

CARE FOR SAFETY

Mikołaj Sokolski
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ETHICS OF CARE AND SAFETY IN THE CITY – ASSUMP- TIONS

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INTRODUCTION /

This book is the result of long conversations sometimes rapid exchanges of thoughts and opinions centered around the challenges of the modern world and the role, and place of the university in setting the directions of intellectual debate. This includes all that is defined by members of international organizations, leading think tanks, and the conditions for human development. That is: the world.

Even a cursory analysis of contemporary reality indicates that the years of calm, trust, peace and relaxation between the two powers on the European continent can only be remembered with sentiment. Not only Russia's war against Ukraine, but also the recent global Covid-19 pandemic have, once again made the broad subject of security, the axis of conversation among loved ones and the subject of debates among politicians and experts. The anxiety associated with this can be the basis for building attitudes of conscious social exclusion and constructing alternative communities, often motivated by fear. In this context, security is a desirable value, a certain ideal state that everyone wants but differs in the methods of achieving it.

We are convinced that the tone of these conversations is influenced by the visible effects of globalization, technological progress and climate change. Contrary to the hopes expressed after World War II, or after the Solidarity revolution in Poland and the end of the Cold War, technological progress and globalization have not brought greater social and economic cohesion. The story is not

over. On the contrary, the world has continued to divide into at least two groups of states. Those who set the tone for the changes, those who participate in them and those who do not. The latter group is further divided into two. Those states and societies that do not participate voluntarily in the modern revolution and treat it with hostility by presenting counter-proposals, or by maintaining vigilant passivity. The second subgroup includes those states and societies that cannot afford the financial effort to fill the already existing development gaps. These states, and their citizens, are often parties to disputes between the major players in international relations.

Assuming the realistic assumption that states behave in the arena of international relations in the way their elites and their citizens allow them to, one can also observe a change in the guiding narrative: i.e. the thought, the idea that binds the world together, giving concrete political decisions an ethical and moral dimension. Hence, it is difficult not to see from the European perspective the progressive secularization of society, the relativization of moral principles for the modernization of life, the change of worldviews and the fear, not always realized, of the consequences of our earlier choices. We redefine and rank what is ours and what is foreign. We are carried by the spirit of legal and technological romanticism, believing that the world and the behavior of all people can be regulated by the rule of law, and that the management of not only megapolis will be easier and better thanks to technology and the principles of smart cities. To a large extent this is true, but with any progress, its benefits can be obscured by losses, flaws, and dangers. But as long as these tools remain in the hands of people, we can expect them to fall into responsible hands. However, if hands and

reason are replaced by artificial intelligence, our influence on its use of tools is limited. Seeing this fact encourages us to reflect philosophically and ethically, in order to define a set of norms and principles on the basis of which we will decide on issues of fundamental importance to us and to future generations.

In trying to maintain common sense in discerning contemporary reality, we are not merely drawing pessimistic narratives. However, we see several disputed areas, among them: the right to self-determination; to possession; to social and economic development; the right to defend against the effects of climate change; the right to preserve one's identity, and to defend ones widely understood interests of individuals and states. The swelling political dispute in many countries and societies is connected with the fact that political movements and parties enter the political scene, re-evaluating the existing political and social principles and programs. On the other hand, civic activity more often resembles ad hoc, momentary, impulse-driven, purposefully motivated activities, rather than regular and thus more effective actions of associations, foundations and other actors of civil society. A myriad of seemingly irreconcilable directions of political action is thus created.

In many parts of the world, the end of liberal democracy is being announced and it is being predicted that the risk of governments that do not comply with the principles of the liberal democratic system will increase. Today, democracy and the rule of law are so prone to relativization that it is difficult to reach a consensus around the meaning of the term. Political action seems more eclectic than before and is delegitimized by political opponents, and the democratic values to which we are accustomed are changing their connotations like images in a kaleidoscope.

Confusion and distraction foster extreme attitudes that build a philosophy of life either in relation to the religious movements and religions we know (often distorting their original assumptions of social thought), or that create new sets of values upheld by new authorities, which are declaratively a-religious but replace old ones with new patterns of recognition and worship. But we do not share the pessimistic vision of Yuval Noah Harari, who writes in the foreword to his book *21 Lessons for the Future* that “philosophy, religion and science — all these areas of human reflection — are running out of time. We cannot continue this discussion indefinitely. We will not be allowed to do so by the looming ecological crisis, the growing threat of weapons of mass destruction, and the emergence of new breakthrough technical inventions.” On the contrary, we believe that philosophy, religion, and science have the combined and individual capacity to adapt to the changing conditions of the social system. And in them, we should look for clues to help order the narrative and ethically inspiring directions of development. We share Harrari’s point of view regarding the challenges we face. These include, among others, the danger of global war, technological advances, biomedical, life in the post-truth and artificial intelligence era, the combination of information technology and biotechnology, the pressure of the global world on our morality and behavior, the crisis of our political systems, and more. We see society’s present sense of fear, distrust, withdrawal from public life, behavioral addictions, and increased vulnerability to virtual reality activity. This latter condition is sometimes associated with the difficulties of people to function, to build relationships in real life. Against this background, we see the need for a new thought that breathes a note of optimism from the

perspective of the next generations. When we think about what is happening today, we think about the next generations of our students with care.¹

