

Edyta CZOP<sup>1</sup>

## **POLISH RECONSTRUCTION LOUTISH TOTAL MODERNIZATION IN 1945–1989**

After 1944, the introduction of a “communist” modernization model began in Poland. Its features were top-down imposed transformations in the political, economic and social spheres. It was the communist authorities that decided about the direction and shape of civilizational transformations. The subject of modernization was a party bureaucracy practically not subject to social control, especially since society in this system was subject to civilization changes. The modernization was to be of a total character, closely linked with the construction of a new socialist system. The adopted Soviet model of modernization was of a mimetic nature, drew from Western standards, but introduced only selected elements, matching the different political and social relations and the principles of manual control of economic life. The transformation of modernization from 1945–1989 was based on the political, social and economic transformation after 1989. The government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki took over the economy which is a hybrid of the socialist version combining the so-called ownership of the socialized (in the majority of cases) with the erosion of the influence of state competence and the growing private sector. Modernization processes in Polish People's Republic took place in the new system context, they were inscribed in subsequent economic plans, in a central planning scheme, which in time was less and less efficient. In spite of this, the country was made industrialized and the economy became more economical, education was popularized, socialization of health care was created, the foundations of the consumer society were created.

**Keywords:** modernization, The People's Republic of Poland, real socialism, centrally planned economy, industrialization, urbanization.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The word modernization is associated with improvement and innovations, but also with socio-civilizational transformations. The latter includes activities within the scope of economic, technical and educational progress, raise of living standards, and finally transformation of public awareness. After 1944, a “communistic” model of modernization was introduced in Poland, which was characterized by a complete, top-down transformation of all areas of social life, in accordance with a strict, analytical program of political, economic and social modernization, considered as a whole. Thus, the modernization was to be complete and lead to the creation of socialism and then communism. The model of Soviet modernization was a variant of Western modernity, but with selected elements only. It assumed top-down activities aimed at achieving standards similar to those in the West, but by using different political and social solutions. The shape of modernization was imposed by the

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<sup>1</sup> Edyta Czop, DSc PhD, Institute of History, University of Rzeszow, Rzeszow, Rejtana Av. 16c, 35-959 Rzeszów, Poland; e-mail: edaczop@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0001-5768-8959.

communistic party and was characterized by the primary role of politics in relation to the other areas of social life; the economic and social development was determined by a political system (as opposed to the western model) (Musiał, 2013).

## 2. PHASES OF MODERNIZATION

Miłowit Kuniński distinguishes three phases of modernization after World War II: a radical and ideological one, a mild and corrective one as well as a consumption one, where ideological aims were to be achieved indirectly (Kuniński, 2006).

The first period focused on the gradual introduction of the doctrinal assumptions underlying the Soviet modernization model, namely slow limitation (final step being total elimination) of private property which obstructed central economic control, striving to remove the market mechanism, and finally politicization of economic entities (Musiał, 2013).

The change of borders after World War II brought about the modernization of the economic and social structures, which gave the opportunity for rapid economic development. What was necessary, however, was an efficient economic system, which would use the natural and human resources of the country. In the first post-war years, some of the reforms announced in the declarations of the Polish Workers' Party and manifesto of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (agrarian reform, nationalization of industry) were introduced, without eliminating private property (trade, craft). In the then discussions on the economic system, the Polish Workers' Party officially advocated a three-sector economy. The change took place after winning the elections to the Legislative Sejm (by fraud) and removing Władysław Gomułka and the supporters of his "Polish way to socialism" to the margins. Before the beginning of intensive industrialization, Poland's GDP per capita compared to 29 European capitalistic countries amounted to 2447 dollars, which constituted 53.4% of the average for Western countries. In the following decades, the situation deteriorated (in 1960 only 46.6%, in 1970 43.4%, in 1980 43.5% and in 1989 35.8%). Positive changes also occurred in the structure of the population taking into consideration the sources of income. In 1938, 59.1% lived off agriculture (horticulture, forestry), and in 1950 - 47.1%. It turned out, however, that this situation could not be effectively used by the authorities. The obstacle was the fact, that economic matters were treated instrumentally, they were subordinated to current political interests and doctrinal assumptions (Chumiński, 2010).

