



Dziamski points to the fact that "axiology which consciously draws from the so-called fundamental ideals of Marx's theory of values usually ignores the findings and formulated methodological intentions of *The Capital*. Although V. Tugarinov, who distinguishes between the notions of good and value, refers to these intuitions, he restricts the ontological and theoretical status of value to a utilitarian value and to objects with utilitarian properties and man's subjective response to them. Tugarinov eliminates from axiological discussions the objective and at the same time social character of value, which forms the theoretical-methodological idea of Marx's *Capital*. A similar way of presenting Marx's ideas can be found with other contemporary Marxists who take up axiological problems. As a result, there are propositions of restricting Marxist axiological studies to the so-called system of preference, whose ontological and theoretical status does not go beyond Marx's conception of utilitarian value. This restriction of the fundamental methodological ideas of Marx's theory of economic value also decides about the limited character of the present-day Marxist axiology". (pp. 30-31).

In Dziamski's view, by referring to homogeneous human work, Marx's theory of value remains a theory of value only in the economic sense. Any attempts to apply it to other type of values must rest on the assumption that the substance of all social objects is always productive work, which leads to a vulgarization of Marx's assumptions and is a manifestation of primitive materialism.

The task of the axiologist is therefore to obtain from Marx's theory of value its theoretical and methodological assumptions, which underlay Marx's reflections on the value of goods. Only the purely theoretical model from *The Capital* can be useful for axiological studies; in no way can we apply the material characteristics of value. We can make use of Marx's theoretical model of social object and of his instructions that the value of an object must be looked for in the features and relations, and these can be distinguished in practice. (p. 41)

In his interpretation of Marx's conception of values, Dziamski introduces the concept of the form of object (a system of relations which make up the feature of the object; the whole, which is vested in the structure of its elements) and a distinction between an object and a thing. "If a thing is understood as such a system of relations, which contains in the characteristics all features and relations, both relations between these features and relations between things forming its environment, then only the form of thing is constituted by practice". Practice decides that some things are useful, for example iron or wheat. The case is different with the notion of object. If we conceive it as a certain system of elements, we can see that the system itself is defined by practice. "For that reason, the ontological status of objects is purely practical, contrary to things whose form only approximates to the practical status of objects." (p. 36).

Depending on the type of practice, we can order objects accordingly. In the case of scientific practice, we are dealing with scientific objects, which are only models of things. That is why science cannot itself decide about the cognitive value of the theoretical objects it has constructed but it has to refer them to practical activity. The relationship of the theoretical object to reality is no scientific problem at all, contends Dziamski adducing Marx's well-known thesis about Feuerbach.

The objects of practice are characterized by certain dualism. Some of them are things, physical objects practically apprehended, whereas others are social phenomena or social objects of practice. The latter kind of objects can only be a product of social practice. The form of such as object is "a certain structure, that is a construction of a relational system, whose characteristics is composed of the ideal features and relations of the same type. This form is conditioned by certain global practices of relational systems, which make up the items of its characteristics. We shall call these properties the values of relational systems which are social objects of practice". (p. 39)

Values should therefore be sought in the properties of social objects, writes Dziamski. The social object here has an objective character, but it is not understood in the naturalistic way. "Social objects are as rule models of social practice, functioning in the abstract. Their role is determined by value which - first, resides in them objectively; second, remains identical with their form always qualitatively determined; third, values of such objects have an exclusively social status, which precludes axiological individualism, and fourth, these values, like the object in social sense, are genetically determined by the type of social practice which is the essential determining factor". (p. 39-40).

Dziamski believes that an example of the objectivist and social conception of values is Marx's theory of economic value, where commodity, its objective reference, is understood as a social object.

Thus, the ontological status of value is the following: "First, value can be such a distinguished feature or relation (or set of features and relations) that makes up the characteristics of the universe of an object, and which constitutes its form, or, in another way, it determines this object (it is its qualification). Second, this feature or relation (or set of features and relations) that makes up the characteristics of the object's universe can only be called a value if this feature or relation is of ideal type, and the object to which it refers is understood in the social sense". (p. 42)

In his further discussion, Dziamski seeks to interpret the question of the variability of the hierarchic system of values. He points to the fact that axiological studies are often confined to problems pertaining to the variability of the system of values, with value usually understood as states of things placed appropriately in a system of preferences. According to Dziamski, an axiologist fails to arrive at the problem of value in this case: he assumes that the constitutive factor is a system of preferences and avoids the answer about the grounds for recognizing one or other system of preferences of values.