Without ascribing normative value to prevailing socio-political narratives, we frequently observe their discrete transgressions, their ostensible globality, and their deliberately constructed intentionality. By discerning them, we see that they often refer to the interpretation of the nature of people, the essence of their and the possible participation in this life of a supernatural being. In this thicket we see that the basis of all relationships, both secular and religious, auto-relationships and interpersonal relationships, female and male, young and old, is caring. Caring, for some reason, or something, about someone. We may feel caring, because of anticipating a difficult situation, or because of finding ourselves in such a situation. More often, however, we use this term to address such a feeling towards someone or something, or to be the recipient of someone's care.

The source of care is the person and the emotional, moral, ethical state in which s/he is. Caring is probably one of the most ethically positive words, although excessive care can involve contempt, elevating oneself above others can lead to inappropriate caregiving. From our perspective, care and the set of norms and values that encourage such behavior take on new ethical significance as a starting point for analyzing contemporary challenges. In this book, we combine care and safety. Jerzy Bralczyk describes the latter as "when someone tells me that I can feel safe, or asks me if I feel safe, I feel not so much a sense of security

¹ Y. N. Harari, 21 lekcji na XXI wiek, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2022, p. 13. trans. M. Romanek.

as vice versa — a sense of something like a threat, or at least the possibility of a threat. “The word security contains the word “security” in its meaning. This, in turn, refers to care. Therefore, Jerzy Bralczyk’s continues to write, what is safe is surrounded by care, treated as something with guaranteed care and caring. What is without care, is treated as left uncared-for, dangerous, or endangered.²³

The revolutionary value of the ethic of care is that it changes the nature of human relationships. Guided by compassion and discernment, it does not despise, it does not exalt, and it places the giver and recipient of care on an equal footing in their relationships. Caring, referring to the most precious gift we have been given — to humanity, is not non-religious, and it is not religious. Because of its non-religious nature, it can be read as contradicting the teachings of some monotheistic denominations. However, it is not the object of this book to make an argument on this subject. To signal this theme, however, is to express our perception of such narratives as the relativity of human nature, not the obviousness of revealed truths, and the contextuality of social principles. However, we leave these themes for consideration in another paper.

The book is divided into four chapters. In them, we refer to the description and analysis of care, the ethics of care. We see the origin of the ethics of care and its source in feminist thought, but we see the value of the ethics of care, not only in relation to left-wing feminism but also Catholic feminism. We analyze the discourses present in German and Anglo-Saxon thought around the concepts of the ethics of safety, the caring city, caring public policy

2 J. Bralczyk, 1000 słów, Wydawnictwo Agora, Warszawa 2017, p. 12.

3 Ref. J. Bralczyk, op. cit., p. 13.

and others. Then, in this light, we ask about power and its exercise based on the principles of care. Seeing the trajectory of changes in contemporary narratives about state security, we see the crisis of liberalism and the importance of neo-realist thought in an anarchic international system as a right to pursue one's interests and defend against invasive policies that threaten those interests. However, we believe that the dispute between the superiority of realist and liberal thought is important, but the alternative to them is the direction of constructivist thought, if only because it shows greater coherence with the assumptions of the ethics of care. In subsequent chapters, we answer the question of what kind of society a caring society should be. On what principles should a caring city function? We understand the anxieties of the modern human and show that the principles of the ethics of care, in our opinion, are able to more accurately give their life meaning and direction.

The work is intended, firstly, to give expression to our current discussion of care. Secondly, it invites open, critical discussion on these topics in order to bring something creative and new to this line of research. In the ethics of care, we see the potential to change interpersonal and social relationships. We see the role of the politics of care in raising the quality of our lives. For it draws an authentic relationship between power and the citizen, based on truth, discernment of needs, and adaptation of political actions. The ethics of care can be a change designed and implemented from the top, through the actions of local community leaders. It has the potential to incorporate new adherents of its principles into the practice of political life. It supports the principles of liberal democracy that resonate with its openness to civil dialogue, political debate, adherence to legal norms, and building relationships based

on respect for each person. Its implementation potential is evident in the field of health security. Based on the assumptions of the ethics of care that grow out of feminist thought, non-hierarchical relationships can be built on a foundation of mutual respect, co-responsible for achieving the intended outcomes. The politics of care have an explanatory potential, organizing the principles of social coexistence, often giving them new meaning, which allows for a more precise understanding of the motives guiding individual participants in public life.