While in the first post-war years the Soviet Union tolerated the separateness of the economic and political model in the countries of Eastern Europe, from 1947 a major shift took place to "transplant" the Soviet model. For the economy, the takeover of Soviet models meant a model of industrialization based on heavy industry, neglecting the consumer goods manufacturing. Thus, the focus was on developing the potential of the economy, marginalizing the needs of society. At the same time, technical progress taking place in the whole world was not taken into account. Industrialization took place in isolation from the global economy, thus the factories built proved to be out of date practically from the very beginning. This situation therefore forced further favoring of heavy industry. The priority of this sector of the economy remained visible practically until the end of People's Poland. Additionally, there were strong autarkic tendencies and collectivization of agriculture (Morawski, 2010).

The belief that accumulation and consumption contradict each other led to limiting consumer aspirations of society. Extensive and unilateral industrial development during the six-year plan led to disproportions and imbalances. Under the influence of protests from the

population and critical economic analysis, the implementation of the plan was subject to timid criticism of the authorities of the Polish United Workers' Party and subject to changes. The inspiration for these activities came from Moscow, especially the changes. It turned out that similar problems occurred in the other countries of the bloc (Kaliński, 2012).

It is worth noting, however, that during the six-year plan, the foundations of the automotive industry were created, and the heavy and chemical industry started to expand. Under Soviet pressure, at the cost of other industries, the defense industry began to be significantly developed and modernized. In addition to small arms and artillery, tanks, fighter aircrafts, minesweepers and radar systems were produced (Kaliński, 2012).

Shortly after the turn of 1956, more emphasis was put on the development of the manufacturing industry for the needs of the population. Refrigerators, washing machines, radios and TV sets were the necessities (also those constructed in Poland).

The attempts to harmonize economic growth, increase of salary and consumption levels began to be less and less important as early as in 1957. As part of the second stage of industrialization, the development of engineering, metallurgy, chemical, raw material and fuel industries, as well as electronics, electrical engineering and automotive industry were the priorities. This program was to be re-implemented at the cost of limiting investments in agriculture, in particular farming, housing and transport (Kaliński, 2012).

During Gomułka government's rule, the development of the engineering and chemical industries was the priority; they were supposed to lead to modernity. The aim was to transform Poland from a raw material country into an industrial one. However, it was necessary to invest and purchase new technologies, and funds were to be taken from the raw material area, which in turn required more expenditure. Investments were to enable modern development and exports on the one hand and create new workplaces on the other. These trends contradicted each other, which is why the perspective of dividing the economy into a modern, automated, export-oriented sector and raw material, labor-intensive sector focused on internal needs was more and more evident (Morawski, 2010).

In the 1970s, the aviation industry regained the opportunity to develop as part of cooperation with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Poland was to be an expert in agricultural aircrafts (M-18 Dromader; jet M-15 was an unsuccessful construction), helicopters (WSK Świdnik) and gliders (Bielsko-Biała). LOT obtained long-haul aircraft (Il-62), which enabled flights to New York, Montreal, Mumbai and Bangkok. The merchant fleet was developing. In the mid-1970s, tankers with a load capacity of about 140,000 tons appeared under the Polish flag; they were the largest units that Polish merchant navy ever had. Towards the end of the decade, container ships appeared in the Polish fleet. The passenger fleet was also developing. It is true that the popularity of Transatlantic routes decreased, but the popularity of ferry connections was growing. Polish ferries appeared on the Baltic Sea (Morawski, 2010).

In December 1970, Edward Gierek's team comes to power, which initially departs from the Soviet model of modernization and lays the foundations for a consumer society. The consumer modernization phase begins. The new team, thanks to the loans obtained from Western countries, began modernization of the industry by building modern factories, purchasing western licenses and investing in infrastructure. The transition from the period of rough consumption to consumption at a higher quality level combined with the opening of borders, affected the society both in terms of greater expectations and aspirations to raise the level of material existence, but also in terms of increasing the quality of other areas of

life. These include relations at work as well as relations with the state and party administration at the local level (Kuniński, 2006).