Dziamski asserts that the main merit of those analyses is the revelation of mechanisms that decide about the acceptance of a given hierarchy of values. In discussing this problem, he goes back to the earlier distinction between the social object (the object understood in social sense) and the practical object (a practically determined thing). The features that are the items of the characteristics of the object of practice are physical features (they are determined by space and time). Only form, which is a counterpart of the object's value, is determined by human practice. Dziamski gives the functional value of iron as an example. Usefulness of iron is its objective value, which, however, can be revealed only through practical application.

Dziamski's distinction between the object of practice and social object is accompanied by the problem of the first system of hierarchy of values, which he calls preference of goods. The concept of a good is associated with Scheler's axiology, but a similar conceptual intuition can be found, according to Dziamski, in Marx's writings. For Marx, a good is an object which is conceived of as a functional value.

There is certainly a definite relation between a good and value. The object of practice has a feature that decides that it is a good only when it is in some relation to the social object, in which a property of being a value resides. A good can be treated as the individualized way of value realization.

Social objects, with whose form the concept of value is connected, are essentially nothing but some abstract models of social practice. They are, however, models referring to the ideal types of practice: productive, artistic or moral practice (this is a clear influence upon Dziamski of the Marxist methodology as applied by L. Nowak). In each type of social practice, subtypes with a relative autonomy can be distinguished.

The social object endowed with a property that makes it a value is at the same time an abstract model of a certain type of social practice. This fact accounts for the role which is usually ascribed to values, that of a factor directing man's behaviour.

Dziamski indicates that while defining the relationship between value and functional value, Marx solved the problem in an analogous way. For Marx the measure of functional value of a good was always the magnitude of commodity value, with value understood in the abstract way.

The same can be said about cultural goods. An assertion defining a state of things as an artistic or moral good is rationally justified if it is in a definite relationship with a rationally recognized statement asserting moral or artistic values. An individual's acts are regarded as moral goods if we can present them as social modes of a practical realization of rationally recognized ethical values. The relationship between a good and value is a functional one. Value determines modes of its realization. A practical object is a good of a certain type, whose global property is functionally determined by value.

Goods of a given type are equivalent to one another. Dziamski holds that if some systems of goods preference are functioning in practice, their criterion has no axiological character. In addition to being non-axiological, this criterion has as a rule a subjective character. (p. 48). This is one of the most controversial points of Dziamski's reflections. He further holds that this is not a question with essential significance for axiology. However, it contributes to the subjective axiological tendency, which is also affected by the identification of the ontological status with the status of goods and by the possibility of selection of various ways of practical realization of values.

The view that goods of a given type are mutually equivalent is not altogether clear and we do not know what this means. In an attempt to interpret Dziamski with reference to one sphere of practice here termed artistic, we must say that this deprives the activity of art critics of objective criteria, if not of all significance. For a critic adduces in his choices the values whose status is objective, but in pursuing his profession he always encounters particular goods from which he must choose and which he arranges in a hierarchic way. His decisions, in Dziamski's view, are motivated by exclusively subjective factors: his knowledge, his likings, or vogues. This would mean that there is no point in art criticism since its judgments can be entirely arbitrary and cannot be verified; while it appears that Dziamski would not accept a conclusion like that about Marxist art criticism. On the other hand, if goods are a realization of values and are mutually equivalent, then in the case of artistic goods or artistic objects or simply works of art, this may mean that a novel X (e.g. Mann's *Zauberberg*) is equivalent to a novel Y (e.g. a poor novel by a third-rate writer) if it only satisfies the formal conditions of being a novel. Insofar as Dziamski is concerned with the formal condition of equivalence, that is, a work of art can be compared with another work of art and not with for instance an umbrella (even if it is impressive or has been elevated to the status of work of art, which, however, is outside our discussion), then we can accept his reasoning. Still, the question is open as it is a fact that various goods of a given type are differently evaluated and sought after to a different degree.

