

Ingrida Gečienė

The discourse on the New Class and its impact on the debates about a role of intellectuals in post-socialist countries

(Naujosios klasės diskursas ir jo poveikis diskusijoms apie intelektualų vaidmenį posovietinėse šalyse)

Santrauka

Šis straipsnis siekia apžvelgti vieną iš pagrindinių Vakaruose plėtojamų diskursų, susijusių su intelektualais ir jų vaidmeniu šiuolaikinėje išsivysčiusiose visuomenėse, o taip pat apsvarstyti šio diskurso atgarsius posovietinėje sociologijoje. Šio diskurso ištakose - Bello ir Gouldnerio teorinės išvalgos apie naujosios klasės atsiradimą keičiantis visuomenės poreikiams šiuolaikinių aukštųjų technologijų kontekste. Bellas pabrėžia vis didėjančią šios klasės įtaką ir galią, susijusią su monopolistiniu žinių ir sugebėjimų valdymu bei vyraujančiu šios klasės vaidmeniu, kuriant, platinant ir diegiant žinojimą. Tuo tarpu Gouldneris, visiškai pritardamas tokios klasės spartaus formavimosi koncepcijai, gerokai praplečia diskursą teigdamas, kad šioji klasė nėra apolitiška, be to, ji turi dvejopą prigimtį: viena vertus, ji yra inovacijų šaltinis, tačiau, kita vertus, ji turi elitistinių kultūrinės buržuazijos bruožų gindama savo materialinius bei galios siekimo interesus.

Naujosios klasės teorija apie vis didėjančią intelektualų bei techninės inteligentijos galią bei vaidmenį sulaukė plataus atgarsio tarp Vakarų mokslininkų. Vieni plėtojo ir gilino šias teorines išvalgas, ypač pabrėždami vis stiprėjančią elitistinę naujosios klasės laikyseną, jos kosmopolitizmą, narcisizmą ir savi-izoliaciją nuo likusios visuomenės dalies (Lasch, Freedman, Pels). Kiti (Jakoby, Eva-Etzioni) atskleidžia naujus neigiamus šios klasės bruožus: konformizmą, priklausomybę nuo pajamų šaltinių, atitrūkimą nuo visuomeninės veiklos. Tačiau nemaža dalis tyrėjų (pvz., Flack, Goldfarb ir kiti) randa ir teigiamų tendencijų: pvz., didėjančią įtaką naujiems socialiniams judėjimams, pilietinei visuomenei bei demokratijos stiprinimui.

Naujosios klasės diskursas rado stiprų atgarsį ir tarp posovietinių šalių sociologų, tiriančių inteligentijos ir intelektualų vaidmenį šiame regione. Daugelis jų įvairiai panaudoja ir praturtina šį diskursą: ieško panašumų, kritikuoja ar kelia hipotezes apie posovietinių intelektualų ateitį, turėdami mintyse, kad visuomenės raida gali priartėti prie išsivysčiusių demokratinių šalių situacijos. Nors vyrauja pesimistinės šios grupės nykimo ir vaidmens mažėjimo prognozės, naujosios klasės diskurso teorinės išvalgos suteikia galimybes giliau pažvelgti į intelektualų prisitaikymo prie naujųjų sąlygų procesą ir jų savi-realizaciją kuriant pilietinę visuomenę.

Introduction

The events of 1989-1990 in Eastern Europe put again a theme of the intellectuals (or intelligentsia if to be more precise in the context of tradition in this region) in the center of sociological and political discourse. The active participation in the political scene and the evident deconstruction of this social group soon after the

collapse of communism gave the inspiration to re-discuss their role and future prospects.

In this purpose there is activated need to review the discourse in Western countries on the issue of intellectuals and their position as well as new roles in advanced societies. Such need is based on the assumption that new re-

structurisation of post-communist societies according to requirements of advanced capitalist order will inevitably lead the position of high educated people towards the similar one of their colleges in Western countries.

The main and most powerful Western theories on intellectuals after the Second World War can be found among the New Class theories that reflect the rise of number of high educated people in conditions of great demand of all kind of professionals in era of new technologies and knowledge. These theories can be best represented by classical works of Daniel Bell and Alvin Gouldner. These theories is chosen not only because they inspired the numerous attempts to verify and criticize proposed assumptions, but also because of their exclusionary influence on the debates about the role of post-communist intellectuals.

Therefore, in this paper will be presented the main arguments of these New Class theories as well as some relevant critics and further elaboration of issue that appeared in later discourse on Western intellectuals mainly by theoretical assumptions in Jacoby and Lash works. And the last part of paper will be devoted to the fruitful use of this approach in works of well known researches of post-communist transformation such as I. Szelenyi and G. Konrad in Hungary, M. Kempny, J. Kurczewska and E. Mokrzycki in Poland, I. Bernik in Slovenia and L. Donskis in Lithuania, L. Greenfeld and L. Gudkov in Russia.