Consumer aspirations in society that were awakened at the beginning of the 1970s, did not result from the effectiveness of economic policy. The improvement of the supply and housing situation was largely related to Western loans. The number of household appliances (washing machines, refrigerators etc.) as well as radio and TV equipment, cassette tape recorders, color TV sets in households increased. Using the licenses, the automotive industry was modernized, and the Fiat 126p car became a widely desired product. Modernization entered the chemical and cosmetics industry (Mrs. Walewska perfumes became a synonym of luxury, Brutal, a cologne, was a little less popular,) and clothing (jeans, wool and silk fabrics). Partly thanks to Western licenses, the electronics industry was modernized (integrated circuits were created, production of Polish minicomputers was being prepared). Large transport investments were initiated, electrification was accelerated (although the conditions of traveling and passenger service were far from being a priority in the plan of transformations), the program of expansion and modernization of the road network was launched. In housing industry, quantitative improvement took place thanks to the so-called prefabricated buildings. On the one hand, new large residential areas were built, and on the other hand, the private housing slowed down as it was struggling with bureaucracy and lack of materials. Regardless of the actions taken, the pace of modernization of technologies and products was slow (Kaliński, 2012).

The modernization in the decade of Gierek brought new elements: it took into greater account the consumer needs of the society and allowed for the growth of the private sector. It had a “hybrid nature”, pro-market and statist tendencies intermingled, consistent with the ideology and strategic requirements of the USSR. Investment in heavy industry continued to be made and attempts to socialize agriculture were not abandoned completely (Kuniński, 2006).

The second half of the 1970s showed the failure of a centrally planned economy and the negative consequences of living beyond the means. The errors in the economic policy of the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR) were compounded by the global energy crisis and the soaring increase in the prices of imported fuels and raw materials as well as the deterioration of the East-West relations. Western states applied sanctions against the Eastern bloc as a response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The economic crisis of the end of the 1970s deepened in the following years. After announcing of martial law in December 1981, some Western states imposed financial and commercial restrictions on Poland. Talks on debt refinancing were suspended and the payment of previously granted loans was blocked. The attempt to overcome the regress was a three-year plan of 1983–1985. It was supposed to stop the fall of the national income; it assumed that of the condition of the economy from 1978 would be achieved and that the living conditions of society would improve. Despite the economic recovery in 1983–1984, contrary to the assumptions of the reform, the command and distribution system was strengthened. It was facilitated by the introduction methods characteristic for the army (military style) in the economic governance. In the national socio-economic plan for 1986–1990, it was intended to concentrate on structural changes leading to modernization of the economy. The deep economic imbalance in 1988 forced the authorities to raise prices drastically. The public reacted in wave of dissatisfaction despite compensations. The attitude of the strikers and the authorities of the underground “Solidarity” forced the authorities to agree to talks at the “round table” (Kaliński, 2012).

The changes aimed at introducing economic freedom began to be prepared by the government of Mieczysław Rakowski (established in the autumn of 1988). Transformations in the area of economy were to be combined with creation of the foundations of the democratic system, which somehow was forced by the attitude of "Solidarity". The authorities, sitting down for talks with the opposition, had the concept of a limited democracy, which would allow them to maintain political control, offering economic freedom in return. Thus, they were ready to depart from the communist dogma which rejected private property or free market mechanisms. Further transformations taking place after elections of June 1989 brought the construction of democracy and transformations in the economy (Kuniński, 2006).

The 1980s brought the pauperization of society. It is true that in 1983–1987 the poverty declined. In 1988, however, the problem returned. At the same time, in the entire 1980s, the amount of equipment such as refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, TV sets present in households, increased. However, their quality and technological level left much to be desired. Some product such as some fabrics, tape recorders, motorcycles, became less available on the market. On the one hand, the number of cars grew, but Poland was far from global trends. The gap of Poland in relation to other countries of the Soviet bloc also widen (Kuniński, 2006).

### 3. PROS AND CONS OF MODERNIZATION

The economic development of People's Poland was influenced by political factors, the needs of the internal market, but also by the needs of the Eastern bloc hegemon, which to some extent distorted or delayed some modernization processes. It is enough to mention the development of the armament plants in the 50's as well as development of production based mainly on Soviet technologies (in most cases, these solutions were copied from the West and implemented in countries of "people's democracy").