If we contend that the criterion of preferences of goods is non-axiological and in the case of art it is socio-political practice, then we are reverting to the Marxist aesthetics of socialist realism, where every revolutionary work was valued far more highly than for example a medieval picture of Madonna. However, when we adopt social-political practice as a criterion, we do enter the axiological plane but the sphere of values belongs to a different system. The adoption of this criterion permits to avoid the danger of subjectivism, but it introduces a hierarchy of values themselves, which may produce patently false appraisals as demonstrated above. Therefore, goods appear to require the axiological criterion for I believe that goods are and should be measured according to a scale, only because they can to a different extent be realizations of value of a given type. But this criterion must be found within a given system of values, with its relative autonomy taken into account. This obviously does not mean that, for example, artistic activity is to be separated from its social-economic base. According to Marxist assumptions, this relationship exists but it has nothing in common with axiology.

In Dziamski's view, it is the functions and social roles performed by an individual that decide about the system of goods which he prefers. The criterion of choice of goods would thus be rationally justified by the character of a social institution whose functions are realized in the practice of behaviour of the individual employed therein. For example, the ideal of the teacher's ethical code is disinterested social work; or we require that journalists provide goods conforming to the criterion of truth. It follows from these examples, asserts Dziamski, that the system of goods appropriate for a given type of value is usually subordinated to a non-axiological criterion. Dziamski again adduces Marx, who held that while determining the commodity price, the criterion of the system of functional value of the commodity has nothing in common with the criterion of its global, economic value (49-50).

This may be coherent in the light of Dziamski's reasoning, his distinctions and his understanding of value. But the assertion that the criterion of truth is non-axiological seems very controversial.

Dziamski explains that the criterion of such a system of preferences of goods can only be decided within general social theories like historical materialism. He maintains, however, that at this point axiological studies stop as they would go beyond their competence. And this is true. Yet an assertion that adopts this criterion is an accession to vulgar interpretations of Marxist studies on the problem of value rather than adoption of Marx's theoretical and methodological assumptions, which Dziamski postulated.

Dziamski believes that an essential question for the axiologist is whether there is a rational criterion of the hierarchic system of values. For him there are at least two ways of establishing the criteria that decide about the hierarchic system of values: 1. non-axiological, closely dependent on the theory of society, its principles and development; 2. internal, which is confined to acts and products of specialized cultural practices, for which the criterion of hierarchization of values is purely deductive. Global value is treated as the primary principle which makes it possible rationally to introduce an assertion establishing derivative values. (p. 52).

The non-axiological way of establishing the criterion of the hierarchic system of values has the advantage over the internal way on account of the possibility to explain mutual relations between aesthetic, ethical or religious values. Global theories of social practice provide criteria justifying the hierarchical system of values which determine human actions. These theories often function as social ideologies. For a Marxist, the proper premises of such a criterion can be provided only by the theory of historical materialism.

It is necessary to accept those assertions of Dziański's. The criterion of a system of values can be provided by a theory often functioning as an ideology. This criterion is non-axiological. However, the proper axiological problem is a search for the internal criterion, which would make possible the processes of evaluation within a given field of social practice. Such a criterion would permit to hierarchize goods or functional values within this field, assuming its axiological autonomy, which would not, however, be taken to mean its ontological autonomy (there is here a dependence upon the essential planes of practice, which is accounted for by another type of theory, that of historical materialism). This criterion would be non-ideological.

Yet a question arises whether a general theory of value is possible which would assume an exclusively axiological criterion of evaluation without adducing any philosophical conception. We could imagine specific axiological theories, for example theories of aesthetic or ethical values, based on the internal criterion of value. However, any theory that seeks to be general seems to adduce theories of higher level that account for the principles governing the human world. Therefore, it cannot remain ideologically indifferent.