Before the start of looking at these theories it must be pointed out that the aim of this paper is not to enter the jungles of hundreds of definitions concerning differences between intellectuals and intelligentsia. Besides these definitions are also part of discourse, thus still there is no agreement about their content. However, the theories of New Class tend to unify these two concepts under the umbrella of the group of highly educated people that is more near to the specific meaning of intelligentsia in Eastern Europe where intelligentsia refers to the social group which "not only consisted of men and women of a wide range of occupations and various intellectual and educational

levels, who shared certain beliefs, attitudes and manners, but it formed a broad segment of society with a relatively homogeneous spiritual culture" (Gella, 1976, 20).

The discourse on the intellectuals in Western theoretical tradition

Daniel Bell in his book "The Coming of Post-industrial Society" proclaimed the birth and rise of new kind of society in Western countries after the Second World War. This society, according to him, first of all is characterized by the two fundamental resources - technology and knowledge. Since "knowledge and technology are embodied in social institutions and represented by persons, [] we can talk of a knowledge society" (Bell, 1973, 212).

The heart of such post-industrial society is a class, which main capital is not a property as in previous stage of capitalism, but its skill attained by the higher education. This class is primarily a professional class and, according to Bell's definition, is made up of four estates: the scientific, the technological (applied skills: engineering, economics, medicine), the administrative, and the cultural (artistic and religious) (ibid., 375).

By talking about knowledge class Bell actually has in mind mainly this part of highly educated people, which "is committed to a functional rationality and technocratic modes of operation" in opposition to "the literary intellectuals, who have become increasingly apocalyptic, hedonistic, and nihilistic (Bell, 1973, 214). Such Bell's position clearly echoes the opinion of Schumpeter about intellectuals as men who "wield weapons of spoken and written words" but have no "practical responsibility" (Schumpeter, 1998, 163) and who mainly are unable to perform useful for society work and, consequently, are unsatisfied with their position in the society and, for this reason, they are angry and full of destructive social critics (ibid., 171-172).

From the other side, Bell's argument is similar to Faucault's famous declaration on disappearance of "universal intellectuals" in dis-

pense of rise of "specific" ones. The reasons of this diminished role of intellectuals, according to Foucault, is rooted in evidence that the function of enlightenment, representation and formulation of the truth gradually loses its significance in accordance to the increase of general educational level and, as Foucault manifests, will finally disappear, because there is no need to teach and articulate general truth when almost everybody can do this by himself or herself (Smart, 1985, 67).

The rise of the knowledge society, according to Bell, was caused of crucial improvement in technologies, so that manual and unskilled worker class is shrinking in the society, while at the other end of the continuum the class of knowledge workers is becoming predominant (Bell, 1973, 343). Due to tremendous demand of specialists who would be able to operate with new technologies and to create even more advanced ones, in second half of XX century there is evident a considerable enlargement in the number of people with the higher education in all branches of science. Thus, the expansion of science-based industries requires more engineers, chemists, and mathematicians, on the other hand, the need for social planning - in education, medicine, and urban affairs - requires large numbers of persons trained in the social and biological sciences (ibid., 232).

Due to the spread of educational and intellectual institutions as a prime concern of the knowledge society; not only the knowledge becomes embodied in class of professionals, but, as Bell claims, eventually "the entire complex of prestige and status will be rooted in the intellectual and scientific communities" (Bell, 1973, 344). However, the core, the elite, "the chief resource of the post-industrial society is its scientific personnel" (ibid., 221). For him, scientific personnel is defined as "persons engaging in any scientific work requiring knowledge or training equivalent to at least four years of college and specializing in one of the scientific disciplines" (ibid., 222).

The considerable change in comparison with previous order can be noticed also in the different location of new educated elite: "less than

one-fourth are employed in business and more than half are in the universities" (Bell, 1973, 232). Thus, following Bell's logic, just as the business firm was the key institution of the past hundred years because of its role in organizing production for the mass creation of products, the university - or some other form of a knowledge institute - will become the central institution of the next hundred years because of its role as the new source of innovation and knowledge (ibid., 344). If to have in mind that the necessary foundation for any new class is to have an independent institutional base outside the old dominant order, then, according to Bell, for the scientists this base has been the university (ibid., 232).

However, Bell does not claim that these educational institutions is entirely autonomous, rather opposite is true that such institutions extraordinary depend on the polity mainly because of three factors. First, education has been traditionally a public function, in which the states have had primary responsibility for elementary and secondary education. Second, the balance between private and public higher education has shifted so that today the larger number of students are in publicly supported institutions of higher learning. And third, the increasing dependence of the entire educational system on federal financing, particularly in higher education. (Bell, 1973, 243).

Here naturally the question about new relationship of power in post-industrial society arises. Usually, when there is a change in the nature of the system, new groups come to power. Bell, by proclaiming that in new society technical skill becomes the base of and education the mode of access to power; evidently faces difficulties in explaining the new power relations. From the one side, as a stratum, scientists, or more widely the technical intelligentsia, now have to be taken into account in the political process (Bell, 1973, 359). The main reason of this is rooted in fact that the members of this new technocratic elite, with their new techniques of decision making (systems analysis, linear programming, and program budgeting), have now become essential to the for-

mulation and analysis of decisions on which political judgments have to be made (ibid., 362).

