as a soldier of AK participated in the Warsaw Uprising where he was wounded and decorated with the Cross of Valor for bravery. Between 1957-62, he was the chairman and board member of Crooked Circle, a discussion club of students and young intellectuals disbanded by the authorities. In 1957, he was on the editorial board of Simply Speaking, a socio-political weekly which championed the democratization and liberalization of the communist regime in Poland during the period of de-Stalinization (1955-57), and in 1964 helped to organize “Letter of 34”. Lipski was a founding member of KOR and his oppositional activities earned him imprisonment and ban on his publication by the authorities. Both of his children, Agnieszka and Jan Tomasz participated in KOR.

Edward Lipiński (1888-1986)

Lipiński was the oldest participant in the Flying University. He was a distinguished scholar, economist and a historian of economic thought. He was a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and a member of many international scientific organizations. Since 1906, he was a member of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). During the Nazi Occupation, he made an extraordinary contribution to the secret higher education when he directed the underground work of the Central Trade
School (Lipski, p.54). Since 1948 in the Polish United Workers Party or PZPR, the Polish communist party. Between 1956 and 1962, he was active in the club of the Crooked Circle. He was also a founding member of KOR. He was the author of a famous 1975 open letter to Edward Gierek in which he "warned that in Poland a government by a minority had a built in tendency toward totalitarianism" (Blazynski, p.127). He was also a member of the Helsinki Commission in Poland which was to evaluate the compliance of the Polish Authorities with the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Jacek Kuroń (1933-)

He studied history at the University of Warsaw. In his youth, Kuroń organized the so called "red scouting" and founded a radical communist group "Walterowcy". He was also active in the Union of Polish Youth or ZMP, a communist youth organization. Kuroń lectured at Warsaw University until 1965, that is until his famous open letter (co-authored with Karol Modzelewski) to the Members of the University of Warsaw Sections of the UPWP and the Union of Young Socialists (ZMS). The letter written from the Marxist viewpoint was a rigorous analysis of Polish society and it formulated a program for a genuine revolutionary party of the Polish working class. The letter which spurred great interest in the West in the communist and socialist circles earned Modzelewski and Kuroń three and three and a half year prison sentences respectively. He was a founding member of KOR and a member of a group of advisers to the National Commission of independent trade union Solidarity. He was
interned by the regime during Martial Law and after his release from prison
participated in the “Round Table” talks between the Jaruzelski government and the
opposition. In the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1989-90) and later of Hanna
Suchocka, Kuroń held the post of the Secretary of Labor and Social Policy. In 1995, he was a candidate in Poland’s presidential elections. He was twice expelled from the
PUWP (1955 and permanently in 1965) and spent a total of nine years in communist
prisons for his political activities.

Adam Michnik (1946-)

As a high school student, he attended the meeting of the club of the Crooked
Circle (1961-2) and was also active in the communist youth organizations. He was one of the student leaders in 1968 events for which he was expelled from the Warsaw University. He was a founding member of KOR and a member of the editorial boards of semizdat periodicals Voice, Register and Critique. Between 1976 and 1977, he stayed in the West where he wrote The Church and the Left: A Dialogue, an influential and controversial book that signaled a period of cooperation between the Catholic Church and leftist intellectuals in Poland. For his oppositional activities Michnik was often arrested, harassed and even beaten by police (Lipski, p.211) He served as adviser to the “Solidarity” leadership and was imprisoned during Martial Law. After the collapse of communism, he became the editor in chief of the largest Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza. Michnik is widely considered to be among the leading leftist
Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927-)

He studied Law at Warsaw University. After the war, he was involved until 1955 in PAX, a Catholic political group sympathetic to the communist regime and editor in chief until 1954 of the Wroclaw’s Catholic Weekly as well as a contributor to Now and Tomorrow and Universal Word. In 1956, he co-founded the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia or KIK and he was editor in chief of Bond, a Catholic monthly. From 1961 to 1971, he was a member of the Catholic Parliamentary Club, Sign. In the 1970's, he became involved with the opposition and was an initiator of the “Letter of 64.” In 1980, he led the advisory commission to the independent trade union “Solidarity” and became the first editor in 1981 of the weekly Solidarity. During Martial Law, he was imprisoned by the regime. In 1989, he was a member of the Solidarity delegation to the “Round Table” talks with the government. In August 1989, he became the Prime Minister (first in the Soviet block non-communist to hold this position). In 1990, he was a major contender in Poland’s first post-war presidential elections (he lost to Lech Wałęsa). In 1990, he founded and became leader of the Democratic Union, a liberal democratic party. Between 1992-5, he was a special envoy of the UN Commission for Human Rights to the former Yugoslavia. He resigned in protest after the UN declared “safe havens” were abandoned and thousands of Muslims were killed.

The scope of this work does not allow me to present all persons who
distinguished themselves in their professions as well as lecturers at the Flying University. Clearly to such people, one would include Władysław Bartoszewski, the general secretary of the Polish PEN club, AK officer and member of the Jewish Aid Council during World War II, and Tadeusz Konwicki, a novelist, film director and AK soldier and revisionist Marxist. Very active in the Flying University were the sociologist Andrzej Celinski (expelled from Warsaw University for his oppositional activity); the historian, sociologist and writer Bohdan Cywiński who also was the editor in chief of Catholic monthly Sign; the philosopher of science Stefan Amsterdamski; the literary critic and essayist Tomasz Burek; the poet, translator, historian of literature and soldier in the Warsaw Uprising Severyn Pollak; the writer, communist activist and world renowned expert on Jewish culture Julian Stryjkowski; the writer, translator, AK soldier and head of the Union of Polish Writers (1980-83) Jan Józef Szczepański, the professor of Russian Literature, translator, and essayist Wictor Woroszylski; the historian Rev. Aleksander Hauke-Ligowski, the historian of literature and member of PUWP (1949-78) and member of the Polish Academy of Science Maria Janion; the slavist, literary historian, member of the Polish Academy of Science and head of the International Slavist Commission Konrad Görski; and others.

The above biographical stories show that writers, poets and scholars, the traditional leadership group of the Polish intelligentsia, were behind the formation of both Flying Universities. However, can the nineteenth century intelligentsia and the intelligentsia of the 1970s be considered as one? Aleksander Gella (1971) suggests that the Polish intelligentsia, a social stratum with a unique set of values and cultural
patterns, no longer exists decimated by the war and communist policies of post-war Poland. I, to the contrary, believe that in many respects the “old” nineteenth century Polish intelligentsia (the main focus of Gella’s article) and the “new” post-World War II intelligentsia are indeed the same. It is true that the Polish pre-war intelligentsia suffered great losses; physically decimated by the Nazis in WWII and persecuted by the communist regime thereafter. It is also true that the communist regime in Poland had undertaken the task of creating a replacement for the traditional intelligentsia, viewed by the new regime as an obstacle to the construction of the new political and social order. It was the new “working intelligentsia”, recruited from the peasants and factory workers, that was ideologically trained to obey every will of the communist party and entrusted with the task of the “construction of socialism” in Poland. Despite the fact that the role of the traditional “old” intelligentsia was highly diminished, the ethos and the tradition of the stratum survived. The Flying university as well as other more or less illegal ventures of the Polish intelligentsia of the 1970s was proof of this survival.

The new intelligentsia that constituted the backbone of the new Flying University were determined to live up to the image of the stratum created by their nineteenth century predecessors. They did not live in the Stalinist period of terror of

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4While six million or 22 percent of the entire Polish population was killed (the highest percentage of any nations), the war loses among the intelligentsia are estimated at 35 percent. The list of killed includes 705 university professors, 848 secondary school teachers, 3963 primary school teachers, 399 artists, 660 authors and journalists to mention just the principal categories (Szczepański, 1961, pp.413-414).
three decades earlier so “the fear to think for themselves” (1989, p.27, trans. G.L.), a characteristic ascribed to the intelligentsia of the 1940s and 1950s by Polish poet and a Nobel Prize recipient Czesław Miłosz, was no longer their defining trait. The membership of the new Flying University was, in this respect closer to the members of the old Flying University with their respective values, attitudes, and beliefs. In fact, the description of the old Polish intelligentsia by British author Isaiah Berlin:

self-conscious group of thinkers who see themselves as directly opposed to an oppressive and irrational regime, united not only by opposition to it, but by a belief in, and a deep respect for, the methods of natural sciences, the dedication to such values as civil and personal freedom, personal integrity and the pursuit of truth no matter what the consequences...

(cited in Podgórecki, 1994, p.88) would fit the new intelligentsia as well. For one, both universities had in its ranks many people devoted to their respective scientific disciplines who were also recognized scholars. Also, the members of both universities were opposed to the regimes that ruled Poland in the two time periods. Their devotion to science but also to truth, freedom, personal integrity earned them recognition in the scholarly world as well as persecution and harassment from those in power.