In his conception, Dziański assumes the equivalence of goods towards values, where, if goods are hierarchized, this is done on the basis of non-axiological criteria. He also assumes a hierarchical system of values, where the criterion is a result of the theory and development of the society. However, there arises another possibility of constructing a general theory of value, which could assume a hierarchized system of goods (without being in its substantiations either normative ethics or aesthetics), while it would not assume a hierarchization of values in accordance with the thesis, also recalled by Dziański, that all values are values with respect to man and are equally significant for that reason, whereas there are no negative values. A conception like that could be developed on the basis of Marxist assumptions about the ontological order, including the mode of the existence of values, rather than about the problem of evaluation itself as this has been the case so far. This problem remains ideologically neutral now. The earlier conceptions of solving this problem may have resulted from the mechanical application of Marx's theory of economic value and were bound to lead to a vulgarization of Marxism.

A more detailed complement to Dziański's paper is, in a way, Michał Piotrowski's essay *Aksjologiczne implikacje Marksowskiej teorii wartości* (Axiological implications of Marx's theory of value), inspired by Dziański's theses, Piotrowski also adduces Leszek Nowak's work *U podstaw marksistowskiej aksjologii*.

In Piotrowski's view, axiological constructions tend to go in three directions:

1. Starting from the assertions of the Marxist classics on ethical, social, aesthetic or other values, attempts are made to construct foundations of axiology through generalization.
2. Making the starting point some formulations contained in Marx's historical materialism.
3. Application of Marx's assumptions of the theory of economic value in *The Capital*.

Piotrowski himself is leaning towards the third direction. He adopts as an assumption Marx's concept of commodity value, which is composed of three categories: functional value, exchange value and value. Functional value is every property of any object, which satisfies the need of a given subject. A good is any object with such properties that at least one of them is qualified as a functional value. Piotrowski is chiefly concerned with the problem of functional value and its role in the general theory of value. He tries to make more precise definitions, about the question of evaluation.

The structure of the process of evaluation is determined by the structure of needs. A man who undertakes various practical activities to satisfy his needs is guided by a certain knowledge. Knowledge is a theoretical model which is being modified in the process of individual practice. Knowledge and the practical experience in relation with definite kinds of needs form an individual axiological system with a variable character. It is made up of: 1) axiological competence, 2) the structure of preferences, 3) the structure of goods. (p. 64).

Axiological competence is a theoretical knowledge and experience. The system of preferences is

made up of the hierarchy of ideals and the structure of general and individual values. Ideal is understood by Piotrowski as a property of an object, which can be indicated as an abstract notion like beauty or good. An individual value indicates a property of one object, while a general value is one that covers all objects in a given class.

The structure of values in a definite system of preferences determines a corresponding structure of goods. Dependences between particular individual values and goods are mutual. An object is distinguished as a good if it has a value which, through the subject's preference, obtains the status of a (functional) value. The subject determines the appropriate structure in a subjective way so that it would agree with the adopted hierarchy of ideals. The process is objectivized by the material possibilities or the structure of goods.

Such an axiological system is an individual criterion of evaluation. Nevertheless, the subject in question is a socially determined individual. However, in explaining a form of value like functional value only individual criteria are adopted.

Applying Marx's concept of commodity exchange, Piotrowski is reinterpreting it in the axiological context as a process of axiological objects becoming widespread. These are objects that have a functional value and are subject to the process of becoming widespread. They are objectified products of material social practice. It is this property of the objects that Piotrowski wants to call value (or social value). It is possible to account for the process of exchange only after the essence of value has been explained.

An axiological interpretation of Marx's concept of value is the most difficult task. The presented explication is, as Piotrowski stresses, only one of the possible solutions. The constituting factor of value, he writes, is every kind of activity within practice. The ontological status of such a value is like economic value: axiological objects have the objectivity of value only due to the fact that they express practice or the objectivity of their value is purely social. It cannot therefore be apprehended in a phenomenalist way. The value itself and its magnitude cannot be directly perceived. We can only perceive the symptoms of value: the object's empirical features which qualify it as a product of a definite type of social practice. The system of these rules should be regarded as an equivalent of exchange value – the only empirically accessible form of value manifestation.

The socially functioning rules determine such a mode of producing objects that they should possess the preferred properties or values, that is that they should be goods (e.g. methodological rules in science). Every system of rules makes it possible to measure the value of objects according to a scale and to determine the magnitude of value. (pp. 74–75).

A novel idea in his studies in Marxist axiology is for Piotrowski an observation that functional (individual) value and (social) value are two distinct and genetically different values (just as production is distinct from consumption of products).