Importantly, in addition to paying attention to the determinants of care, their cognitive dimension enables conceptualization, and the creation of relevant visions related to the future shape of public policies. This dimension is important in that despite the apparent exhaustion of the formula for liberal democracy, it still sets a systemic framework. Thus, on the basis of this framework, we present proposals for determinants to enable the introduction of public policies that demonstrate the dimension of care and compassion, while excluding the systemic layer of hierarchy. Therefore, within the framework of practical references, we turn to safety ethics, concepts of a caring society, a caring city, health security, local security, and deliberative proposals that, like care, take a position of action for social inclusion. We realize that the current dimension of reflection and research on the introduction of care ethics belongs to a narrow section of academic discourse. However, with this book we want to draw attention to the need for care in the public space as well as in the formation of new dimensions of social activity.

CHAPTER 1 /

CARE ETHICS AS A THEORETICAL INSTRUMENT AND THE BASIS OF BUILDING A CARING SOCIETY

1. PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF CARE ETHICS

As Dorota Sepczyńska points out, the political theory of care is one of the latest trends of political philosophy, which plays an important role in shaping the debate on the construction of theoretical foundations for a just society or, in the case of this chapter, caring. Depending on the accepted research perspective, the axiological content of considerations on the ethics of care can be perceived in different ways. The foundations in chronological terms are consistent. The development of the indicated cognitive category is associated with the development of feminist thought and the range of issues addressed within the framework of the so-called 2nd wave and mutual implementation of the assumptions of maternal thinking in terms of, among others Sarah Ruddick, Carol Gilligan's

psychological research on feminist moral development and the philosophical ethical foundations proposed by Nel Noddings.⁴⁵⁶

The ethics of care, within the framework of political interpretation and a security science perspective, deal with the psychological and ethical assumptions of the perspective of female morality and its impact on the perception of socio-political reality and the construction of theories within its framework. The ethics of care, as a developing trend in philosophy and social sciences, find application in both theory and political practice. Contemporary challenges such as changing demographics, globalization, social conflicts and ecological crises place care at the center of reflection on how to build sustainable, inclusive societies.

The role of care in public policy goes beyond its classical meaning as a work of care, becoming a tool of social transformation. Carol Gilligan, in *In a Different Voice* (1982), points out that it is impossible to scale male and female morality using the same determinants and based on the same moral categories. The reflection made by C. Gilligan directly referred to Lawrence Kohlberg's critique of the model of moral development with gender diversity.⁷⁸⁹

- 4 D. Sepczyńska, Etyka troski jako filozofia polityki, *Etyka* 45, 2012, s. 37.
- 5 S. Ruddick, Maternal thinking, *Feminist Studies*, vol 6 no. 2, 2019, s. 342.
- 6 D. Sepczyńska, op. cit.
- 7 C. Gilligan, *In a different voice*, Harvard University Press, Harvard, 1982.
- 8 N. Noddings, Care and virtue ethics, (eds.) L. Besser-Jones, M. Slote, *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, Routledge New York 2015, s. 404–407.
- 9 C. Gilligan, *In a different voice : Women's conceptions of self and of morality*, Harvard Educational Review 47 (4), Havard 1977, p. 481-482.

This researcher-psychologist clearly presented the limited possibilities of moral development of women compared to men, as evidenced by the fact that within the three-step scale, women achieve the maximum second level of moral development. This foundation, as well as the extrapolation of attitudes from the theory of Rosmarie Putnam Tong in collaboration with Tina Botts in their book *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* 5th Edition, presents C. Gilligan's reasoning as follows:¹⁰

*Importantly, in Gilligan's estimation, women's style of moral reasoning is no better or worse than men's: it is simply different.*¹¹

R. P. Tong thus, confirming the correctness of the direction set by Gilligan, points out that moral reasoning can be differentiated in sex on the basis of the assumed sex characteristics, while not being determined by gender. The issue of sexiness and sex determination in feminist thought or philosophy comes up often, which thus confirms the contemporary results of cognitive and psychological research, while at the same time it fits into the considerations adopted by C. Gilligan in formulating the assumptions of feminist ethics in terms of confirming the difference in male and female perception. They draw the same conclusion that gender determines how we perceive the surrounding reality. Behind this concept are the experiences of centuries of discrimination against women, especially in terms of their lack of presence in the public

¹⁰ According to L. Kohlberg, women stop in moral development at the so-called „good boy-good girl” stage. This is a fundamental problem of the objectification of women in social processes, resulting from the belief in the moral superiority of men.