But from the other side, these technologists are not bound by a sufficient common interest to make them a political class (Bell, 1973, 362). Moreover, such technical intelligentsia holds a double position: due to its interests in research and positions in the universities, the intelligentsia becomes a claimant, like other groups, for public support. At the same time, the technicians represent an indispensable administrative staff for the political office holder with his public following (ibid., 364). Therefore, the control system of society is lodged not in a successor-occupational class but in the political order, and the question of who manages the political order is an open one (ibid., 374).

In order to find the possible answer to this question, Bell argues that in American society there are three modes of power and social mobility. There is the historical mode of property as the basis of wealth and power, with inheritance as the major route of access. There is technical skill as the basis of power and position, with education as the necessary route of access to skill. And finally there is political office as a base of power, with organization of a machine as the route of access. The difficulty in the analysis of power in modern Western societies thus is that these three systems co-exist, overlap, and interpenetrate (Bell, 1973, 361).

What then is the basis for Bell to call new emerged numerous group of professionals as a class? According to this sociologist, they, despite of the lack of common political interests, do have common characteristics. They are, first, the products of a new system in the recruitment for power. The norms of the new intelligentsia - the norms of professionalism - are a departure from the hitherto prevailing norms of economic self-interest, which have guided a business civilization. In the upper reaches of this new elite - that is, in the scientific community - men hold significantly different values, which could become the foundation of the new ethos for such a class (Bell, 1973, 362).

However, it seems that Bell ascribes for this

knowledge class only the role to accumulate and disseminate knowledge in society. He clearly ignores the other side of these intellectuals, namely their ability to take active political stance and to mobilize at least part of themselves for achieving political goals. Such dual character of intellectuals can be definitely more explored by the theory of other highly influential author - A. Gouldner.

Alvin Gouldner offers the most comprehensive in this perspective knowledge class theory. In his book "The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class" he analyses the emergence of a New Class by reflecting the same tendencies as Bell does. However, for him such New Class is not neutral in its interests: in essence it is highly elitist at least in defining itself as responsible for and "representative" of society as a whole (Gouldner, 1979, 3). Besides, according to Gouldner, the New Class is evidently self-seeking and uses its special knowledge to advance its own interests and power, and to control its own work situation (ibid., 7).

Gouldner's New Class differs from Bell's knowledge class also by including of intellectuals in the composition. Differences between the intellectuals and the intelligentsia can be described best of all by different interests. Intelligentsia's intellectual interests are fundamentally "technical" and rests upon implementation of ideas into practice, while intellectuals interests are primarily critical, emancipatory, hermeneutic and hence often political (Gouldner, 1979, 48). Nevertheless, both these fractions of the New Class are highly united as being the most "progressive force in modern society and a center of whatever human emancipation is possible in the future" (ibid., 83).

The arguments of this thesis lie on the statement that the New Class possesses the scientific knowledge and the technical skills on which the future of modern forces of production depend. Besides, it is committed to the culture of critical discourse, therefore resists old class and also it is a center of opposition to almost all forms of censorship. The New Class is also the most internationalist and most universalist of all social strata, it is the most cosmopolitan of

all elites, etc., thus its control over ordinary “foreign” languages, enables it to communicate with other nationalities.

However, this New Class has some contradictions: it can be considered both as the cultural bourgeoisie and as the speech community. As new cultural bourgeoisie whose capital is not its money but its control over valuable cultures as cultural capital (Gouldner, 1979, 21). As such, it produced the new ideology that “holds that productivity depends primarily on science and technology”. Thus the use of science and technology as a legitimating ideology serves the New Class, lauding the functions it performs, the skills it possesses, the educational credentials it owns, and thereby strengthens the New Class’s claims on incomes within the status quo in which it finds itself (ibid., 25).

As a Speech Community the New Class is characterized by the culture of careful and critical discourse. This is the key concept of Gouldner’s theory and it constitutes “the common feature and quality of knowledge shared by Marxist radicals, professionals, the technical intelligentsia, and adversary or counter-cultural intellectuals” (Szelenyi, 1994, 726). The culture of critical discourse is characterized by speech that is relatively more situation free, it is also relatively more reflexive, self-monitoring, capable of more meta-communication. Besides, it requires that validity of claims be justified without reference to the speaker’s societal position or authority (Gouldner, 1979, 28).

The culture of critical discourse (CCD) can also be the source of political activity of the New Class and performs the uniting role. For example, the New Class was widely united during the anti-fascist movement of the 1930s and in their opposition to the United States’ war on Vietnam (Gouldner, 1979, 30). CCD is radicalizing partly because it experiences itself as distant from conventional culture. According to Gouldner, “the deepest structure in the culture and ideology of intellectuals is their pride in their autonomy” (ibid., 33), and such autonomy is “an expression of the social interests of the New Class as a distinct group” (ibid., 34).