The members of the “old” Flying University were well aware of the risks associated with teaching at this clandestine institution. They faced imprisonment or forced exile to Siberia for their illegal activities. Some, like sociologist Ludwik Krzywicki or philosopher Edward Abramowski were not strangers to the Russian prison system. Krzywicki and philologist Ignacy Chrzanowski were also facing reprisals for their uncompromised political and social opinions even later when Poland...
regained independence. The members of the “new” Flying University were also no strangers to persecution and harassment. This included firing from university jobs, refusal of passports, ban on publications, and in some cases beating by police and prison terms as well as various forms of psychological punishment (Lipski, pp.265-277, 406-407; Bartoszewski, pp.77-78). This was the case with Stanisław Barańczak, Marek Barański, Jacek Kuroń, and Andrzej Celiński who were fired from their university jobs for political reasons. Barańczak was refused a passport when he was offered a chair at Harvard and Hanna Buczyńska-Garewicz, Bohdan Cywiński, Michał Głowinski, Tadeusz Kowalik and Aldona Jawłowska were denied passports numerous times to prevent them from attending international conferences or to conduct grant research in other countries (Anderson, Appendix A). Several members of the Flying University spent time in prison including Jacek Kuroń who spent a record nine years behind bars for his political activities. According to Buczyńska-Garewicz (p.27), all members of the University suffered some sort of harassment, and according to Bartoszewski (p.85), eighty percent of the membership became imprisoned during martial law.

With respect to the demographic characteristics, it is evident that the members of the “old” Flying University were characterized by a young age. In fact, a great majority of the professors who taught at the university were in their late twenties and thirties and the person credited with initiating the Flying University, Jadwiga Szczawińska, was only twenty two years of age at the time the loosely organized clandestine academic courses took on the form of a university. The majority of the
participants of the first Flying University were born around 1860. This, according to some historians (Cywiński, 1985, p.28; Pobóg-Malinowski, 1991, p.187), had an important consequence: this generation was spared the experience of another failed uprising. They, like Krzywicki (see his Wspomnienia [Memoirs], 1947, pp.16-19), learned about the January Rising of 1863 from their parents or relatives that participated in yet another effort to regain independence, but they did not experience the tragedy of the rising first hand. So while the older generation was sunk in apathy and fear, the young who reached their mature age ten or twenty years after the rising were ready for heroic action to emulate those they heard from stories or read in patriotic literature. The romantic tradition of young heroes ready to bear the sacrifice for the nation was once again revived.

As far as the membership of the second Flying University is concerned, it included in its ranks several young individuals. In fact, some of the most active professors of the university like historian Bohdan Cywiński, poets and literary critics Stanisław Barańczak and Adam Zagajewski were all in their early thirties. The person credited with initiating the Flying University, sociologist Andrzej Celinski, humorously referred to by the rest of the faculty as “rektor” (the Polish equivalent of the university president in the U.S.), was not quite thirty when the university was beginning to take off (Lipski, p.521). However, the “new” Flying University, in contrast to the “old” one, consisted of a large contingent of individuals who were in their fifties, sixties, seventies and even older. Many of them like writers Hanna Malewska, Władysław Bartoszewski, Jan Józef Lipski, sociologist Jan Szczepański, or economist and scholar
Edward Lipiński experienced the difficult and tragic years of the war and the failed Warsaw Uprising of 1944 as soldiers of the Polish underground. Lipiński, who was among the most respected members of the "new" Flying University was born in 1888, only six years after the "old" Flying University was formed. This age difference among the members of the second Flying University was not without significance. I suspect that besides providing experience, values and moral and ethical standards, the older generation of the faculty perhaps acted also as a force of moderation in the university. Such an interpretation is confirmed by the Polish historian Adam Bromke, who saw the younger generation as more restive, idealistic and bolder (1981, p.7).

I also argue that there were some differences between the members of the two universities with respect to their social class origin. Leading figures at the "old" Flying University like Ludwik Krzywicki, Wacław Nałkowski, Jan Władysław Dawid, and Adam Mahrburg all came from gentry families, which was the class origin of the majority of the faculty of the university. This social composition reflected the social composition of the entire stratum of the Polish intelligentsia at the time. Several studies (Chałasiński, 1958; Gella, 1971; Szczepański, 1962) support the claim of the gentry as the main class that constituted Polish intelligentsia. According to historian Bohdan Cywinski (1985, pp.28, and pp.61-62), it was the generation of children of the declassed gentry (who lost their estates after the risings due to confiscation or changing economic tides) that formed the backbone of the intelligentsia who participated in the Flying University. For the children, education and subsequent jobs in professions often provided the only means of ascertaining the high social status.
traditionally associated with the gentry and nobility. Besides the gentry, Jews as well as a small number of individuals with peasant and working class roots constituted the remaining social strata that comprised the Polish intelligentsia.

The social class composition of the “new” Flying University differed substantially from the social composition of the “old” institution. For one, the gentry as a class no longer existed in the quantitative sense as it had during the partitions. This class’ gradual disappearance was the result of the historical process of industrialization as well as the destructive policies toward Polish gentry adopted by the Russian and Prussian regimes. Furthermore, in the period of the Second Republic (1918-1939) a large number of persons from the lower classes were joining the ranks of the intelligentsia, the result of increased participation of these classes in efforts to obtain higher education. According to Szczepański (1962, p.412), in 1935, among the students in Polish universities, 13.4 percent came from the peasant and working classes, and 19.5 percent from the lower middle class. The intelligentsia, in fact, was a stratum that, toward the end of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century, acquired the numerical strength enjoyed before by the gentry. However, the tragedy of WWII during which an estimated 35% of the Polish intelligentsia perished, contributed to the diminished significance of the stratum during the post-war period. The Polish Jewry, whose participation in the intelligentsia was increasing since the last decades of the nineteenth century, suffered tremendous loses due to the Nazis’ extermination policies. Out of 3.35 million Jews in Poland in 1939, only 369,000 or 11 percent survived the war (Davies, p.265). Out of those who survived, a significant
number emigrated to the newly formed state of Israel and yet additional number of Jews, many of whom were members of the intelligentsia, left Poland after an anti-Semitic campaign unleashed by a faction within the communist regime during the March Events of 1968. Zygmunt Bauman, a well known sociologist was among those who left the country. Furthermore, the efforts of the communist regime to develop a new "working intelligentsia" based on peasants and factory workers while at the same time preventing individuals with pre-war intelligentsia origins to be included in the new stratum (Chałasiński, p.29; Smolar, 1983, p.44), caused significant shifts in the social composition of the stratum after the war. According to Gella (1971, pp.24-25), "the majority of the contemporary 'working intelligentsia' have a working-class or rural background". I think that this new social composition of the intelligentsia after WWII was also reflected in the membership of the "new" Flying University as well. There were people with intelligentsia origins as well as people with peasant and proletarian roots. There were believers and atheists, Catholics and Jews.

Ideology

The fact that the Flying University existed at all testifies to the relevance among its members of the ideas of Polish Romanticism. The Romantic ideology called for courageous acts and individual sacrifices for the good of the nation. The values of freedom, human dignity and independence for the nation were elevated to the highest values for which one should give up his own happiness or even life in the highest "spirit of sacrifice" (Walicki, p.75). This was an idealistic ideology that greatly
contributed to the idea of regaining independence through the popular military rising or through conspiratorial activities that often involved great risk and sacrifices.

The flying University represented an effort that was consistent with the Polish Romantic traditions that preceded the January Uprising of 1863. The Polish language, literature and history, forbidden subjects in official schools, were taught at the Flying University by distinguished professors like Chmielowski, Chrzanowski, Smoleński and Korzon contributing to the rekindling of the Polish national culture and traditions. The dangers associated with participating in a clandestine education (deportations, imprisonment and large fines) were fueling highly idealistic atmosphere; the idea of sacrifice was revoked. There was also a great deal of Romantic symbolism associated with participation in clandestine education. More than half a century earlier in 1820, Polish students at Wilno University organized a secret Society of Philarets (Lovers of Virtue). The society’s goal was to safeguard Polish culture and tradition, encourage moral, intellectual and physical development and train leaders ready to serve the nation (Skurnowicz, p.32). The society was guided by the secret and elite literary and scholarly organization called the Society of Philomats (Lovers of Learning) in whose ranks were leading exponents of the Polish Romanticism: Tomasz Zan, Jan Czeczot and the great national Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz (Skurnowicz, p.32).

Members of both societies were immortalized in poems. The organizers of clandestine education sixty years later drew inspiration from this romantic belief in education as a way to Poland’s freedom. One of them, Helena Ceysingerówna (1930), wrote:

...there was the faith derived from the democratic and insurrectionist ideals,
from the instructions by the poets and leaders of the nation, derived through traditions and, strengthen in this generation, the faith of the Polish intelligentsia in the greatness of education, its magic power to free the nation from the political chains. (p.96, trans. G.L.)

The first Flying University was also consistent with another ideological current that tackled the national question known as “Warsaw Positivism.” In contrast to Romantic ideology, Positivists argued for “organic work”, legal, slow and systematic work in economy, science and education rather than military uprisings as the means for regaining independence for Poland. In the opinion of Positivists, Poland needs to improve trade and industry, build railways and raise the literacy and consciousness of the population if it were to stand the chance of ultimate survival. Aleksander Świętochowski, the leading exponent of Warsaw Positivism wrote in 1882:

Dreams of regaining external independence must today bow before endeavors for domestic independence. This independence can result only from strengthening of our intellectual and material resources, from a general national development linked with progress, and from the nation’s democratization calling to action its dormant and immature elements. Only such power, such constant intensity of energy, such progressive movement can maintain the vitality of the nation and ensure its growth. (cited in Blejwas, p.199)

The Positivists turned toward science and contemporary Western thought in search of a foundation upon which to build the nation’s future. In their effort to built a modern nation, they greatly contributed to the development of Polish intellectual life, science and education.