¹¹ R. P. Tong, T. F. Botts, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* 5, West Press, Boulder 2017, p. 215.

space and their minimal impact on shaping social reality. The development of feminist thought determines the emergence of new forms of marking the presence of women in the shaping of social systems, however, as the Rev. Jimmy Carter noted in his TEDx speech in 2015, this is not a big change enough.^{12,13,14,15,16}

Feminist thinkers who take up the issue of the ethics of care refer, unequivocally in their considerations of the socio-political nature, present the range of three basic theoretical dimensions that enable the characterization of feminist thought in perspective, representation, difference, and point of view, which determine the way in which feminist thought is decoding the socio-political reality. Each category is subject to an appropriate interpretation based on guiding paradigms. Depending on the type of feminism adopted, they are different.^{17,18}

12 C. Gilligan; J. Attanucci, Two moral orientations: Gender differences and similarities, *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 34(3), Wayne State University Press, Detroit 1988, s. 223-225; M. Rogowska-Stangret, *Odczarowanie urojeń płciowych*, Etyka, 2018 s. 1; 3-5.

13 Note that the political perspective they adopt is not universal.

14 M.-L. Fougere, Women's Studies and the Politics of Relations Across Differences: The Lessons of Postmodern Epistemology, *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice*.

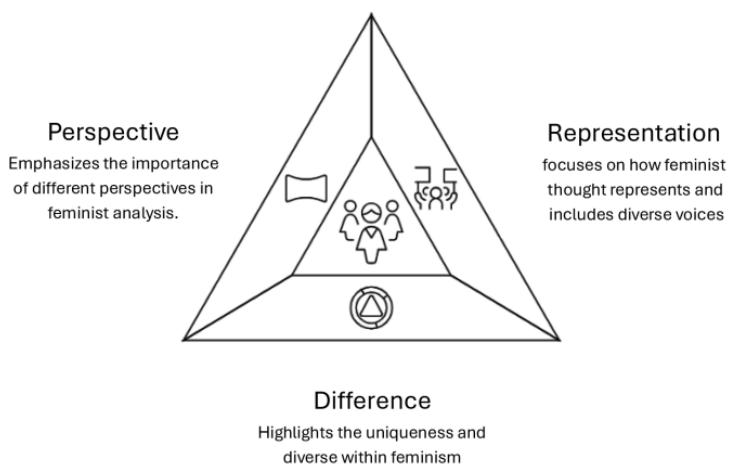
15 American politician and 39th President of the United States of America. He served from 1977 to 1981.

16 J. Carter, Why I believe the mistreatment of women is the number one human rights abuse, TEDx, 2015.

17 M. Nussbaum, On Hearing Women's Voices: A Reply to Susan Okin, *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 32 (2), 2004, pp. 193-195.

18 R. P. Tong, T. F. Botts, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, 5th ed., Westview Press, Boulder, 2017, p. 7.

Figure 1. Feminist Ethics of Care



Description: Determinants shaping the construction of feminist ethical systems — self-study.

The aim of this chapter is to present, as broadly as possible, the spectrum of assessments and views presented by feminist thinkers on the indicated categories, namely: difference, representation and inclusion, and to draw attention to the socio-political dimensions of the construction of a caring society in the perspective of the realization of the need for security. Within the framework of our discussions, we consider orientation as a paradigmatic empowerment that determines the coding and decoding of socio-political reality in a determined way. In this case, it takes place in the question asked by Andrea Schneider in her reflections on the thought of Carrie Menkel-Medow — what decides? We detail the indicated question by changing its wording, i.e. what decides that the presented categories have theoretical value in feminist thought? Based

on the indicated thought direction, we perceive the basis of feminist thought leading to ethics in three dimensions: difference, representation and inclusion.¹⁹

1.1.1 DIFFERENCE

The issue of difference has been present in feminist thought since its formal inception. It relates not so much to the gender divide, but also to the perspectives on issues that fall within the scope of feminism's interests. The specificity of difference in feminist thinkers' thinking refers to two determinants, namely gender and the assessment of feminism. Rosi Braidotti and Judith Butler are the most important authors to address this issue. In the 1980s, feminist debates were fought over what constitutes the basis of a woman's identity. The "new" identity of feminism became the basis for a conflict between gender studies' theorists who advocated the use of the cultural gender category as the main determinant of femininity and representatives of the mainstream who believed that gender difference should be preserved as a basic distinction between women and men.²⁰²¹²²²³

19 C. Menkel-Medow, Dispute Resolution in a Feminist Voice, *Texas A&M Law Review*, 10 (1) Reporting by Alastair Macdonald; Editing by Peter Cooney.