However, CCD is also the reason of ‘alie-

nation’ of New Class from the rest of society. It is conducive to cosmopolitanism, that distances persons from local cultures, so that they feel an alienation from the particularistic, history bound places and from ordinary, everyday life (Gouldner, 1979, 59). Moreover, because of CCD (which is trained in educational system) together with the cosmopolitanism of the New Class all authoritative claims are now potentially open to challenge. It claims “the right to sit in judgement over the actions and claims of any social class and all power elites”. Traditional authority is striped of its ability to define social reality and, with this, to authorize its own legitimacy. Thus CCD is also the mean of New Class to legitimate itself and also inspiration to political act (ibid., 59).

The political strategies of New Class in pursuing its interests can be described by two types: revolutionary strategy and strategy of reforms. First one is characterized by the cultivation of “an alliance with a mass working class, proletariat or peasantry, to sharpen the conflict between that mass and the old moneyed class” (Gouldner, 1979, 17). And second can be divided into a ‘welfare’ state strategy and a ‘socialist’ state strategy. An essential difference between them is that in a socialist state, the hegemony of the New Class is fuller, its control over the working class is greater. In welfare state the new and the old class mutually limit one other and share control over the working class, although the New Class may at times ally itself with the working class to improve its own position against the old class (Gouldner, 1979, 17).

According to these strategies it can be distinguished the different paths of the New Class to power. It can be Marxist way where intellectuals provide ideology and perform the role of leadership as Vanguard. According to Szelenyi, Gouldner here identifies certain features of intellectuals “that make it possible for Marxist intellectuals to pursue self-interested goals while pretending to represent universalistic interests”. Thus, “armed with this knowledge, the revolutionary intelligentsia can substitute itself for the proletariat and emerge from

the revolution as a new dominant class" (Szelenyi, 1994, 726). However, according to Gouldner, after capture of state power, the position of Vanguard itself becomes precarious: "in Russia it was pulverized by Stalinism; in China by the Cultural Revolution" (Gouldner, 1979, 79).

Eurocommunism is the other path of the New Class in the democratic states. On the one hand, it remains committed to the extension of the state's sway over the economy, thereby removing career blockages for the New Class and, on the other, it renounces the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and commits itself to a pluralistic democracy thus limits the threat of censorship (Gouldner, 1979, 82). However, the involvement of some members of New Class into Nazi movement reveals that the New Class must not "necessarily move it towards the left and towards solidarity with the old working class" (Gouldner, 1979, 70).

Nevertheless, Gouldner states that the New Class in current democracies is unlike to be revolutionary: "its rise will more nearly be like that of bourgeoisie than like revolutions made in the name of the working class" (Gouldner, 1979, 31). This is a 'revolution-in-permanence' that is grounded in the culture of critical discourse. However, it can be noticed the significant shift among the New Class from the critics towards exploitation, etc. to the new public discourse. These new areas of the interests of the New Class in democratic countries can be described as advocating the academic freedom; the protection of "consumer" rights; the development public policy and of an 'independent' Civil Service; and as participation in various new movements, for example (e.g. international ecology movement).

Nevertheless, here it can be noticed the crucial contradictions in behavior of the New Class. That is, "if the New Class is characterized by its commitment to CCD, then how can it also join Vanguard Party which limits and acts inimically toward CCD?" (Gouldner, 1979, 81). The answer rests upon the contradiction character of the New Class: it has both an ideology of CCD as disposition to freedom and

interests in its cultural capital that make it an elite concerned to monopolize incomes and privileges (ibid., 81).

After the Gouldner's insightful analysis of dual nature of knowledge class the discourse on intellectuals went mainly in away of critics of deepening tendency of this group towards more and more conformism, elitism and cultural reproduction. As an examples of such critics can serve the arguments of R. Jacoby who after one decade looks for the reasons of noticeably deeper isolation of cultural elite and disappearance of public intellectuals.

Russell Jacoby in his book "The Last Intellectuals" emphasizes the tremendous decline of involvement of intellectuals in public debates thus the losing role of them in providing in society a critical discourse. He claims that independent public intellectuals such as "writers and thinkers who address a general and educated audience" (Jacoby, 1989, 5) "have been supplanted by high-tech intellectuals, consultants and professors - anonymous souls, who may be competent, and more than competent, but who do not enrich public life" (ibid., X).

The essential argument of Jacoby is that the public role of cultural elite and especially left intellectuals who mostly support the democratic principals is decreasing because their energy became to be expended in theoretical discourse and academic careerism instead of the public activity. According to Jacoby, the expansion of universities resulted in the fact that "younger intellectuals, whose lives have unfolded almost entirely on campuses, direct themselves to professional colleagues but are inaccessible and unknown to others" (Jacoby, 1989, X). Besides, "their jobs, advancement, and salaries depend on the evaluation of specialists, and this dependence affects the issues broached and the language employed" (ibid., 6). This financial dependence on evaluation, various funds and limited decision making is also in main focus of Etzioni-Halevy critics of intellectuals (Etzioni-Halevy, 1993).