The influence of Moscow on the technological development of Polish industry can be seen, for example in aviation sector. The aviation construction office was established in October 1944. After transforming into an Aviation Experimental Workshop in Łódź, (1945), it was the first aviation company to build aircraft prototypes. The first factories launched in the region of Polska Lubelska were Mielec and Rzeszów. Initially, they carried out repairs under supervision of the Russians, and from 1945 started operating under Polish management. Gradually new plants and centers were created, where prototypes of aircrafts were worked on. Most employees were pre-war engineers and constructors who took advantage of Polish technological thought. Gradually, domestic production gave way to licensed production, mainly the Soviet one. At the same time, serial production of aircrafts, including jets, was developed on a large scale. On one hand, there was a technological leap, on the other hand, the production was dependent on the inflow of parts from the Soviet Union (those that could not be produced in Poland). Soviet designs were favored, even outdated and unsuccessful<sup>2</sup> at the cost of Polish, often innovative concepts. Clearly there was no pro-innovative attitude (Glass, 1980; Orłowski, 2006).

Regardless of limitations of the autonomy of the aviation industry, serial production of Soviet SM-1 helicopters was started from scratch, although it happened at the cost of Żuk

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<sup>2</sup> For example, an agricultural jet plane PZL Belfegor (constructor: R.A. Izmajłow) was uneconomical and unsuccessful.

helicopter, designed by Bronisław Żurkowski. In the plant in Świdnica, the SM-1 was re-designed, and then the production of the prototype version of the Mi-2 helicopter was started. Despite the limited use of the potential of Polish constructors, successful Polish planes were created, such as TS-8 Bies or the first Polish jet TS-11 Iskra, both engineered by Tadeusz Sołtyk. The unhampered Polish construction thought developed in the production of gliders. In this field, Poland was one of the world's leader (Orłowski, 2006).

Modernization processes, especially in the area of the development of the country, which took place in the first post-war years (a three-year and partly six-year plans) were mainly a continuation of the program of Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski from the second half of the 1930s. The main aim was to eliminate agrarian overpopulation and reduce the civilization gap between Poland A and Poland B, and to expand the industry in less developed areas. It meant implementing similar ideas as in the construction of the Central Industrial District. The process of electrification continued, and the infrastructure was gradually expanded. At the same time, the model of Soviet modernization was introduced. It emphasized the development of heavy industry (the foundation of the economy was to be the industry, treated as a factor influencing the growth and progress), gradual elimination of individual property in the countryside and reconstruction of the social structure.

The authorities of People's Poland failed to radically rebuild "production relations" in the countryside, and the effects of attempts of implementing innovative processes in agriculture were poor. Instead of unsuccessful collectivization, cultivation contracts and machinery rings were introduced, based on technology, which significantly contributed to the mechanization of farming. The fact that agriculture was operating under autarkic conditions limited its development, modernization, specialization and concentration. According to the model of "partial modernization" (non-urbanization and unbalanced industrialization), "drainage" of agriculture meant lowering prices of agricultural products and food products, introducing compulsory deliveries, taxes, part-time farming, lack of investment in individual farming and manipulated statistics. In consequence, there was lack of appropriate conditions for modernization of agriculture resulting in increased production and socialization of the peasant economics. The policy of modernization in agriculture became noticeable in the first half of 1970s; loans for individual farmers were available, which enabled, among others, purchase of modern agricultural equipment. In the years of accelerated industrialization and delayed urbanization, no steps were taken to develop modernization in agriculture, such as the modernization of agricultural production which required investment (Leśniak-Moczuk, 2012).

The modernization of rural areas and agriculture in Poland was delayed in comparison to Western Europe, but it also differed from the way of modernization of agriculture implemented in Eastern Europe. In Poland, the peasants did not transform into employees of large farms, but still remained small producers. At the verge of system transformation, Poland did not go all the way from the agrarian to industrial era. Poland was a medium-developed country with a dual society, partly prepared for change, and partly doomed to (subject to) marginalization. The scope and pace of farm modernization also depended on the level of family awareness. Peasants were to be seen not only as recipients of technical innovations, but also co-creators. Despite the fact that farmers constructed or improved devices and machines, their achievements were not promoted. There were several reasons: the peasants either did not apply for a patent or the patents were denied. Taking into account the devices they designed and made, they could be co-creators along with the professional experts (Leśniak-Moczuk, 2012).