The participants of the first Flying University saw Education as a mean to preparing the ground for the future independent Poland, a theme consistent with the ideology of the Warsaw Positivists. Historian Bohdan Cywiński (1985, p.74)
observed that to prepare elite cadres of educators, distinguished individuals who were to lead the nation was the most important objective of the Flying University. This elite was to be educated in the best traditions of modern European thought. A great role in this aspect of education was played by several faculty members of the Flying University including Ignacy Chrzanowski and Piotr Chmielewski, two editors of literary and scientific journals of Warsaw positivist Ateneum. These members of the Flying University and others like Bem and Krzywicki were attempting to popularize the works of Western scientists like Darwin, Spencer, Buckle, Taine, and others. Krzywicki himself acquainted his students with the works of Western sociologists and economists like Comte (he began translating Comte’s Positive Philosophy as a student in the gymnasium), Ward, Spencer, Marx, and others. There was a strong belief in science at the Flying University which was due to a group of accomplished scholars and scientists like the sociologist Krzywicki, the embryologist Nusbaum-Hilarowicz, the geographer Nałkowski, or historian Smolareński, to name a few.

Thus both, the Romantic and the Positivistic, ideologies were influencing the participants of the Flying University. Interestingly, Warsaw Positivism was considered by many to by incompatible with the Romantic ideology. This seemingly paradoxical situation could be explained by the fact that Romanticism and Positivism were just different strategies toward the same end state; an independent Poland. This proposition finds support among some historians (Bromke, p.4; Pajewski, p.17; and others). Polish historian Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski (1991) perhaps provides the best explanation when he stated:
It would be a mistake to judge [Warsaw] positivism as a kind of loyalism—it was first of all a philosophical current contrasting with romanticism, not so much politically, but rather in the methods of thought in general; in his results positivism was, without a doubt, a fight against subjugation, its “organic work” was after all an armor against the “power and violence of the partitioner”, and new links between Poland and the West and its culture, established through positivism constituted a new dam against the influences coming to Poland from the Moscow’s East. (p.51, trans. G.L.)

Was the Flying University of 1977-81 similar to its predecessor in that it represented both, the romantic and the positivistic, ideological currents? I think yes. The university on one hand was a bold and idealistic undertaking, a trait consistent with Romanticism. One of the faculty, philosopher Hanna Buczyńska-Garewicz (1985) emphasized that aspect when she explained why the faculty members decided to reveal their names despite the risks of persecution:

Some professors, like the students, combined their official and clandestine lives, but the major difference was that professors’ names were publicly announced. There was a practical and moral reason for this. First, the students wanted to know who the teachers were; without a name the scholarly status of the person remains hidden. Second, clandestine teaching was a kind of civil disobedience designed to provide a moral standard. All this activity took place in a highly idealistic atmosphere. (p.28)

The risks for participation for both, the professors and students alike, were tremendous. They included dismissal from the university, a ban on publications, imprisonment and even beating. Participation thus required considerable courage and sacrifice and also required the adaptation of some conspiratorial measures. All this was consistent with the Romantic conspiratorial tradition of active resistance. These facts, were perhaps the reason that prompted the Polish historian Adam Bromke (1981, p.10) to suggest that just like in 1890s there was a shift from realism to
idealism with respect to the ideologies and tactics of the Polish opposition in the 1970s.

The invocation of historical names "Flying University" and TKN was symbolic and consistent with Romantic traditions. These names were synonymous in the minds of Poles with active resistance against foreign oppression and the foreign domination of Poland. They were synonymous with efforts to preserve the Polish cultural identity, a fact that elicited broad social support. One member of the Flying University faculty, Hanna Buczyńska-Garewicz (1985) confirms such an interpretation:

Both names [Flying University and TKN] have been used before and have important historical connotation, bound up as they are in Poland's political history. Clandestine education in Poland began in the nineteenth century and is part of Poland's national history. This is of great importance for an understanding of the flying university of 1978. Without deeply rooted tradition, the TKN would not have so immediately received such broad and strong social support or exerted such a powerful moral influence on the entire Polish academic world. (p.24)

The activity of the second Flying University was consistent with the positivistic ideology as well. For one, this activity was consistent with the positivist' idea of national revival through educational, cultural and economic activities. It was not a call to arms or to underground conspiracy in order to overthrow the government as the Romantic ideal would have. It was designed to enlarge the area of independent social activity rather than to challenge the power of the state. This aspect of the Flying University activity was consistent with the ideological directions outlined for democratic opposition in Poland by historians Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuroń, who were among the co-founders of the Flying University and KOR. The basic premises of
both programs focus on the idea of the active involvement of the main segments of society, workers, peasants, intellectuals, and the Catholic Church in creating an independent social action. Kuroń (1977) sums up his program stating:

I do not intend to list every kind of organization we need at this stage, but all matters of concerns should be covered. It is essential, however, that society should organize itself into social movements, interacting on each other, expressing as fully as possible the aspirations of all. (p.69)

The programs elucidated by both Michnik and Kuroń show the pragmatism and realism that could be easily associated with positivism. Both authors agree that to demand full independence from the Soviet Union would be unrealistic and premature. In his 1976 article titled “New Evolutionism,” Michnik argues that the transformation in Poland must occur, at least in the first phase, in the framework of “the Brezhnev Doctrine”, in other words within the limits established by the Soviet military might (1985, p.144). Kuroń (1977) in his article “Reflections on a Program of Action” strikes a similar cautionary note:

The extent of opposition activity is defined by the response of society on one hand and on the other by the readiness on the part of the USSR to intervene militarily. No one can be sure when the critical point may come and it is certainly true that it is better to stop much too early than a moment too late. (p.64)

Both authors suggest that ultimately, at some future point, Poland’s sovereignty will be reestablished. They, however, are of the opinion that instead of waiting for that day, some concessions from the regime can be achieved “today”, under the conditions of limited sovereignty.

Beside the Romantic and Positivistic ideologies, the ethos of the intelligentsia
played important role in the ideological orientation of both Flying Universities. Although the faculty of the first Flying University included in its ranks leaders and theoreticians of socialist movement like Abramowski or Krzywicki, the ethos of the intelligentsia was emphasized by the faculty of the university more than the political ideology. For the faculty of the Flying University more important than a proposing specific ideology for their students was to inculcate in them a sound moral and ethical attitude. According to Gella (p.20), one of the major characteristics representative of the nineteenth century Polish intelligentsia was that, in his actions, he was guided by what Gella calls "tradition direction" and "inner direction." The first meant that the nation's past, with its tragic heroes and idealized virtues was shaping his imagination. The second described the "moral imperatives such as 'Be inner directed!' 'Judge and behave according to your own heart and mind!' 'Hold your own opinion even against the majority!'" (Gella, p.20). This ethical attitude is exemplified by the writings directed to young audience by Ludwik Krzywicki. In his Będziesz bez Zasad [Be without Rules], Krzywicki writes: "Go ahead and part with formulas and norms, with insanity of a 'moral beast', with tribunals and their codes in which you search for your own recipe to fit each situation..." (cited in Cywiński, p.78, trans. G.L.). For Krzywicki and others, the political ideology was not what mattered the most, but rather the internal integrity, being true to one's own beliefs. The only imperative that one should follow is, according to Krzywicki, to avoid being the source of social suffering. He writes: "It is up to you, how you respond to those who inflict suffering upon you, but I wish that nobody will ever tell this about you: 'he is among those who
caused suffering to others” (cited in Cywiński, p.77, trans. G.L.). What Krzywicki teaches his students is the importance of dignity, of moral courage and nonconformity. He warns his young readers that such an ethical attitude instead of applause will bring them more likely loneliness and suffering but they will be able to preserve their own dignity:

I know that the cross I put on your shoulders is heavy.... You will be among people but not with the people. In silence they will distance themselves from you, because they applaud only those who adulate their instincts, and tolerate their little, dirty deeds. And perhaps they will curse you and some will reach for a rock to stone you, you will not find many followers... but instead you will not become a drudge on a nameless street. (cited in Cywiński, p. 76, trans. G.L.)

Beside Ludwik Krzywicki, professors Władysław Dawid and Waclaw Nałkowski wrote on the subject of ethics and morality. For them, civil courage, compassion and internal integrity are the most important values. At the same time, they in no ambiguous terms reflect the attitudes which, in their opinion, are harmful for the nation and society. In the writing of Nałkowski, the criticism of such attitudes in society is most severe. He distinguishes between several types of these negative ethical attitudes giving them names: people-oxen, people-swine, and people-trees. Nałkowski not only describes in this topology those social attitudes that are evidently pathological but also those that seemingly do not cause any harm. He writes about people-trees:

With respect to their professionalism, people-trees can be valued the highest, working like an efficient machine, and doing it honestly.... If, however, the universal progress of humanity is understood as a fight, than the people-trees, oblivious to internal and external dramas, stand beside the fight because they lack the impulse, courage or the knowledge how to fight. As such they are obstacles in the fight. (cited in Cywiński, p.67, trans. G.L.)
Beside ethical concerns, social issues take an important place in teaching of the Flying University professors. They want their students to not be oblivious to the plight of the working class, and of all the poor and downtrodden people. Krzywicki uses strong language to remind his student about the exploitative nature of capitalist (their) society:

You are in debt, you are indebted to the working people. You became indebted at the very moment of your birth, you still are accumulating this debt today, and you will increase it till the day you die. Once again I call upon you: you are in debt. If I could, I would take a hot iron and press it against your conscience: so, like a snake pressed against the ground and like convict aware of his great crime it can trash from pain and from the awareness of its great sin against society... You are in debt. I give you this truth without giving you ready answers of what to do to pay off your debt. (cited in Cywiński, p.79, trans. G.L.)