Thus the need, urgently expressed in the 1960s and early 1970s, to connect intellectual work with everyday experience and with so-

cial movements seems to have been replaced by an urgent need to be recognized by fellow intellectuals. Moreover, the sense that politically engaged intellectuals might form and sustain their own community has faded as, more and more, they become integrated into their disciplines, departments, and campus administrations. Therefore, the professionalization of New Left intellectuals and their seeking for such academic life benefits as the security of job and regular salaries, grants and funded researches, long vocations and freedom to write as well as teach what they want replaces the free and vital public activity (Jacoby, 1989, 118). To succeed in the academic field, according to Jacoby, "neither brilliance nor public contribution count, since both are viewed with suspicion - signs of a nonprofessional bent - but conformity and 'contacts', connections with reputable institutions or people" (ibid., 144).

In effect, the intellectual left organized itself sufficiently to win some legitimacy, to gain a position in the institutional life of society - but the price of this victory has been to accept the institutional logic of the academy, especially in terms of the style of the writings and work and the definition of their audiences and their social functions. It results in the fact that "the vocabulary, which political science shares with sociology and international studies, reduces human and social conflict to diagrams and computers printouts" (Jacoby, 1989, 156). Thus, as Jacoby pessimistically points out, their "professionalization leads to privatization or depolitization" (ibid., 147).

Christopher Lasch in his book "The Revolt of the Elites" reveals other negative aspects of alienation of nowadays intellectuals and especially cultural elite. In Lasch work it appears that extending of well-educated people in the end of XX century results in the triumph of elites and in the disdain up on working and even middle class which "failed to share the vast fortunes accumulated in real estate, finance, and manufacturing" (Lasch, 1995, 31). Thus general tendency "runs more and more in the direction of a two-class society in which the fa-

vored few monopolize the advantages of money, education, and power" (ibid., 29).

These professional and managerial elites constitute almost 20% of population in USA and is "a new class only in the sense that their livelihoods rest not so much on the ownership of property as on manipulation of information and professional expertise (Lasch, 1995, 34). Similarly to Bell, Lash also has doubts about the possibility of this group with a wide variety of occupations to carry out the political role, because they lack a common political outlook (ibid., 34).

What new Lash added is the argument that the new elites is defined, apart from its rapidly rising income, by a way of life that distinguishes it from the rest of the population (Lasch, 1995, 33). This new way of life first of all refers to the cosmopolitan character of their work as well as their new ideology. Thus their loyalties - if the term is not itself anachronistic in this context - are international rather than regional, national, or local. They have more "in common with their counterparts in Brussels or Hong Kong than with the masses of Americans not yet plugged into the network of global communications" (ibid., 35). Their ties to an international culture of work and leisure - of business, entertainment, information, and "information retrieval" - make many of them deeply indifferent to the prospect of American national decline (ibid., 45).

Here Lash uses also the arguments of Reich that without national attachments people have little inclination to make sacrifices or to accept responsibility for their actions. "We learn to feel responsible for others because we share with them a common history, ... a common culture, ... a common fate". The denationalization of business enterprise tends to produce a class of cosmopolitans who see themselves as "world citizens, but without accepting ... any of obligations that citizenship in a polity normally implies" (in Lasch, 1995, 47).

Therefore here Lasch reveals also the negative aspects of cosmopolitanist feature of intellectuals that in Goudner's theory has only the positive one. And definitely Lasch was not

alone in this line of thinking. A lot of other authors heavily contributed to the critics of such cosmopolitanism, for example, Friedman blames global culturally hybridized elite as embedding the new source of real power, both political and economic, in the world system that shows their fragmented political identities and allegiances (Friedman, 1997, 84-85). The increasing rootlessness among intellectuals and especially the new fashion of being proud of this also is criticized by Pels as nomadic narcissism (Pels, 1999, 71).

Other harsh critic on intellectuals deals with cultural reproduction of this social group. Lash points out that the forces of reproduction of such elites are very strong: "tests measuring academic achievement are culturally biased, and academic achievement has become hereditary, in effect, since the upper middle classes pass on to their children the accumulated advantages that virtually guarantee advancement" (Lasch, 1995, 44). Bell also had noticed the fact that "the college population is still drawn principally from the middle class" (Bell, 1973, 239), however the full mechanism of cultural reproduction of intellectuals was brilliantly revealed by P. Bourdieu. He not only showed how economic capital of middle class families is converted to the education of their offspring by also explained that all the culture of school is biased by middle class culture (in terms of accent on language, poetry, Latin, etc.).

If to go back to Lash, in knowing such hereditary advantages, the new class is interested in maintaining of the fiction that its power rests on intelligence alone. Thus, according to Lash, the new elites have a heavy investment in the notion of social mobility - the only kind of equality they understand. They would like to believe that Americans have always equated opportunity with upward mobility (Lasch, 1995, 50).