Both Piotrowski and Dziamski recognize functional value as the value conferred upon the object by the individual subject. I think that a situation where a given individual subject endows the object with such a value or discovers it in the object is a special case. Functional value understood as a property of the object obtains its status of usefulness primarily in the social way. For ordinarily, functional value (or a feature or quality of the object) is a value for all (or in this case all essential objects). Recognition by many subjects determines this quality as functional value and the scale of the object's usefulness depends upon the degree of this recognition.

The fact that the problem of functional value has been taken up is, I think, very significant. Contrary to what Dziamski writes, this problem does not appear too often in axiological studies and its present solutions are certainly not satisfactory, although this question appears to be rather simple.

The problem of relations between qualities as objective properties residing in things and the subjective recognition of these qualities by the subject (whether individual or social) was not fully explained in the two essays under discussion. This problem was dealt with in Marx's law of supply and demand with reference to commodity value.

It follows from Dziamski's essay that he espouses the objectivistic theory of value, asserting that all other interpretations lead to subjectivism, which is inadmissible in Marxist philosophy. However, his often formulated definition – real objects (natural or socially produced) are subject to processes of evaluation, whereas value is constituted by the reaction of the collective subject in the form of the

accepted principle of a group or a social class – seems to lean towards a relationist interpretation, where relationism has nevertheless an objectivistic character.

Much less interesting seem further essays in this collection: *Antynaturalistyczna interpretacja wartości estetycznej w marksizmie. Na przykładzie Anatola Łunaczarskiego* (*Antinaturalist interpretation of aesthetic value in Marxism on the example of Anatoly Lunacharski*) by Anna Maciejewska-Jamroziakowa, *Kategorie estetyczne. Próba eksplikacji pojęcia* (*Aesthetic categories. An attempt to explicate the concept*) by Krystyna Choińska-Mielniczuk, *Rola świadomości moralnej w procesie rozwoju społecznego. Na przykładzie wzoru osobowego w twórczości Ludwika Krzywickiego* (*The role of moral consciousness in the process of social development on the example of personality model in the work of Ludwik Krzywicki*) by Ryszard Nazar. Although written to the point and certainly not devoid of value, these papers do not seem entirely in keeping with the task of defining the directions of development of general theory of value, as intended by Dziamski, the editor of the collection.

In her discussion of Lunacharski's theory of aesthetic value, A. Maciejewska defines his standpoint as pluralistic and antinaturalistic, exposing the latter feature as significant for the conception of the Soviet aesthetician, whereas most Marxist theories have an antinaturalistic character. With Lunacharski, we are dealing with a variety of instrumentalist theory of value, which is clearly evident in Maciejewska's discussion. It seems controversial to present this conception as a model for the Marxist theory of aesthetic value, which makes possible the development of Marxist studies in this field.

In the paper by K. Choińska-Mielniczuk, her theses are very unclear and difficult to understand due to the learned jargon in which the paper was written. Choińska-Mielniczuk believes that the methodological assumptions of Marxist humanities exclude reflexion on the traditional notion of aesthetic experience. Why, she does not explain. According to her, the theoretical explanation of the process of value formation requires that the concept of aesthetic category should be explicated in the form of the so-called framework concept. A framework concept, she writes, is a theoretical equivalent of complex humanistic structures, whose complete description is replaced by an alternative of variables representing sets of features of a given structure, which fulfill a definite framework condition. (p. 88). Choińska-Mielniczuk proposes that aesthetic categories should be treated as the framework structures of values.

R. Nazar takes up the problem of the role axiological (here moral) consciousness in determining and directing human activity. He discusses the mode of presentation of this question in the thought of the eminent Polish philosopher and sociologist, Ludwik Krzywicki. Nazar reproduces Krzywicki's views on how morality is formed, on its place in social consciousness and in the process of social changes. He also presents the model of personality which Krzywicki advocated. Krzywicki's views are treated by Nazar as belonging to the vast current of Marxist thought, which is not recognized by all scholars (e. g. Adam Schaff).

Despite the foregoing reservations about the presented essays, these papers deserve discussion and consideration. They show the tendency towards more thorough studies on the Marxist theory of value.