Krzywicki does not offer his young readers ready solutions but he, consistently with the idea of mission present in the ethos of the Polish intelligentsia, propels the students to active involvement in the life of the nation and society: “You are a man who carries with him a special stigma, and this stigma give you the name of a fighter...” (cited in Cywiński, p.77, trans. G.L.). The faculty of the first Flying University wanted their student to fight for the independence of Poland, but they also wanted them to confront the social injustices that were perhaps to some degree responsible for the country’s tragic plight.

As in the case of its predecessors, not the political orientations of its members but the values and attitudes associated with the ethos of the Polish intelligentsia were the important factors in the second Flying University. The university included people with strong Marxist and communist background like Jacek Kuroń, Julian Stryjkowski,
Maria Janion and Tadeusz Konwicki. It also included Catholic activists and writers like Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Hanna Malewska, Bohdan Cywinski or reverend Aleksander Hauke-Ligowski. Such a strange mix of people with so diametrically differing political views stood, nevertheless, united against the regime in Poland. The traditions of the old intelligentsia as the cultural and spiritual (with the Church) leaders of the nation that compelled the new intelligentsia or more precisely the intellectuals to efforts at recovering its historic social and political relevance. Since direct political action was out of the question, their fight was to restore the true meaning to words, to fight for the traditional values of the nation.

The Flying University was an initiative that attempted to invoke in society a very specific set of traditional values among which freedom, independent thought, truth, human dignity, courage and tolerance ranked the highest. These values were clearly antithetical to those values that were associated with the communist regime in Poland as well as in other countries of the “block”. Vaclav Havel, the foremost Czech dissident and present day President of the Czech Republic describes the soviet-style system of power:

Government by bureaucracy is called popular government; the working class is enslaved in the name of the working class; the complete degradation of the individual is presented as his or her ultimate liberation; depraving people of information is called making it available; the repression of culture is called its development; ..., lack of free expression becomes the highest forms of democracy; banning independent thought becomes the most scientific of world views; military occupation becomes fraternal assistance. (1985, pp.30-31)

This passage by Havel illustrates the degenerative, hypocritical nature of the communist system of power. The intellectuals that participated in the Flying
University understood the price that society had to pay for what was commonly accepted as the imposed political system, devoid of any real legitimacy and one that contradicted Poland’s centuries old history and traditions. The intellectuals in the TKN identified themselves with the traditions of the XIX century Polish intelligentsia, who as a stratum was granted the task of safeguarding national culture and tradition in the times of Poland’s subjugation to the foreign powers. The intellectuals active in the Flying University were assuming the responsibility for the nation and they were aware that society expected it: “everything - from society’s overt or unspoken demands to his [intellectual’s] own moral imperatives - pushes him towards the extreme of service to the common cause...” wrote Stanisław Barańczak (1986, p.222), one of the most active members of the Flying University.

The intellectual protest did not grow overnight. Many individuals that participated in the Flying University were protesting since the early post-war years against the policies and practices of the regime that were harmful to education, culture or society as a whole. Among these various protests, there was the famous 1964 Letter of 34, an open letter to the party-state by the cultural elite that protested against censorship and cultural policies of the government. There was also the 1964 Open Letter to the Communist Party by Jacek Kuroń (co-authored with Karol Modzelewski). The letter, a critical analysis of Polish society and the program for action written from the Marxist perspective, earned Kuroń three and a half years in prison. There was also the Letter of 59, an open letter by Poland’s leading intellectuals (including 17 future TKN members) protesting proposed amendments to
the Polish Constitution that would enshrine the “leading role of the party” in the constitution and tie Poland closer to the Soviet Union. It would be helpful to describe the content of these forms of protest with some excerpts. The Letter by Kuroń and Modzelewski in chapter X titled “Program” states:

The existence of more than one workers’ party [an idea proposed by the authors. GL] requires freedom of speech, press, assembly, the end of preventive censorship [emphasis original], complete freedom of scientific research, of literary and artistic creation. Without freedom of expression for different currents of thought in the press, in scientific research, in literary and artistic experimentation, without complete freedom to create, there is no workers democracy.”(cited in Weissman, 1969, p.77)

The 1975 Letter of 59, invoking the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the Helsinki Conference (signed by the Polish government, G.L.) in support, suggested that Poland’s constitution should guarantee freedom of conscience and religious practices, freedom of work, freedom of speech and information and freedom of learning. With regard to the last two, the letter stated:

If there is no freedom of speech, there is no free development of national culture... The particularly dangerous consequences of the State monopoly on publications as well as the impact of preventive censorship, appear in literature and art which are not fulfilling their socially important function. Therefore, trade unions, creative, religious and other associations should be enabled to establish publications and periodicals independent of the State. For this reason preventive censorship should be abolished, and in the event of violations of press regulations action is to be taken only by judicial process.

And also:

There is no freedom of learning when the criteria for selection of the academic cadre and the subject of research are determined by the State authorities and have a political character. Consequently, the autonomy of the institutions of higher learning should be restored and the independence of the academic milieu should be assured. (cited in Polish Review, 1976, pp.55-57)
These passages probably are very close to the ideological aspect behind the activities of the Flying University. They deal with freedoms, and especially freedom to conduct research and creative endeavors; after all, the majority of the TKN members were scholars or people of art and letters. The significance of the Flying University extends beyond the sphere of culture, education or social life. The university had a serious political ramification and some of the University members expressed such political thoughts in their writing.

The Statement of Founding has some references to the "structure of political power in our country" that with some aspects of structure of sciences "brings harm to our society, to its culture and learning." (cited in Buczyńska-Garewicz, p.21) The document is very careful in criticizing the communist system in Poland for the fear of more serious repressions and ramifications. Some Flying University members didn't hesitate to go further. The open letter to Edward Gierek, the first secretary of the PUWP, by Professor Lipiński can serve as an example:

we need a legal opposition with rights of freedom of association and assembly guaranteed by the constitution. The contradiction should be allowed to express themselves and manifest themselves freely. The system of parliamentary democracy is the only one which allows that to happen. (cited in Blazynski, p.127)

The letter contained passages that, if not for his very advanced age (he was in his 80s), would certainly have earned Lipiński a prison term:

The imposition of the Soviet system has devastated our social and moral life. It represents a great misfortune in the history of the nation. We are being compelled to support Soviet foreign policy unconditionally, and we have ceased to be an independent element in world politics. This is often contrary to Polish national interests.
And also:

There is no more important goal for Poland then the reassertion of its sovereignty. Only after regaining political independence will it be possible to undertake systematic economic reform and to restructure the political and social system, which will release the creative potential of the nation.” (cited in Bromke, p.77)

For obvious reasons, other TKN members would not use such politically charged statements, but one can expect that they were holding similar views. After all, Lipiński was highly regarded in the Flying University as well as others oppositional circles. Other Flying University members expressed ideas with regard to the future of Poland in more modest terms. Adam Michnik saw the role of the University as well as other oppositional groups to “rebuild social ties outside official structures”, a step that would lead to the society becoming its own master (p.174). Jacek Kuroń is close to Bartoszewski in his 1976 assessment of the desired political system for Poland:

“Without a doubt parliamentary democracy leaves still much to be desired. Nonetheless, as far as it provides conditions for the aspirations of all to be realized and a practical platform for social cooperation, it is certainly the best of all political systems tried so far” (p.58).

Buczyńska-Garewicz (1985, p.24) contributes the initiative of the university to the fact that the “values of freedom are deeply rooted in the consciousness of Polish intellectuals.” The love for freedom, of course, means all freedoms including academic freedom, freedom of speech and freedom to publish. These themes, deeply rooted in the polish traditions, were revoked by the intellectuals many times in the post war history. Despite the efforts of the regime to instill in the new intelligentsia the need for
subservience to the party, conformity and uniformity of thought and of uncritical adoption of the tenants (often distorted) of Marxism-Leninism, the appeal of the old values for a large part of the intelligentsia and especially intellectuals proved much stronger. It is quite informing that even the foremost Marxist theoreticians in Poland, philosophers Adam Schaff and Leszek Kołakowski, both chose independent scientific inquiry and independent thought and personal integrity (regardless of the price it would cost them) over the lucrative rewards of serving as the leading communist propagandists (which required uncritical acceptance of the official, often false and illogical, party “line”). For their independent thinking, both scholars were expelled from the party and Kołakowski in 1968 was forced into exile (he lost a chair at Warsaw University but gained one at Oxford University).

The second Flying University itself contained many individuals that were initially active proponents of Marxist ideology and supporters of socialism in Poland. These were the people who genuinely believed in the possibility of a humanistic and just society and who tried, in the words of Kołakowski, “to graft democratic values and intellectual honesty on the tree of communism” (1983, p.60) Future members of the Flying University, writers Kazimierz Brandys, Edward Lipiński, Wiktor Woroszylski and Jacek Bocheński all belonged to the “Revisionist” camp, as this group was commonly known. However, by 1976 or even earlier it became very evident that the attempt to transform “from within” the party and the doctrine in the direction of democratic reform and common sense was not to be. The communist system in Poland was simply incompatible with democracy since, as Kołakowski
observed, "...the totalitarian character of communism was not only perfectly consistent with, but clearly included in, its ideologically defined essence" (1983, p.60). Thus the conviction even among the Marxist intellectuals in Poland by the time that the Gierek regime took power in 1970 was in essence that "democratic socialism=fried snowballs" (Kołakowski, cited in Zamoyski, p.382). This truth, however disappointing to some, resulted in a new direction that the democratic opposition in Poland adopted in the mid 1970s. Since the party and the system cannot be reformed from within, the change can be created "outside" of it.