20 R. Braidotti, *Postsecular Feminist Ethics*, in: E. Oleksy (ed.), Routledge, London, 2014, p. 222.

21 R. Braidotti, J. Butler, Feminism by Any Other Name, *Differences: Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 1994, pp. 27-63.

22 A. Jagusiak, Rosi Braidotti's Feminist Project. Reformed Feminism or Rebellious Feminism?, in: I. Desperak, I. Kuzma (ed.), *Unruly Women. Reformers: Rebellious Revolutionaries*, s. 103-115, 2015, p. 106.

23 R. Braidotti, *Postsecular Feminist Ethics*, in: E. Oleksy (ed.), *Intimate Citizenships*, 2009, p. 50-51.

A key figure in this dispute was Judith Butler, who determined the way to think about feminism from the perspective of gender studies. Agnieszka Jagusiak (2015) points out that this also led to the dominance of the feminist debate within Anglo-Saxon paradigms. As an example, to support this thesis, she points to the small influence of European thinkers, theorists, and activists on the shape of the debate. In the context of the ongoing debate about a “new” identity, Butler presents a broader application of the gender element in considerations than just a feminist one.²⁴

Within the social sciences, one can often come across studies of gender as a major determinant shaping social and political perception and behavior. The theory of gender performance, despite its global reach, has not met with unequivocal acceptance. According to many researchers, the identity dispute is still ongoing, which makes it difficult to determine the unambiguous extent of the impact of the indicated concept. Despite the lack of a unified position, the indicated dispute has a measurable impact not only on normative considerations in the socio-political area but also through creating the basis for the formation of new systemic theories.²⁵

Within the framework of feminist thought, criticism should be presented as the generation of solutions and knowledge based on an understanding of the socio-political reality, as well as the possibilities facing feminism as a movement and intellectual current. In the perspective of the reality presented by the media, this conclusion is counterintuitive. However, going back to Braidotti’s proposal,

²⁴ J. Butler, *Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics*, AIBR: Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana, 4(3), 2009, p. xi.

²⁵ G. Boucher, *The Politics of Performativity: A Critique of Judith Butler*, Parrhesia, 1(1), 2006, p. 112.

despite the opposition to Butler's concept within the typologies created, he situates in a similar place, namely in corporeal feminism. Characterizing the representatives of the third wave of feminism (90s. 20th century, 10th century, 21st century) and the way of thinking about them, it is necessary to refer to the fundamental issues raised by them. The discussion was not only about the search for a "new" identity of women, but also about changing feminism as a whole. Going beyond the theoretical framework and strengthening the socio-political position of feminism was the main motivation, as exemplified by new theoretical proposals, including constructivist, i.e. Butler's gender theory, which is based on the assumption and determination of men's social determinism, as well as women's perception and their patterns of behavior.²⁶²⁷²⁸²⁹

The constructivist-linguistic paradigm was dominant during the second wave of feminism. One can thus get the impression that it had the character to order the theoretical foundations of feminism, building new cognitive categories, while at the same time changing the status of women in the socio-political reality (in practical terms). The initially postulated change was to bring about the result of a debate between gender studies theorists and supporters of the concept of gender differentiation. Jagusiak, following Braidotti, defeats this argument and considers constructivist theories to be naive because they sought the

26 C. Gilligan, *Moral Orientations*, 1988, Quarterly.

27 E. Hyży, *Kobieta, ciało, tożsamość. Teorie podmiotu w filozofii feministycznej końca XX wieku*, Wydawnictwo Universitas, Kraków, 2003, pp. 15–20, follow: A. Jagusiak, 2015, s. 107.

28 A. Jagusiak, op. cit., pp. 107–108.

29 J. Aldrich, *Positive Theory and Voice and Equality*, *American Political Science Review*, 91 (2), 1997, p. 421.

practical liberation of women in theoretical considerations rather than practical action.³⁰

The critique of performative theory goes beyond the classical view. R. Braidotti is unequivocal in her assessment of the constructivism presented by Judith Butler and her imitators. The author bases her critique on the analysis of cultural gender. For the philosopher, this is just one of many concepts that have a place in feminist considerations, but it does not force the whole field to be more active. The writer states that the original motivation of the gender studies theorists behind the concept of cultural gender was to create a universalist feminist theory that included all women. In her view, however, this is impossible, not least in terms of the inadequacy of the basic category, namely gender. The field of her criticism is continental feminism, which has sort of given up on building its own theories despite the differences in the current traditions and social situation of women. From an Anglo-Saxon perspective, it is far more diverse.³¹