Thus the new elites - mobile and increasingly global in outlook - refuse to accept limits or ties to nation and place. Lasch contends that, as they isolate themselves in their networks and enclaves, they abandon the middle class, divide the nation, and betray the idea of a democracy for all America's citizens. The author tra-

ces how meritocracy - selective elevation into the elite - gradually replaced the original American democratic ideal of competence and respect for every man.

However, it can be found the more positive approach towards the future of cultural elites, according to which, Lash's and Jacoby's diagnosis is too pessimistic. For example, as Flacks points out, a sizable number of academics and professionals have continued struggling to connect their work and dedicate energy to change-oriented projects. The activist core of locally based peace, environmental, feminist, human rights, and social justice projects includes a high proportion of academics. Thus one of frameworks of possible relevance of cultural elites to the democracy is "the framework provided by social movements" (Flacks, 1991, 13) or broader civil society (Goldfarb, 1998).

According to Flacks, the problem of the post-1960s generation is that it has lost the sense of a shared project and vision - not that it has produced so few "stars" or that its members have become politically disaffiliated. A generation once possessed by a collective identity now finds itself dispersed into thousands of fragments (Flacks, 1991, 13). However, despite the diversity of social movements they "compels a quest for new models of political action, new relations between intellectuals and the grass roots" (ibid., 14). Thus they create the new common ground "in order to gain sufficient social leverage to achieve needed change and in order to create the basis for democratic mutuality" (ibid., 15).

The reflection of western discourse on intellectuals in case of intelligentsia in post-socialist transformation

The most powerful employment of New Class theories can be found in Ivan Szelenyi and George Konrad in their inspiring book "The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power" which offers an analysis quite similar to that of Gouldner but focused on socialist case. The main idea deals with the claims of intelligentsia in Eastern Europe for the class power

by “virtue of its monopoly over the ‘technological knowledge’”. These claims, according to these authors, was partly realized when “in post-Stalinist epoch, the bureaucracy has indeed opened up and joined forces with the intelligentsia as a new dominant class” (Szelenyi, 1994, 726).

However, later Szelenyi in analyzing the results of ‘velvet’ revolutions states, what he together with Konrad were right in prediction that intellectuals are coming to power in Eastern Europe, but he confessed that actually they were right for the wrong reason. Therefore, intellectuals “did not achieve power by rationalizing redistribute power”, but instead they defeated the bureaucracy in a ‘discursive revolution’ of the kind Gouldner forecasted”. But, from the other hand, it may have been ‘a Pyrrhic victory’: “if intellectuals eliminate the redistributive institutions along with the state socialist bureaucracy, they undermine in the long run the economic and social base of their own collective power as well” (Szelenyi, 1994, 728).

Ivan Bernik also points out the self-interests of soviet intelligentsia. But, differently from Szelenyi and Konrad, he reveals these interests among other wing of this intelligentsia - among non-conformists. They saw themselves as a ‘vanguard’ of resistance to the authoritarian regime and as such as a public voice of demand to create a free space to help society to express itself in form of different social movements, forums, and initiatives. However, such “civil society ideology” generated by this intelligentsia during socialist regime was not ‘unbiased’, but in opposite - “strongly related to the vital interests” of it (Bernik, 1999, 108). These interests are primarily based in ensuring their professional autonomy and to improve their economic status. Thus “the attempts in revive civil society and the corresponding envisaged radical limitation of the prerogatives of the state would clearly be instrumental in the realization of these interests” (ibid.).

The further confirmation of Gouldner’s insight on the ability of New Class of highly educated people to mobilize in seeking of the political goals can be clearly found in the role per-

formed by intelligentsia during ‘velvet’ revolutions. As Konrad and Szelenyj emphasized, in the events of these years the role of intellectuals in all post-soviet countries was the most important, besides, it was exactly intellectuals who formed a new political elite. However, according to them, this is characteristic only of a transformational period. Thus they will prepare soil for a new class, for which the same intellectuals are also candidates (Szelenyj, 1991, 338).

The processes that started soon after the ‘velvet’ (or ‘singing’ and so on) revolutions confirmed such prediction. Paradoxically, the intelligentsia, in fact being the main initiator of the collapse of communism, faced the substantial decrease their political role as well as the importance of them as guardians of eternal and universal values. This situation can be explained first of all by the declining need for the intelligentsia’s function to articulate the ‘truth’ and, that is the most important, the insufficient competence of intelligentsia to perform the role of political leading. As Donskis points out, intelligentsia with it’s focus on the moral, cultural and more spiritual but not material issues was not prepared for the new real political and economic goals (Donskis, 1997, 102). In this respect, according to Kennedy, intelligentsia “will be assured of continuity leadership only insofar as they become, on one hand, members of new entrepreneurs class, or professional politicians” (Kennedy, 1992, 63).