The idea of a social, cultural, and political life independent of the party had widespread support in the ranks of the intelligentsia. Among the leading proponents of this idea were members of the future Flying University (and also founders of KOR), historians Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik. It was outside the official system that intellectual honesty, independent thought and tolerance of opposing views could be practiced. The university was a significant attempt in this respect. Despite the high price that the faculty and the students had sometimes paid for their involvement in it, it demonstrated to society that independent education, not burdened by an ideological straight jacket, can exist and even flourish.

The formation of a clandestine university in 1882 can be viewed in a similar way. The idea was to create an opportunity for university education outside the russified official system. Although all Polish universities by 1869 were closed, the Russian University was organized in their place. The difference between the universities was largely in the way both groups viewed the role of higher education.
While the Russian administrators saw the university as a tool of ideological indoctrination and a way to convert the Poles into loyal subjects of the Tsar, the Flying University was an attempt to keep the national spirit alive. Furthermore, the faculty of the Flying University tried to inculcate in its pupils tolerance for different opinions and ideas, love for independent thought and respect for an individual - values incompatible with the Russian autocracy based on intolerance of dissent, obedience, uniformity and fear.

The element of social change present in the ideology of the Flying University was linked to women’s issues. The faculty of the university were supporters of Women Emancipation ideas (e.g. Krzywicki’s *The Women Issue*) which was consistent with the positivistic ideas of its members. The interest in women issues, however, was not just a result of emancipation ideologies coming to Poland from the West but also the difficult situation of Polish women after the failure of January Uprising of 1863.

Polish historian Adam Winiarz (1992) explains:

The change of social and economic relations in the Kingdom of Poland took place at the time when the emancipation movement aiming at the legal, social and economic liberation of women began developing in Western Europe and the United States of America. The movement met with broad support in the Kingdom of Poland where, after the failure of the January uprising and the resulting deportation of men to Siberia, a considerable number of lonely woman had been left behind who had to take care of their families, and this entailed the necessity of earning a living. Under those circumstances, in addition to the women question, the question of the education of girls became particularly important: it was necessary to prepare them to live in the new social and economic conditions. (p.101)

The already difficult situation of women was made even more difficult by the fact that Russian schools of higher education barred women from attending them. In this
respect, the university, which itself was initiated by woman (Jadwiga Szczawinska) and where women were the overwhelming majority, was a significant development with ideological, social and political ramifications. First, as Bogna Lorence-Kot observed (1992, p.43), it gave the “menless” women the means to “fend for themselves in society” and to take control of their households. It also contributed to the spread in the society of the emancipation ideas, but most importantly it gave women the opportunity and the knowledge to actively participate in the social and political life of the nation. Indeed, in Tsarist Poland it was the women who, in the face of russification, were responsible for the development of the entire network of clandestine education for lower classes (Lorence-Kot, p.44). The emancipation ideology present in the Flying University gave the entire generation of young women a new “mission” in life. After a young woman character in a very popular novel Siłaczka [Strong woman] by Prus, they saw themselves fighting for Polish culture in an underground education movement, and they followed their new mission eagerly.

Historian Norman Davies (1982, p.233) observed: “In Russia [Russian partition, G.L.], the typical Polish “patriot” of the turn of the century was not the revolutionary with a revolver in his pocket, but the young lady of good family with a textbook under her shawl.”

The second Flying University did not emphasize the education of women as one of its main ideas and objectives. In contrast to Tsarist Poland, the Polish People’s Republic did not stop women from attending institutions of higher education. Also the void in male population that existed after the Rising of 1863 did not exist in Poland in
1977. It would be a mistake, however, to think that the idea of social change did not exist in the second Flying University. Although it was not expressed directly in university documents like the TKN Statement of Founding, it nevertheless existed as an attitude of the faculty, and as a way of conduct. The social change required the involvement of the entire Polish society, and such involvement had to be fostered and encouraged regardless of uneasy circumstances. The idea of openness became of strategic significance. Adam Michnik (1980, p.49), a member of the Flying University and of KOR, explains:

The principal theme of these ideas and these activities was openness -- openness at any price. Some people went so far as to walk voluntarily into a home where an open but illegal lecture of the Flying University was to take place and the secret police had already arrived. “Open but illegal” -- in this somewhat paradoxical expression lies the very essence of the tactics of the era. Books and periodicals were printed underground, but the names of their authors and editors were openly disclosed. Openness was a way of fortifying collective courage, of widening the “gray area” between the censor’s scissors and the criminal code, of breaking down the barrier of inertia and fear.

The Flying University Faculty consciously chose to openly disclose their names as a way of providing moral standards for society living in the political system based on lies, deceit and secrecy (Buczyńska-Garewicz, p.28). In contrast, the idea of openness was not the hallmark of the original Flying University because of strategic reasons. The chance that Tsarist authorities would learn about the identities and activities of the Flying University members would spell doom to the entire enterprise. The punishment for organizing and conducting illegal education in partitioned Poland was imprisonment or more often forced exile to Siberia. This was not the case with the second Flying University whose members, although occasionally jailed and harassed,
hardly ever were victims of long prison terms or forced exile. This is not to say that openness as a virtue was not encouraged by the faculty of the first Flying University. Quite to the contrary, it was, for example, among the main themes in the writings of Ludwik Krzywicki.

Objectives

I believe that, while discussing the objectives of both Flying Universities, one has to realize that along with the objectives that were visible or declared there were ones that were not so clear and did not openly appear in some official declarations or other documents. This is understandable since the universities had to deal with many strategic problems; the results of its illegal or oppositional status. Also, there was the possibility that some of the aims of the universities or the aims of some of its members were not at all idealistic and therefore carefully concealed or not mentioned. All this contributed to the situation where very little documentation about the university existed. My comparison between the objectives of the two universities (similarly to my comparative analysis of ideologies) is therefore somewhat incomplete, indirect and even speculative in nature.

As one might expect, the primary objective of both Flying Universities was to provide an education to young people outside the official system. In the case of the original university, this education, however, was most complete. The university offered not only courses in all areas of academic studies but its program was developed to encompass four years of rigorous studies in several areas of
specialization. In contrast, the second Flying University offered courses in a few specific areas of the social sciences and the humanities; the areas where the official distortion and omissions were most severe. In fact, the university of 1977-81 had never had as a goal to provide complete education; this simply was unnecessary (Buczyńska-Garewicz, p.27). This crucial difference can be linked to at least two historical circumstances. First, in communist Poland, despite the ideological constraints imposed on the universities, there was considerable progress in comparison to partitioned Poland with respect to the number of institutions of higher learning and the relatively good standards of academic education in physical, biological and technical sciences. In Poland under the Russian yoke, the university studies were neglected with many more universities being closed then opened. The quality of available education was also getting tragically low. Furthermore, women were completely barred from attending Russian universities, a fact that explains why the majority of students attending the original Flying University were women.

The education of women was in fact one crucial difference in objectives between the two institutions. As I have already mentioned, the person behind the formation of the first Flying University was a woman, Jadwiga Szczawińska. In fact, the university grew out of private lectures for women, many of whom lost husbands or fathers in the January Rising and whose plight became a pressing social problem. The main objective of the university at least at its humble beginning was to prepare them for careers previously occupied by men so they could take care of their families and to assume control of public matters (Lorence-Kot, p.43). Also as historian
Norman Davies rightly observes, the young women on the wave of emancipation ideologies coming to Poland from the West, searched for a true and worthy mission to give meaning to their lives (p.233). The mission that they discovered was in providing an education to the lower classes and to carry on the national spirit that was endangered by the occupiers. Indeed, the entire network of illegal education in Poland was in their hands. This aspect (the education of women) was, for the reasons I have already mentioned, missing from the objectives of the second Flying University.

One of the areas in which the aims of the two Flying Universities were the same was with respect to the concept of self-education. The faculty of the first Flying University were conscious of the fact that their efforts were not enough to stem the tide of the official policy of russification adopted by the Tsarist government in occupied Poland. Therefore, they tried to develop a means that would enable a large number of young Poles to educate themselves. Also, there was considerable risk to students and their parents for attending the university lectures. The faculty of the university prepared special textbooks for students to study at home by themselves. One such textbook was the Study Guide for Self-Education authored by Adam Mahrburg, a professor of philosophy and lecturer at the Flying University. Self-education was promoted by the second Flying University as well. It was openly emphasized as a main goal: “Our purpose is to help anybody who wishes to increase his or her knowledge through self-education” (original declaration establishing flying university, cited in Buczyńska-Garewicz, p.21). The reasons were the same, but the way self-education was pursued differed. Instead of holding lectures for live audiences,
which were often disrupted by plainclothes police, the lectures were sometimes published in the clandestine press (Zuzowski, p. 98; Bartoszewski, p. 81). Also there was extensive use of tape recorders and the resulting taped lectures were then distributed or copied again among circles of friends. In this way, thousands of individuals were gaining valuable knowledge without the necessity of attending lectures in person (Bartoszewski, p. 82).