However, the success of the gender category, as measured by attendance, including in universities, distracts from the most important aspect, which is activity. In terms of gender studies, masculinity and femininity should be treated as symmetrical categories. According to Braidotti, this assumption is wrong. He thus points to the social determinants of engagement in feminism, which challenge the unequivocally stated assumptions of gender studies. He believes that the basic motivation of engagement is the unequivocalness of gender asymmetry in the form of male dominance. With this elegantly drawn statement,

30 A. Jagusiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

31 A. Jagusiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

she questions the efficacy and gender studies as an ally of the female cause. On this basis, he creates his concept of nomadic subjects. Remaining within the discourse on identity, he presents it from a different point of view. He does not see sexual difference as a theoretical proposition present in the history of feminism and one that is intended to support the disparity between women and men. Gender difference in her perspective is post-phenomenological in nature. It cannot be reduced to a biological or sociological level. Therefore, she postulates that the level of difference is non-essential.³²³³³⁴

In fact, the discussion of difference in the feminist milieu relates to its identity. The need to create new theories of the subject is still present in contemporary feminist literature. One of the most important examples is the theory we mentioned, i.e. the theory of nomadic subjects. Rosi Braidotti analyses the different meanings of this term, pointing to its adaptability, depending on the context. It is an artificially created category that has the properties of myth and at the same time changes the boundaries of concepts and ways of thinking present in society. Nomadism in Braidotti's view appears as an alternative to the social status quo, and in a feminist context it is an alternative to the essentialist concepts of identity that are the result of the "fashion" of postmodernism. Of course, the main result of further consideration of "nomad" is the entanglement of women in diverse interpretive frameworks, related to

32 A. Jagusiak, op. cit., p. 107.

33 A. Derra, Rosi Braidotti – zaproszenie do nomadyzmu, [in:] R. Braidotti, Podmioty nomadyczne, Wydawnictwo Universitas, Kraków, 2009, pp. 7–13.

34 A. Jagusiak, op. cit., p. 109.

race, age, class, etc., but also the lack of clarity regarding their place in society and the form they take.³⁵³⁶

The category of nomads presented by R. Braidotti is broad. In addition to the inclusion of women within her framework, she points out all other individuals who do not agree with socially accepted norms regarding gender, gender identity and all those who stand outside this framework. *Nomad* for Braidotti has a positive impact and at the same time becomes the heart of her feminist project. The difference she presents relates to the ambiguity and heterogeneity of women's positions within the existing socio-political structures, but also the possibility of influencing their shape. In this sense, women and the other subjects she points out, are not determined by gender, but through the prism of various factors, i.e. experience.³⁷³⁸

The work of Judith Butler and Rosi Braidotti on highlighting differences is significant. However, it should be noted that it is not only about presenting basic differences between women and men. Examining the category of difference on the basis of the work of these philosophers demonstrates its vitality. Difference in feminist terms is not so much about creating a set of distinctions, but also about the broad significance of social conditions as determining identity.³⁹

35 A. Jagusiak, op. cit., p.110.

36 A. Jagusiak, op. cit., p. 112.

37 A. Derra, op. cit. p. 12.

38 A. Derra, op. cit. p. 7-8.

39 R. Braidotti, J. Butler, Feminism by Any Other Name, Differences: Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies, 6(2), 1994, p. 48.

1.1.2. REPRESENTATION

The emergence of feminism and the increasingly explicit presentation of women's histories has introduced the issue of representation into philosophical and political reflection. It appears in different contexts and its dimension, even in linguistic terms, finds different interpretations. These result from the presentation and identification of representation as representation (the representation of the group by the individual), as representation (the presentation of a specific image characteristic of a given group or individual, the basis of subsequent representations). As Maria Solarska points out, we can also point to the emergence of a two-dimensional understanding of the term representation as representation.⁴⁰

The issue of representation is a living concept present in the context of considering feminism. Whatever the moment of history, it has been and continues to be an expression of a lack of voice in women's issues that exemplify the process of their self-empowerment, despite the existence of many streams. The basic element that binds each of them together is the original belief that the common feature that unites this diversity is the belief that there is equality between women and men. Equality in the sense that women are discriminated against. The problem Solarska presents in the context of representation relates to two issues. The first concerns how much the feminist movement actually represents women (both in representation and representation). The second relates to the paradox of the demands for equality, because they are presented

40 M. Solarska, Reprezentacja jako przedstawicielstwo i przedstawienie – feministyczne konteksty, Rocznik Antropologii Historii, 2013, p. 120.

as the pursuit of gender equality and the abolition of the notion of sexism in lawmaking.^{41⁴²}

Feminism, as has been presented before, is diverse. The indicated diversity is also a requirement for the presence of women in the public space. As the last dimension, objectification is about the specificity of the movement as well as the feminist current. It also involves the use of specific language. As Solarska points out, feminism was born on a wave of women's desire for self-expression in matters that they care about. The fundamental problem for its existence was and continues to be the generosity of society as well as language. It has to do with a rarely noticed problem, which is the fact that neutral (gender and linguistically) things or situations are, in fact, gender. Being involved in gender in the present context is clearly linked to a masculine (androcentric) vision of the world. This issue comes up increasingly in discussions about the construction of the Polish language and the presence of feminism within it. Linguistic reflection is one of the elements of feminist discourse on issues of representation, i.e. marking the position of women within social structures and their presence in the theoretical dimension.