The process of modernization of Poland in accordance with the Soviet model had two faces. On the one hand, this method was very expensive, on the other hand, it resulted in the social advancement of millions of people who moved from the countryside to the city, became workers, clerks, and became part of the intellectual elite.

Civilizational advancement brought changes in the quality of life and as well as changes in aspirations and transition from traditional to modern society. The economic situation of the country caused this transition to take place in two stages - post-war and in the 1970s. In both cases, the feeling of advancement was built on the basis of experience and the starting point was important. The factor that positively influenced shaping the sense of civilizational advancement was surging character of changes in social life.

Consumer needs of citizens began to grow. They wanted to live better and more comfortably. Next generations were characterized by increased civilization aspirations, which started to be clearly visible in the 1970s. Opening of Poland to the West brought new life-style models and new needs. Economic plans which returned to the industrialization of the country at the cost of limiting citizens' aspirations caused frustrations and in consequence, strikes.

The lifestyles of the society were also influenced by social issues, especially insurance. Development of insurance took place after the Second World War. Initially, it was based on the pre-war system. The structure and insurance premiums, however, changed. In 1947, family insurance was introduced, and agricultural workers were covered by health insurance. In 1953, they were covered by disability insurance. An important change took place in 1954, when benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases were added to the pension scheme (cf. wider: Grata, 2018).

Another reform of the social insurance system was carried out in 1968, and coherent system was created. In 1972, individual farmers were covered by social insurance (employees of production co-operatives were entitled to social security and pension scheme in 1962) and were granted the right to use social health care. Eight years later, pension and disability insurance for farmers were introduced. The rights for people bringing up children were also gradually extended. In 1972, maternity leave was reformed. In 1975, the Alimony Fund was established, and in 1980, a child care benefit for women taking care of children up to 3 years was introduced. Subsequent reforms of the social security system took place in the next decade. At the end of the 1980s, 0.3% of the total population was not covered by social insurance system (Makarzec, 2013).

It was characteristic for Polish modernization in the post-war period that innovative projects were not used at all or they were used in a very limited extent. The directive planning and command and distribution system made it difficult for innovations to break through. The fear of failure to implement the plan and the belief that it was necessary to implement imposed Soviet solutions prevailed among the administrative and party bureaucracy. In addition, the new elite did not have or had little contact with Western technologies, hence a certain primitivism of technological solutions was not surprising (1950s and partly 60s).

On the other hand, construction projects and new buildings enhanced modernization and mechanization. Scientific and research facilities were created. The '70s brought a "new opening"; taking loans, but also construction of new facilities, an increase in the production of consumer durables, the development of housing construction (prefabricated buildings, but of a higher standard than in the period of Gomułka), development of infrastructure. The slowdown was brought about by the crisis in the second half of the 1970s. In consequence,

modernization processes in the 1980s were slower. However, tangible (research laboratories, factories, infrastructure, modern household appliances, etc.) and non-tangible (higher level of research and education, technical culture) became facts. Unfortunately, the full scientific and technical revolution did not take place despite the involvement of scientific communities, mainly due to the shortcomings of the political and economic system. Development of automotive industry in the 1980s can be an example. At that time, mainly the constructions from earlier periods were modernized and the native successors of the existing models were searched for. Two constructions were the leaders: Beskid 106 and Wars from FSO. The works on Beskid were carried out in the years 1982–1986 in the Research and Development Center in Bielsko-Biała. Despite positive evaluations, the process was stopped at the moment when the new Fiat – Cinquecento was launched to the market. Wars was presented for the first time in October 1986 at the “Polish Automotive Industry Exhibition”; works on this car started in 1983 and it was to be a universal passenger car. Despite positive evaluation, it did not enter production due to lack of funds. It is also worth emphasizing that since the mid-1980s, the authorities chose to modernize the Polish automotive industry by purchasing foreign licenses (Wilk, 2015).