Such the decline of essential functions of intelligentsia is widely seen as the natural death of intelligentsia or at least the retirement of it “from the stage” (Kurczewska, 1995, 249). The main preconditions are rooted in the fact that “the organizational and symbolic context required for its existence and for the charge of its self-appointed tasks has ‘come to an end’ (ibid., 248). Despite this, the major part of intelligentsia reflected “that the losses outnumbered the gains”, and the lost of prestige and in many cases of the material resources led towards the new critics of ‘unfinished democratization’ in the best case, or even towards “turning away from the ideals of democracy” in the case of Russian in-

telligentsia (Greenfeld, 1996, 419). Thus, in spite of being the main supporters of democratic order, in such conditions, intelligentsia can start to perform the role of opposing of progressive political development in defending first of all its own interests.

According to most widespread opinion, in coming era of new market relations the only way for former intelligentsia to survive is to adapt to these new requirements by silent split into two parts: specialists and intellectuals as men and women of ideas. Such theoretical position can be illustrated, for example, by the view of Kennedy, that "intelligentsia will become good professionals and give up their aspirations for a leading role in the making of Eastern European society" (Kennedy, 1992, 64) or by the prognosis of Mokrzycki, that "the new 'knowledge class' may emerge in its place, but it will retain some of intelligentsia's features" (Mokrzycki, 1994). Evidently such assumptions echo the main idea of Bell on politically neutral knowledge class.

However, in some works it can be found the signs of idealization of Western intellectuals. For example Gudkov, by opposing the intellectuals to the "morally old-fashioned" intelligentsia, claims that the most distinguishing feature of intellectual is innovations. They are created by skeptical evaluation of traditions, therefore intellectuals "cultivate the reflection of internal moral and conceptual systems and clichés of values" as "a rational self-control". Such reflection is based, according to him, on the principle of "ethics of responsibility" - "personal responsibility for results of ideas, words and actions", while the intelligentsia is highly influenced by "dogmas and ideological postulates" (Gudkov, 1995, 151). Such a view completely disregards the real situation of Western intellectuals that was described by Jacoby and Lasch by revealing the degradation of these intellectuals in terms of responsibility, of involvement into public debates, and of representing of people's interests.

Nevertheless, the further observation of quite chaotic development of post-communist societies revealed the growing interest in a high-

er education and useful knowledge as well as the need to revive the critical discourse. All this provides a basis for considerable increase of symbolic power of intellectuals. As Kurczewski notices, such situation when "the university professor is on the top of the prestige scale while the politician in on the bottom", "the specific elite role of the whole group of the intelligentsia, not to speak of its elite of intellectuals seems to be secured in the near future" (Kurczewski, 1997, 226). This role of intellectuals first of all is associated with the fostering of democratization process through articulation and deliberation of pressing problems as well as involvement into expansion of civil society.

However, the elitist stance of intellectuals can complicate the consolidation of new democracies in post-communist societies, since it promotes the biased interests and creates a distance from the rest social groups. Therefore, in order to develop the democratic political culture in "non-democratic societies" (Mokrzycki, 2000, 64), it should be made an attempt to involve broader segments of these societies in active participation, to share accumulated through studies abroad knowledge, and to criticize the backwardness or new unfavorable developments of these societies. In this perspective post-socialist intellectuals would be 'a central democratic actors' (Goldfarb, 1998) in political arenas of respective societies, who would be able to face not only difficulties of transformation process but also a new challenges of global 'crisis of democracy' (Castells, 1997), of the rise of 'informational' or 'e-democracy' as well as the 'power games' of globalized intellectual elites (Friedman, 2000, 19).

Conclusions

In summarizing the paper, it can be said that Western theories of New Class in Bell's and especially in Gouldner's works are extremely fruitful for the examination of changing roles of intellectuals in post-communist societies. If the first theory reveals the objective tendencies of new most powerful position of 'know-

ledge class' due to its monopolistic possession of skills and knowledge in the era of high technologies, the theory of Gouldner defines the dual character of this New Class as being "both emancipatory and elitist" at the same time (Gouldner, 1979, 82).

Such discourse on Western intellectuals reveals at least two main roles. From the one hand, they clearly perform the role of accumulation, dissemination and implementing of knowledge. From the other hand, such intellectuals are not neutral but in opposite - engaged in political activity through the rise of new ideas and involvement into new ecological, feminist, etc. movements. But, as Gouldner states, such New Class elites also seeks their own interests as holders of cultural capital, prestige and privileges that results from this power and thus seeks to maintain the status quo.

Most of Central East European authors involved in the debates about the intellectuals employ this Western discourse in different purposes: to find the similarities, to criticize, or to make some assumptions on the future role of post-communist intellectuals. Therefore they reveal both the activation and sudden decrease of political role of post-socialist intellectuals. Also they point out the different strategies

of this group in post-socialist reality: one is the silent adaptation and transformation to the neutral group of professionals and other - the strong opposition to the democratizing processes. But due to some idealization of Western intellectuals most of them hardly enter the hot debates of last decade about the conformist character of knowledge class, about deepening of its alienation from the rest of society and about nomadism of cosmopolitan intellectuals as it was briefly showed by Jacoby and Lasch.