Among the more general aims of both Flying Universities was the liberalization of social, cultural and even political life in Poland. In the case of the Flying University that existed in Partitioned Poland, the strategy (which eventually succeeded) was to weaken the official system of education by depriving it of students and fostering the feeling of resistance to the school authorities so that they would give up strangling the educational system in Poland. Indeed the popular resistance and pressure on Tsarist school authorities (school strikes⁵, demonstrations etc.) combined with the already extensive network of underground schools resulted in the liberalization of the entire educational system by the authorities in 1906. The Flying University itself in 1906 acquired legal rights (short of gaining the status of official university) and as The

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⁵Ignacy Chrzanowski, Flying University professor was among the organizers of school strikes of 1905 that forced Tsarist authorities to relinquish some of its grip on the system of education.
Society for Scientific Studies or TKN continued its educational activities.

For the second Flying University, the liberalization in all areas of social, cultural, and political life was an ultimate goal. Buczyńska-Garewicz hints: “…the idea of an autonomous state university assumes that the state is liberal itself…” (p. 23). The first step toward this state liberalization was the liberalization in education, research and publishing. The primary target, like in all previous organized attempts by intellectuals, was the ever present censorship. The tight grip of state-imposed censorship in Poland was of great consequences to the intellectuals in Poland. Censorship, and the whole system of lies and misinformation perpetrated by the regime was effecting society and intellectuals alike in a deeper sense. Polish writer and journalist Stefan Kisielewski in his 1979 essay “The School of moronism or GTM”, addressed to Polish emigre writer Gustaw Herling-Grudziński, put forward the following diagnosis:

Millions of people in Poland no longer know what is and what is not the truth, and what it means to be an “sincere witness.” For decades, not only our language has been changed but our mental criteria—we are different now, though if you speak with us in the West you will think we are the same as you. We do great many things without being forced to, instinctively, and that’s the whole tragedy, worse than more painful than you in that Naples of yours can imagine. (1983, p. 284)

And he added:

Censorship is the instrument of the school of moronism. It keeps careful watch to make sure people loose their memory, their ability to connect causes with effects, and that they examine everything separately, out of historical context, criticizing details, of course, but avoiding like a plague any generalization or overall evaluations. I once wrote about a tribe of Africans that had not observed the connections between sexual intercourse and the birth of their children. Now the press of the school of moronism wants to turn Poles into a
Although the ideological restrictions on creative activities, writing and research were not as severe as during the years of the Stalinist terror, nevertheless it continued to be a main obstacle for the full development of culture and science in Poland. It is no coincidence that the Flying University had in its ranks many individuals who themselves learned the unpleasant reality of censorship in Poland, by having their works banned or prohibited from publication. For intellectuals involved in the Flying University, the effects of censorship were harmful in both practical as well as in a moral sense. For one, it was a hindrance to everyday teaching, writing or research, for another, it prevented the intellectual from being authentic, honest and free. Instead of truth, there was half-truth or silence, the language itself was impoverished and the meaning distorted. Kazimierz Brandys, a distinguished Polish writer and Flying University lecturer, wrote about the peculiar and debilitating effects of the official censorship on the cultural life in Poland:

Someone from the outside, who came here from, say, Venezuela might have the feeling that Poland’s cultural life was on fire. What could possibly be lacking here! There’s everything, and everything in its proper place: creative work produced here, translation of literature from the three worlds, analyses of contemporary civilization, sociological polls, structuralism, human rights, civil rights, new terms - paradigm, trauma, trends...Everything, the entire spectrum! How many years would a person have to live here before he could decipher this system of shams and smell the hovering stench. Here everything conceals the corpses hidden under the floor. A book that is not published even further down. Buried between the lines of every text printed are the names one is not allowed to mention, the facts about which one remain silent. The places and dates blotted from history create a dead zone whose silence is filled with the noise of artificial polemics and where semipoets give interviews to semijournalists and express their semitruths to their semireaders. There is no lack of anything here except for the half that has been amputated”. (cited in
Goodwyn, p.188)

The censorship was strangling the cultural life in Poland. For the intellectuals, the weakening or better yet the elimination of the system of censorship was a prerequisite for the liberalization in all other areas of life in Poland.

The Flying University, because of its clandestine and unofficial status, was not subjected to the state censorship. As such, it was well fitted to the major goal of the Flying University which in Buczyńska-Garewicz words (p.32), was to “explore the unexplored domains of the social sciences and the humanities, teach what was restricted and banished from the official university,..., to correct what was falsified.”

The goal of the Flying University was very practical. It offered those professors fired from their jobs the chance to teach and to publish their own writing and it offered the students an educational opportunity. This type education was also designed, according to Buczyńska-Garewicz (p.32), to produce a new intellectual elite. These aspects were also present in the original Flying University. Several of the professors of the first Flying University had a chance to teach and research what was forbidden and their work provided them with a modest income. They were also determined to prepare new elite cadres of educators, scientists and other professional for the future independent Poland.

Finally my comparative analysis would not be complete without the discussion of some of the more elusive goals that were present in the second Flying University. The goal I am talking about has to do with what Goodwyn describes as “the hunger for political relevance that long years of party monopoly had engendered in sectors of
the Polish intelligentsia" (1991, p. 183). Goodwyn, among other things argues (and I
tend to agree with him) that the self-promoting claims of various groups of Polish
intellectuals caused the false and exaggerated credit that the Polish intellectuals held in
the West for their role in the creation of the Solidarity movement in 1980.
Sociologists Roman Laba (1991) and Lawrence Goodwyn (1991) both came to the
same conclusion. It is possible that the self-promotion played a role in the Flying
University as well.

The ethos of the old intelligentsia, which elevated its most talented members to
the rank of the governors of souls in the partitioned Poland, created in the intellectuals
in post-war Poland a conviction that they were the only group that was capable to
consciously take the responsibility for the nation. The literature and various writings
in the last two centuries in Poland created and reinforced that myth. It would be a
grave mistake, however, to conclude that this was just a myth. For one, several
thousand members of the intelligentsia lost their lives fighting for Poland and for the
values that constituted the ethos of the intelligentsia before, during and immediately
after WWII. Often, these efforts (like the Warsaw Uprising of 1944) were nothing
less than highly idealistic, heroic sacrifices. The members of the Flying University
themselves, many of them war heros, payed a high price for their activities, be it prison
terms, ban on publications or "internal exile". But it is also true that participation in an
illegal activity conferred on the intellectual a certain status of moral superiority in
comparison with those that stayed on the sidelines. Often, the intellectuals
participating in opposition, were becoming known for that reason to the West. It
seems also necessary to note that following the collapse of the communist in Poland in 1989, several members of the Flying University attained the highest posts in government, or in other social, cultural and political enterprises that carried a high status and often considerable material rewards. Of course, there is really no way to tell how much these facts were a result of acts stemming from one's deepest convictions and how much they were the results of shrewd political maneuvering or conscious efforts at self-promotion. The same speculative arguments could be brought up with respect to the second membership of the original Flying University. I have to admit, however, that at least to my knowledge (and the lack of bibliographical material does not help here), no member of the first university gained any significant rewards of political appointments or material rewards from their association with the university at the time when Poland regained independence in 1918. In fact, even then, some of them like Krzywicki or Chrzanowski were experiencing career setbacks for holding tight to their convictions.
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The interpretive historical approach (see Skocpol, 1979, pp.368-374) allowed me the flexibility of not being limited by any singular theoretical approach, but instead to utilize the existing theories toward my overarching aim of discovery and of interpretation of the Flying Universities that existed in Poland at two distinct points in time. The approach has also freed me from the responsibility of testing a singular theoretical model and from developing causal relationships as required by other methods of historical sociology.

For these reasons, I have focused on these elements of social movements theories (New Social Movements or NSMs and Resource Mobilization or RM) that seem to be most fitting for the task of elucidating the phenomenon of the Flying Universities in Poland. This is important since, as I believe, a singular theory can limit the scope of the study of social movements by excluding other points of view that may be important to the fullest understanding of the movement. Therefore, it might be useful to discuss the theoretical elements that informed my approach to the study of the Flying University. I also believe that the implications that my empirical study of the Flying University movements may have for theory or social movements in general and the theory of social movements in particular, should not be completely ignored. For that reason, I have briefly touched upon that subject as well.

The theoretical frameworks that I have utilized in giving direction to my study
of Poland’s Flying Universities were the NSM theory and to a lesser extent the RM theory. The reasoning behind the choice of theory for this study had to do with the different emphases that each of these frameworks gives to the different aspects of social movements’ formation and continuous existence. I had originally thought of placing my investigation of Poland’s Flying Universities exclusively within the framework of the RM theory, since it focuses on such important elements as forms of organization, strategies or resources, all important elements of movement activity. I had also thought about the theoretical approach that utilizes the structural explanation (Structural Functionalism), since such elements as government structure, the censorship, or apparatus of coercion etc., have contributed to the unique way that both Flying Universities operated. After some thought, however, I came to the conclusion that despite these two theoretical frameworks’ utility in elucidating some aspects of movements activity, they failed to satisfactorily answer the question of why the movements like the Flying University take place in the first place. RM theory, for example, does not deal with the motivations of movement actors that can not be encompassed within the logic of its rational-utilitarian, cost/reward analysis. With respect to my criticism of the structural approach, its limits became apparent when confronted with the reality that the movement of the Flying University type did not appear in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where similar structural conditions existed. This undermines the fact that social movements are not simply (if at all) irrational outbursts caused by structural strain. It also underscores the significance of the elements found outside of “structures”, in cultural field of values,
beliefs and traditions. This perhaps explains the fact, that the only other intellectual
social movement resembling Poland’s Flying University, the Institute of Catalan
Studies, took place in a Western European country, Spain (see Johnston, 1991, pp.44-
47).