The weakness of the industry was the failure to implement plans according to the range of products. Regardless of central planning and economic governance, “even key industries plants avoided the production of technologically difficult goods”, there was low quality of production and outdated technologies. On the one hand, employment rates, industry's share in generating national income (from 22% in 1947 to almost 50% in the 1980s), an increase in the number of factories and a spectacular increase in global industrial production over almost 45 years, indicated positive transformations in this sector. On the other hand, until the end of People's Poland, the faulty structure of industry (emphasis was placed on the production sector, including military production, at the cost of consumer production) and lack of encouragement to implement modern technological solutions related to scientific and technical development remained. The result was low competitiveness of Polish goods in the world (Chumiński, 2010).

In the economy of shortage and state monopoly, the plants were not interested in modernizing the technologies. In addition, the implementation process required a lot of time and the technologies were imposed from the top etc. The attitude of central administration that was responsible for distributing funds was also important.

In the field of technology, there were clear shortcomings of the system which had rejected market mechanisms. Despite the lack of decision-making powers of middle-level administration and the low level of support of innovation, there were some engineers-inventors who managed to overcome the bureaucracy, namely Wiktor Zinkiewicz (the creator of the so-called mole, an equipment for drilling underground passages), Tadeusz Ruta (invented a method of making crank shafts), Zdzisław Marciniak, Ryszard Józwicki and Jan Pacholski team (OE spinning machine Wir). Achievements in coal mining or mechanical engineering should also be mentioned (Orłowski, 2006).

What was characteristic, especially in the decade of the 1970s, was that modernization of the Polish economy was based on the purchase of Western licenses. Often, it was decided to implement technologies that were already obsolete, not used in Western countries or were not adapted to Polish conditions. The Ursus plant can serve as an example. Looking for a new license in 1974, it was decided to buy it from the Canadian-British company Massey Ferguson. It was for a tractor that was to make a technological leap in Polish agriculture. So instead of financing the successful Polish Ursus tractors, a bit more modern, but with

the inch system, which was not used in Poland, was bought. A new production had to be introduced using the inch system that other countries stopped to use. Implementation of MF tractors for production lasted ten years. The inch system created problems for farmers who often decided to alter the MF tractors themselves. In 1981, the production of Ursus-330 tractors partially based on the Ferguson and Zetor components was resumed<sup>3</sup> (Homicki, 2016).

It was not uncommon that non-technical and non-economic reasons influenced the development of technology in Poland. Attempts to introduce new ideas and bottom-up initiatives faced the production plans. At the same time, the existing regulations made it difficult to assess the real profitability of new technical concepts, which led to their rejection. Jacek Karpinski case can be an example. In the early 1970s, he constructed the K-202 minicomputer. For party and industrial bureaucracy, it was more convenient to buy licenses from other countries (seen as tested and verified), so that the officials did not have to take risky decisions. In addition, the minicomputer was a competition for Odra which was produced by Elwro factory in Wrocław, so the importance of Karpiński's construction was diminished even more (Orłowski, 2006; Lipiński, Matys, 2014).

Regardless of all the difficulties faced by modernization in the system of real socialism, the evolution that was taking place could be clearly seen. However, it is difficult to precisely indicate to what extent it resulted from the modernization of the system operations, and to what extent it was the result of the inevitable evolution of civilization. On the one hand there were civilization aspirations of the society and the desire to have: radio, television, motorbike, car, bus lines, that is everything that broke the isolation of people. They also wanted access to education, more effective medical treatments, which were provided by the state (Kula, 2010).

At the same time, a social project was being implemented in People's Poland. It caused the limitation of the individualization (so typical for modernization solutions) in the political and social dimensions. This omnipotent state was to take care of the civilization development of the individual, that was treated as an element of the community. It was not modernization that gave the freedom to choose how to invest money, complete freedom in acquiring property, choosing which party or organization to become a member, choosing politicians, etc. In the area of social life, modernization processes were poorly implemented. An example is the emancipation of women, which was encouraged, but little was done about it, or blocking of the bottom-up initiatives which also was not an example of modernization (Kula, 2010).