Besides, in talking about the decreasing of role of intellectuals in post-communist societies, almost all authors disregards the potential self-realization of this group by involving into the active creation of civil society sector. It is exactly this sector where such intellectuals can use all of its potential of culture of critical discourse. Moreover, by claims of necessity of development of this sphere for 'making democracy work' they may legitimize their 'indispensable' usefulness and in this way to defend their interests to remain as one of main political actors. Thus it can be fully agreed with the Eyerman's thought that new generations of intellectuals have to and definitely will construct their new roles in new contexts (Eyerman, 1994, 16).

References

- Bell, D. (1973): *The Coming of Post-industrial Society*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York.
- Bernik, I. (1999): From Imagined to Actually Existing Democracy: Intellectuals in Slovenia, *Intellectuals and Politics*, ed. by Bozoki, A., CEU Press, Budapest.
- Castells, M. (1997): The Information Age, vol.2, *The Power of Identity*, Blackwell Publishers.
- Donskis, L., (1997): Two Lithuanian Cultures: The Coalitions of Intellectuals and Intelligentsia and the Possibilities of Future Dialog, *Between Carlyle and Klaipeda: Critical etudes of Society and Culture*, Klaipeda (in Lithuanian).
- Etzioni-Halevy, E., (1993): *The Knowledge Elite and the Failure of Prophecy*, Polity Press, UK.
- Eyerman, R., (1994): *Intellectuals between Culture and Politics*, Polity press, UK.
- Flacks, D., (1991): Making History and Making Theory, Notes on How Intellectuals Seek Relevance, *Intellectuals and Politics: Social Theory in a Changing World*, ed. by Lemert, Ch., Sage Publications.
- Friedman, J. (2000): Indigenous Struggles and The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie, *Kultūros Barai*, Nr. 6, Vilnius [in Lithuanian].
- Friedman, J. (1997): Global crises, Struggle for Cultural Identity and Intellectual Porkbarrelling: Cosmopolitans versus locals, Ethnic and Nationals in an Era of Dehegemonisation", *The Dialectics of Hybridity*, ed. by Werbner, P., London, Zed Press.
- Gella, A., (1976): An Introduction to the Sociology of the Intelligentsia, *The Intelligentsia and the Intellectuals*, ed. by Gella, A., SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Greenfeld, L., (1996): The Bitter Taste of Success: Reflections on the Intelligentsia in Post-Soviet Russia, *Social Research*, vol. 63, No. 2.
- Goldfarb, J.C., (1998): Civility and Subversion: The Intellectual in Democratic Society, Cambridge University Press.
- Gouldner, A. W., (1979): *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*, The Seabury Press, New York.
- Gudkov, L., (1995): The Intelligentsia and Society: Time for Mutual Reckoning?, *Political History of Russia*, vol. 6, No. 2.
- Jacoby, R., (1987): *The Last Intellectuals*, The Noonday

- Press, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York.
- Kempny, M., (1996): Between Politics and Culture. Is a Convergence between East-European Intelligentsia and Western Intellectuals possible?, *Polish Sociological Review*, No. 4 (116).
- Kennedy, M. D., (1992): The intelligentsia in the constitution of civil societies and post-communist regimes in Hungary and Poland, *Theory and Society*, vol. 21.
- Kurczewska, J., (1995): The Polish Intelligentsia: Retiring from the Stage, *Democracy, Civil Society and Pluralism*, ed. by Bryant, G. A. and Mokrzycki, E., Warszawa.
- Kurczewski, J., (1997): Intellectuals and Social Movements in Process of Transformation, *Polish Sociological Review*, vol. 119.
- Lasch, Ch., (1995): *The Revolt of the Elites*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, London.
- Mokrzycki, E., (1995): Is the Intelligentsia Still Needed in Poland?, *Polish Sociological Review*, No. 4 (112).
- Pels, D., (1999): Privileged Nomads, *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 16 (1), SAGE Press.
- Schopflin, G., (1993): The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe, *Politics in Eastern Europe*, London, Blackwell Press.
- Schumpeter, J.A., (1998): Kapitalizmas, socializmas ir demokratija, Mintis, Vilnius.
- Smart, B., (1985): *Michel Foucault*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Szelenyj, I., Konrad G. (1991): Intellectuals and Domination in Post-Communist Societies, *Social Theory for Changing Society*, Bourdieu, P. and Coleman, J.S. (eds.), New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Szelenyi, I., (1994): Post-Industrialism, Post-Communism, and the New Class, *Social Stratification*, ed. by Grusky, D.B., Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford.

Įteikta 2002 08 08

Pateikta spaudai 2003 07 04

Socialinių tyrimų institutas
Vilnius, Saltoniškių g. 58