The aspect of the NSMs theory that seemed to me particularly fitting for the
task of elucidating the phenomenon of the Flying University was the emphasis on the
cultural elements and circumstances that surround movement formation. For me, this
meant going deeper, beyond the appearances and visible aspects of the social
structures, and beyond the logic of the strategic, cost/reward calculations. It also
meant searching for the answers within the realm of ideas, values and beliefs, the
features not only invisible to the eye but also often responsible for behaviors that may
seem irrational, altruistic or symbolic in nature. I have utilized the cultural explanation
in my analysis of the Flying Universities, to show that it is within the realm of
traditions, collective memory and cherished values that the ideas of social movements
are born. I felt that the emphasis on social actors, their values, beliefs and aims would
be most adequate in explaining the problem of why this type of social action, as
represented by Poland’s Flying University, took place.

I had also hoped to show that the social movements were not just some
inevitable events brought about by the magical forces of history, but rather they were
forced into existence by the conscious actions of individuals. These people derive their
desire to act, as well as their modes of actions, in large part from the accumulated
knowledge of the society to which they belong. They utilize this historically
accumulated knowledge of the past in their actions aimed at consciously shaping the present. I found the work of Alain Touraine, a French sociologist and a leading theoretician of the NSMs approach to be a good illustration of this point. Touraine (1983), who led the team of the French and Polish sociologists in the empirical studies of Poland’s Solidarity Movement in 1981, concluded:

...men and women are not subject to historical laws and material necessity,...they produce their own history through their cultural creations and social struggles, by fighting for the control of those changes which will affect their collective and in particular their national life. (p.5)

This emphasis on individual actors who consciously participate in drawing the course of history is in sharp contrast to the Marxist interpretation of social movements. For Marxists, the social action of individuals is secondary at best, what really moves the wheels of history is the class conflict rooted in the logic of capitalist production. This economic reductionism, of course, is powerless if it has to explain social action which attempts to change social values, beliefs and cultural codes rather than relations of material production or political power relations. Touraine’s words cited above were written about the men and women who were participating in the Solidarity movement but, I think, they can be applied to any social movement in general. I felt that this was especially true with respect to the individuals participating in the Flying University, KOR and other small movements involving intellectuals. The intellectuals were consciously creating facts, that had real and not just symbolic significance with respect to the future social and political changes in Poland. Not surprisingly, Stanisław Barańczak, an active member of the Flying University and KOR, described this effort
as "an experience of intellectuals directly involved in History" (1986, p.226).

I also thought that Touraine's approach to the study of social movements was significant to my own study in another respect. It underscored the necessity for the researcher to enter into the ideas and feelings of the movement's participants in order to fully understand the social movement which is the object of their empirical analysis. In this study, I have tried to show the ideas that were important to the understanding of both Flying Universities. These were the ideas that were espoused by the participants themselves as well as other ideas that clearly had some influence on their actions. Example of these can be the ethical convictions that were held by the members of the first Flying University like Krzywicki or Nałkowski as well as the ideas of the women's emancipation that were becoming popular among the Polish intelligentsia at the time. With respect to the second Flying University, the ideas of oppositional tactics as expressed in the writings of Michnik or Kuroń as well as the ideas of democratic freedoms espoused by Polish intellectuals can serve as examples.

NSM theoretical approach as exemplified by Touraine's book on the Solidarity movement was informative to me in yet another respect. It showed me that no contemporary movement can be understood without some glimpse of the past. Touraine, for example, finds it necessary to present the reader with the picture of the events in Poland that took place in the nineteenth century in order to make sense of the national consciousness present in the contemporary Polish working class (p.44). In fact, nearly a quarter of his book, despite being written based on the ad hoc spoken accounts of the movement participants, is filled with description of events that took
place in 1956, 1968 or even earlier. This grounding of the social movement in history was a crucial point to me. I think that it would be very difficult or outright impossible to fully understand the Flying University that emerged in Poland in 1977 without knowing the history of its predecessors or the history of the resistance against the oppressive regimes that took place in Poland in the times of partitions, WWII or in the post-war period. By the same token, the meaningful interpretation of the Flying University that emerged in the Russian partition in 1882 can be jeopardized without the knowledge of Poland's strong traditions of personal freedom and toleration during the pre-partition era or the Romantic ideology formulated by Polish poets and philosophers after the country lost its independence in 1795. Importantly, the movements participants seem to be acutely aware of the past, a fact that found expression in both their words and actions.

I have to admit that I had thought about utilizing the NSMs theory for this thesis with reservations. After all, the NSMs approach was the result of intellectual discourse by a group of several sociologists to deal with the emergence in the West of "qualitatively new" social movements. NSM theorists like Melucci, Touraine, or Habermas, all claimed that Western societies were entering a post-industrial era and they have linked the emerging new social movements to that development. Such understanding seemed to me to be limiting the applicability of NSM theory to the economic, political and social realities of few countries of Western Europe and the United States. The Flying University emerged in Poland, not a Western European country, and it first emerged at the time when the industrial society was in its
formative stage. Despite these seemingly serious limitations, I saw the utility of the
NSM approach for the study of Poland’s Flying Universities. I was encouraged,
however, because the first attempts to study Poland’s contemporary social movements
from the NSM perspective were already made (Misztal, 1990; Crighton and Mason,
1986). Furthermore, there was a convincing study (Calhoun, 1993) that described
“new social movements” (Chartism, Second Great Awakening, Transcendentalism,
Owenite socialism and others) that took place in the United States and England in the
early nineteenth century (emphasis mine), which suggested the arbitrariness of the
time boundaries imposed by the NSM theoreticians.

One of the additional factors that pushed me toward NSM theory as a guiding
theory for my study was the fact that the developments in the West described by the
NSM theorists to some degree resembled the social realities of the Central and
Eastern European states. For example, both Alain Touraine and Jurgen Habermas
argue that the Western societies, and more specifically the social relations, are
threatened by the expansion of the autocratic state into every area of social life.

Touraine (1981) writes,

...the sphere of social relations and social action is no longer any more than a
place for secondary negotiations, for reforms which are rather adjustments and
which do not threaten the established power, or are themselves even
instruments of manipulation: power, formerly concentrated in monumental
institutions, now like the a devouring enzyme pervades the entire social and
cultural control agents. (p.5)

This general and abstract statement, indeed, could be used to describe the social and
political reality in Poland. A more detailed description, of course, would reveal that
the power of the state in Poland was more extensive and left less room for social
action than was allowed by its counterparts in the West. Nevertheless, the concept of
the state as a threat to social life as present in the NSM theory seemed to me to be of
utility in guiding my discussion of the Flying University in Poland.

In view of NSM theorists, because the state extends its influence beyond the
traditional "public" sphere, the social life becomes politicized. As a result, the social
struggle is no longer one concerned with the redistribution of resources but one that is
concerned with what Habermas (1981, p.33) calls "grammar of forms of life", or of all
aspects that were formally sheltered in the sphere of the "private" life. Civil society
becomes, according to the NSM theorists, the new location of the social movements, a
fact that contributes to the (false) impression of the movements as primarily social and
not political in character (Scott, 1990, p.16). Civil society was also, in my opinion as
well as in the opinion of others (Arato, 1981), the exact location of the contemporary
social movements in Poland, the Flying University of 1977 included. Just like the
movements in the West, the movements in Poland focused on values and life-styles and
were not interested in the pursuit of political power. The difference, of course, was
that while the West was experiencing the implosion of the state into the traditional
sphere of the "civil society" (Offe 1985, p.818), in Poland the civil society was
underdeveloped because it was under the political control of the state. In this
truncated form, it ceased to perform its functions of sustaining an active social life in
the intermediate sphere between the family and the state. (Vale, 1981, p.60)

The difference between the spheres of civil societies in Poland and in the West
necessitated, of course, differences in aims between the respective social movements in the West and those in Poland. Offe (1985) writes,

...[new social movements] seek to politicize the institutions of civil society in ways that are not constrained by the channels of representative-bureaucratic political institutions, and thereby to reconstitute [emphasis original] a civil society that is no longer dependent upon even more regulation, control, and intervention. (p.820)

For NSM theorists like Touraine, the aim of new social movements in the West was to defend civil society from the encroachment of an increasingly technocratic state (Scott, p. 17). The aims of the opposition in 1970s in Poland was to depoliticized the public life by recreating the sphere of civil society outside the immediate control of the state. The state was already almighty and powerful and the aim was to make it weaker, more tolerant, and less in control of the whole society. Adam Michnik in his Flying University lecture delivered in 1980 reflected on the role of the opposition in this process:

It was [in addition to the beginning of the disintegration of state power] also the beginning of a social organization independent of the state. Society was in the process of becoming its own master. This story is already known: the creation of the first independent institutions, KOR, ROBCIO, the Association for Scientific studies (the Flying University), independent unions, publishing houses, free newspapers and magazines, the farmers self-defense. (1981, p.71)

From this statement, one can see that the goals of the social movements in Poland and the goals of the “new” social movements in the West, despite some differences, revolved around the theme of liberation of society from the influences of the mighty state. Kuroń’s statement, besides pointing to the role of oppositional groups in reviving civil society, also underscores the validity of Touraine’s concept of society
self-reproduction of “society’s increased ability to act upon itself” (Touraine, 1981, p.2).