It is worth mentioning that the executor of modernization was the party bureaucracy, which “became a new ruling class”, “the class of proletariat owners”. Society was, however, the subject. Thus, the modernization controlled by the communist bureaucracy often served the interests of the majority, which, however, had almost no control over its implementation (Majmurek, 2010).

It is also difficult to clearly assess the “Solidarity” movement in terms of modernization. It operated during the breakdown of modernity and in the moment of crisis of systems that were called progressive. It was often ambivalent: it propounded modernization of Poland, but at the same time emphasized tradition and “familiarity”. It wanted efficiency that was associated with capitalism, and at the same time, wanted to maintain a welfare state, even to a higher degree than in socialism. On the one hand, people wanted to have a car –

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<sup>3</sup> Another poor decision was the purchase of French bus Berliet license.

a synonym of prestige, but also not only to maintain the current social achievements, but to extend it (Kula, 2010).

One of the factors which was important for expanding the freedom and thus for the modernization of the state and the economy were institutions of workers' self-management. They were formed in some state-owned enterprises in the years 1980-1981 and were associated with the operations of "Solidarity". However, it should be remembered that workers self-management started in the period of breakthrough in October 1956. The workers' councils that were created at that time were gradually marginalized and eventually included in the existing system or stopped existing. Independent labor councils established in the years 1980-1981 continued to operate later, trying to keep at least part of the autonomy of their own plants from the administrative and party apparatus. Often, workers found their allies among the plant directors. Local governments had social, union, protective and quasi-economic functions, at the same time giving employees basic economic and political knowledge as well as their rights and opportunities (Pańków, 2010).

#### 4. SUMMARY

The attempt to bridge the gap between Poland and Western countries that began before World War II, was continued after its end in completely different political, social and economic conditions. The "imposed modernization" implemented in the conditions of the centrally planned economy and the command and distribution system turned out to be a very costly political and economic operation. At the same time, it resulted in advancement of significant part of society (Morawski, 2010b).

In difficult conditions of real socialism, both society and economy were developing. However, the evaluation of the process is not easy, especially since it depends to a large extent on the starting point. The post-war modernization achievements will be assessed in a different way if the reference point is the period of the Second Republic of Poland, and differently when comparing the standard of living in post-war Poland with Western countries.

This situation can be illustrated by the situation in housing, which was usually underinvested and did not meet the growing needs of society. The society with its expectations was not satisfied with insufficient number of flats and their standard. At the same time, unification of standards influenced the development of housing culture, which in turn resulted in an increase in expectations and a growing level of disappointment with the housing situation in post-war Poland.

In 1988, there were 283 flats per 1000 inhabitants (in the 1930s, there were 200 flats per 1000 inhabitants, in 1946 – 211), but in Western European countries – 400–480. Statistically, the country was lacking 1.3 million flats in 1988, and about 24% of households were shared households. In Western Europe, however, the number of flats exceeded the number of farms. Flats in Western countries at the end of the 80s in 96-100% were equipped with bath and toilet facilities, while in Poland – 70%. Water supply was more common, around 85% in Poland and 95–100% in Western Europe (Cesarski, 2016).

The authorities of People's Poland implemented industrialization, which resulted in urbanization and migration from the countryside to the cities, proletarianization, concentration of the workforce, improvement of its qualifications, that is, they implemented the goals of not only peripheral modernization (Majmurek, 2010).

The achievements of the authorities and society in the period 1945–1989 were the foundation of economic, systemic, political and social transformations. The process of implementing Soviet models was interrupted in 1956. Changes that took place in the area of ownership and in the system of regulation of economic compounded the ongoing transformations. As a result, when the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki took over, the economy was a hybrid version of socialism “combining the statistical advantage of the so-called socialized property (around 70–80%) with the fact that the state was the owning less and less and the private sector was, growing as well as with a decreasing central regulation with elements of market allocation and the beginnings of institutional regulation” (Luszniewicz, 2017).

It should be emphasized that the modernization processes in the period of People's Poland took place in a completely new system context, they were included in further plans, in a central planning scheme, which over time became more and more fictitious. However, the whole country and its economy were industrialized, education was popularized, health care was socialized, and the country was rebuilt from war damage.

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