1.1.3. INCLUSION

The call for social inclusion often appears in the work of representatives of feminist thought. The basic premise they present is the reversal of the idea of equality. The idea postulated within the framework of the practice of

41 R.P. Tong & T.F. Botts, op. cit., p. 7.

42 M. Solarska, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

socio-political life is equality and social justice. Social justice on the canvas of the postmodern critique of universalism has application problems. Any attempt to apply or idealize it is subject to problematization. The accepted critique refers unequivocally to the adoption of a global perspective on the issue of social justice. The indicated idea needs certain conditions in order to exist. The stability of democracy is fundamental.⁴³

In the context of postmodern criticism, however, it does not stand the test of broad application. David Harvey presents it as an example of a narrative typical of Western imperialism of the colonial period, characterized by particularism. Moreover, the difficulty of its application is due to the multiplicity of idealistic interpretations. The same problem must be raised when trying to characterize the idea of equality. The indicated multiplicity of interpretations reveals the advantages and disadvantages of the idea, but from the point of view of feminist thought it is more likely to encounter its contention.⁴⁴

The proposed solution is social inclusion. It indicates the rejection of ineffective ideas in favor of a realistic view of the shape of socio-political reality. The basic reference is to promote activities that are not ideal (theoretical or based on fantasy) but are legally sanctioned, so that traces of their existence can be found in social practice. A basic example is inclusion. Iris Marion Young represents this way of thinking. In her book, *Inclusion and Democracy*, she presents the possibilities of using tools to effect social

43 D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 2020, p. 212.

44 D. Harvey, *op. cit.*: 208-209.

change based on legal regulation. The measure of change is, in this sense, the level of inclusion.⁴⁵

The concept of inclusion in the perspective of I.M. Young and other feminist thinkers has a clear meaning. It points to the expansion of the presence of groups unrepresented within existing systems, primarily democratic ones, at various levels of community organization, including at the city level. Within the framework of feminist thought's assumptions, inclusion is a goal that, in the postmodern critique of democracy, is not defined as equality or social justice, but as a set of concrete solutions that increase the legitimacy of decisions by increasing the number of actors involved in the democratic process. This is an expression of the desire to realize the basic assumption of the presence, not only of women, but also of ethnic, sexual minorities, etc., it can also be extended to other areas enabling reflection on the nature of the importance of care in socio-political processes, including security. In addition to drawing attention to the intellectual basis resulting from the philosophical-psychological development of the term "care" in terms of the implications related to the construction of socio-political theories.⁴⁶

45 Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2003.

46 R. Bachin, *Deliberative Democracy: Cities and Civic Activism*, Oxford 2023, p. 11.

2. FEMINIST ETHICS OF CARE — REFLECTION BY C. GILLIGAN, N. NODDINGS, J. TRONTO AND J. PHILLIPS

The ethics of care is directly related to the development of feminist thought. The subject of interest of feminist thinkers was not only limited to addressing issues of an axiological nature but also enabled the construction of further categories and socio-political structures. Despite the scope indicated, the ethics of care as a term and assumptions of a normative nature determined the perception of feminism in terms of political science. Until now, as A. Waleszczyński points out, there have been few studies and articles that deepen this issue. Thus, it is important, from our point of view, to present the basic discourse that shapes the ethics of care in feminist considerations, but also to extrapolate it as a cognitive tool that enables it to be seen in the activities of political actors.⁴⁷⁴⁸⁴⁹

The development of this category is clearly linked to the three authors who have laid the intellectual foundations of conceptualization and operationalization of care as an object of socio-philosophical interest, as well as building a block of contemporary social relations, as well as an alternative to current socio-political theories. An important determinant, often emphasized in research on care, is the critical attitude of feminism towards masculinistically saturated social structures and the relationships formed

47 A. Bilski, Etyka Troski. Próba faktycznej troski?, *Perspectiva. Legnickie Studia Teologiczno-historyczne*, 2024, nr. 1, pp. 22-23.

48 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 12-17.

49 M. Sokolski, M. Tomaszyk, Doświadczenia organu prowadzącego przedszkoli i szkół Gminy Świebodzin w latach 2018-2024 z punktu widzenia założeń etyki troski, *Samorząd Terytorialny 2024/10*, pp. 58-71.