The attention that NSM theory allots to the social actor, consciously shaping the course of history makes it an attractive feature for anyone studying the intellectual social movements. The identity of the social actor, is also important in elucidating the problem of why the social movement formed in the first place. The idea suggested by the RM theorists that individuals get involved in a movement for utilitarian reason, carefully waging costs and outcome seemed to me an unsatisfactory explanation. If this was true, how do we explain movement mobilization where risks outweigh the rewards and where outcomes are uncertain, which is often the case. NSM theory offers a way out, by pointing to “commitment”, “solidarity”, “loyalty”, “engagement”, etc., concepts that convey identification with others and which are excluded from RM analysis. NSM theory also suggests that the means/ends distinctions of RM theory obscures the fact that social action in itself can be rewarding to participants. As Scott (1990, p.121) rightly observed, the involvement in a collective action can be an expression of the values espoused by the actor and it reinforces his or her self-image. The act of participation in collective action also confers on the participating individuals a kind of group identity that could be a source of pride, high social status and friendships, all important features of social movements emphasized by the NSM theory. This, in my opinion, is a considerable advantage that NSM theory has over RM theory in elucidating the actors motivations for participating in social movements. It would be very difficult, for example, to understand the participation in the Flying
University, an activity that carried considerable risks and that had outcomes that were unclear, without tapping into the whole area of values, beliefs, ethical considerations or of traditions and group identities that were important for the individuals that formed the social base of the movement.

NSM theory helped me to focus my attention on social actors, ideology and aims of the Flying universities. The theory seemed especially useful in tackling the question of why the movements took place and why it took the form it did. The theory appeared a little bit weaker in suggesting the answers to the question of how the movements were able to sustain their organization or activity over time. The strategies adopted by the movement to attract support or to avoid being destroyed by authorities, both important aspects of movement success, can be discussed within the RM framework. I believe it to be worthwhile to bring to light the kinds of resources that both movements had to their disposal and to show how they were used and with what effect. It would also be interesting to see how the information about the lectures was circulated and what measures were undertaken to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands. I think, it would be worth some investigating to see how both universities were organized, who was responsible for making key decisions and who supported them financially or in other ways. Both Flying Universities were illegal undertakings and it would be interesting to see how they were able to escape detection (in the case of the first Flying University) or what means they were using to minimize the risks and to maximize the effects of their efforts. It is true that the participants of the Flying Universities were motivated by ideas and values, but it is equally true that
they were faced with real problems and obstacles that required them making decisions based on cost/benefit calculations. It has to be noted that in the case of the second Flying University, the authorities were quite successful in suppressing the spread of the university’s activities into wider regions of the country and many meetings of the university were prevented from taking place by using arrests, intimidation and other means by the police. In this light, it would be interesting to elucidate the full extent of tactics and repressions used against the movement by the authorities. I agree with Scott (1990, p.116) who suggests that the usefulness of the RM theory lies in the theory’s recognition of the “inherent instability of collective action and the fact that this poses organizational and tactical problems for social movements.”

I hope that I have succeeded in showing the utility of the NSM theory in the study of a movement that is not only located outside Western Europe but also one that took place nearly a century ago. It is my belief that the characteristics of new social movement (non-class based, concerned with values or lifestyles, aiming at issues of non-economic significance, located within a sphere of civil society) are also generalizable to older movements. Indeed, several theorists (Calhoun, 1993; Scott, 1990, p.134) support such a conclusion. For me personally, the value of the NSM theory reflects its attention to the aspects of social movements that deal with cultural determinants of social movements mobilization and activity; aspects largely ignored by the previous theoretical frameworks. I also think that, despite its definite value as an explanatory framework, NSMs theory has some limitations that stem from the fact of not paying enough attention to the problems of resources and organization. This
compels me to conclude that an approach that integrates these two theoretical frameworks may provide the best possible solution to the comprehensive elucidation of the social movements phenomena.

As for my research question whether the Flying University of 1882 and the Flying University of 1977 constitute one and the same phenomenon or whether they are two distinct phenomena, I conclude that they should be viewed as distinct entities. It is true that they were similar in many respects. They both faced oppressive and illegitimate regimes that posed a real threat to the Polish culture, traditions and learning. Operating in such an environment, both universities can be viewed as attempts to free Poland’s cultural and intellectual life from the suffocating grip of the Russian or communist authorities. The second Flying University invoked the traditions of the first Flying University and made effort to revive the old traditions of the nineteenth century Polish intelligentsia who felt deep responsibility for the nation. Both universities were strongly influenced by the ideology of Polish Romanticism that emphasized individual sacrifice for the sake of the nation. The two Flying universities were also similar in that they both held in their ideas and actions to the ethos of the nineteenth century Polish intelligentsia. The ethos of the faculty of second Flying University, just like the ethos of their nineteenth century predecessors, contained strong believe in science, personal freedom, truth, independent thought, toleration, honesty, courage and opposition to an oppressive regime. From these we can conclude that seen from the cultural perspective, the two universities may be viewed as similar indeed.
There were, however, several important differences that one cannot ignore and which make each Flying University a unique phenomenon. For one, despite the fact that communist ideology created an obstacle to the unrestricted growth of a national cultural life it did not try to jeopardize the entire system of education. In contrast to the original Flying University, the university that reemerged in Poland in 1977 did not attempt to provide a comprehensive academic studies for its students but instead focused on the areas of humanities and social sciences where the ideological constraints were most severe. The second very important difference between the two universities concerned the education of women. Since in communist Poland both men and women achieved relative equality, the Flying University was not faced with the need for providing education for women which of course became one of the main concerns of the original Flying University. The original Flying University was also more concerned with the social issues concerning the lower classes of society as expressed in the emphasis on educating teachers who are sensitive to the suffering and the needs of the poor. For the Flying University of 1977, the social inequalities were not a major concern since the communist society was a “classless” society and, with the exception of the party-state elite, had to endure the same hardships. I also have to stress the more open character of the second Flying University. Openness was an ideological and strategic characteristic of the Flying University which reflected, not only its strategic difference between the two, but also the fact that the participation in the university under communists carried lesser punishment than in Poland ruled by Tsarist administrators. Finally, the social class origin of both Flying Universities
differed. This was primarily due to the fact that the gentry class from which the majority of the nineteenth century intelligentsia came, was at the turn of the century rapidly shrinking. The tragedy of the World War II and the communist policies in Poland in the post-war period also contributed to the decline of the “old” intelligentsia. I think and I hope that this study makes it clear, that the difference between the first and second Flying University was one between an attempt to safeguard Polish culture and learning from the annihilation and between attempts to recover full cultural, social and political autonomy.

I believe that we should see both Flying Universities in Poland as different but significant developments that helped shape the future of this country. The faculty of the first Flying University understood that the future of Poland would need highly qualified cadres of people for positions in industry, government, schools and other areas vital to the Polish state. They also wanted to train cadres of young activists willing to fight for the poor and disenchanted, for human dignity and against oppression. They wanted to train young teachers willing to take the torch of education to the masses. They understood that if there was going to be a successful fight for Poland, those at the bottom of the society had to be involved. Their ideas were not new, real attempts at reforms were undertaken by the Polish Parliament at the end of the eighteenth century. But it was too late, these gains were not only reversed by the invaders, but the entire national existence was under the danger of extinction. Their effort was like an effort of a person trying to swim upstream. They had to face not only the tsarist apparatus of terror, but also their own society sunk in
Education came to the forefront of Polish concerns at the time of the first Partition, and remained there for the duration... The task was daunting... but in the end, where the generals and military planners failed, the educators triumphed. Polish culture, Polish educational enterprises, and the Polish intelligentsia survived, bruised but intact, from the Partition to the “explosion” of independence in 1919. (p.262)

The role of the second Flying University can be viewed as significant as well. Its primary goal was to correct the wrong of the political system in Poland in the sphere of educational and cultural spheres. Yet, the significance of their enterprise goes well beyond those areas. Their courage in the face of brutal repressions, their convictions and commitment to the traditional values like freedom, honesty, tolerance, openness, or dignity serve as a moral and ethical example to a generation of young Poles. It was a significant attempt to uphold the idea of academic freedom and intellectual commitment to truth. It was also an example of the leadership of the intelligentsia taking responsibility for the matters that were of national importance. They wanted to change the governing system in Poland that was based on lies, misinformation and censorship. The university can be seen, together with other similar undertakings, as the necessary precondition for such change. It was an attempt to rise the political consciousness of the Poles and make them more involved in the social, cultural, and political life of their own country. The university provided an example of how the independent social action can exist outside the official social structures. The Flying University was an open, organized protest. In the words of Jacek Kuroń, such...
a form of resistance, “synchronized in a number of centers, unites the country and becomes a social movement” (p.60). The birth of “Solidarity” in 1980 suggests that, as such, it was successful.


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Michnik, A. (1982). We Are All Hostages, Telos, 47, 173-182.