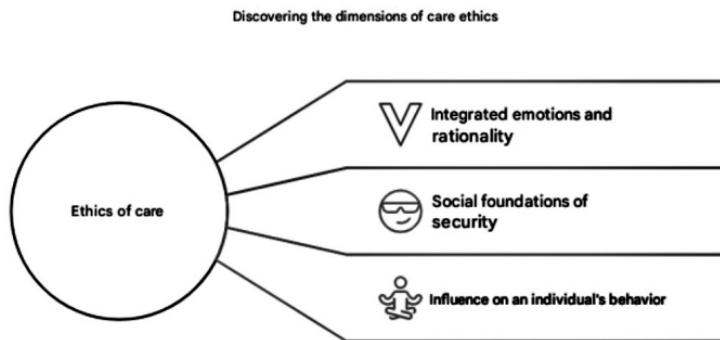
around them. The ethics of care in the beginning draws attention to the need for a feminist perspective and also recognizes the question of the formation of morality and normative social foundations. The basis for these considerations was research conducted on the basis of psychology as well as philosophy. The forerunners of the current of care ethics were the aforementioned Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings, as A. Waleszczyński points out: "The ethics of care emerged as a result of empirical research on the basis of psychology". This is why the views of pioneers of this trend, such as Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings, are often included in the psychology of morality.⁵⁰

The ethics of care, as a moral trend, grew out of a critique of traditional ethical theories such as Kantianism or utilitarianism. Its foundation is Carol Gilligan's research on the moral development of women, which pointed to the existence of an alternative model of understanding of morality, focused on relationships and care. In this context, the individual is not an isolated, rational being, but part of a web of dependency, where care becomes an essential element of building security, both psychologically and socially.

The use of care as a central ethical category transforms the perception of moral duties towards others. An individual's safety, including safety in the city, is defined not by abstract rules, but by concrete interpersonal relationships that provide a sense of belonging, support, and sense of security. The ethics of care thus integrate emotions with rationality, showing their interdependence, but also showing the natural basis for forming social relationships, a sense of security, and the way an individual acts within socially defined boundaries.

50 A. Waleszczyński, Feministyczna etyka troski, Środkowoeuropejski Instytut Zmiany Społecznej, 2013, p. 14.

Figure 4. Ethics of care in three social dimensions



Source: Own study.

The work of C. Gilligan and N. Noddings, in addition to being innovative in their consideration of a normative nature, has given rise to research activities in the field of attempts to define and subsequently interpret care, as well as to determine the conditions for its occurrence in a systemic sense. Important figures are, in this dimension, J. Tronto and J. Phillips, a continuation of the “path” adopted by two earlier researchers.

Carol Gilligan, as mentioned earlier, was one of the forerunners of the care ethic current. In her article, “In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development”, C. Gilligan turns to a polemic with the aforementioned Lawrence Kohlberg regarding moral development, or moral reasoning according to the gender divide. In basic terms, C. Gilligan agrees with his earlier mentor that morality has its gender. But C. Kohlberg has unapologetically tried to argue and justify the moral inferiority of women. Gilligan, in a significant way, has challenged Kohlberg’s point by pointing out that moral “voices”

develop differently depending on gender. According to the researcher, this is due to the fact that there are significant differences in the accepted perspectives on ethical issues. She states that the masculine dimension of moral reasoning is universalist, i.e. it refers to ideas and rationales (assuming a formal and abstract character), while the feminist dimension of morality adopts a contextual and relational perspective because it refers to the search for the appropriate course of action (of a moral character) appropriate to the situation. Thus, feminist moral decisions are based on contextuality, emotionality, and particularity.⁵¹⁵²

In characterizing thought, C. Gilligan draws attention to the issue of moral predisposition depending on the assumed position (feminist or masculine) arising from gender. The author recognizes that in the former it refers to the development and introduction of care, while in the latter to the cognition of principles. Gilligan, in theory, supports the dimension of difference. The masculine dimension of morality beyond the cognition of moral principles that are socially embedded and abstract (as in John Rawls's conception of justice as fairness) assumes an individualizing position, i.e. moral reasoning is associated with an axiomatic internalization, which is determined by an individual perspective and a specific role attributed to an individual in the world. The feminist dimension of morality, on the other hand, focuses not so much on context, but primarily on the moral development of the community and responding to the needs of other members of society.

⁵¹ C. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice. Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

⁵² An important context for the critique of Kohlberg's scale of moral development in Gilligan's perspective is the two researchers. Lawrence Kohlberg worked with Carol Gilligan in one lab.

These determinants of moral reasoning stem from the so-called moral perspective.⁵³⁵⁴

Gilligan concludes, on the basis of his research, that the masculine moral perspective is the result of the recognition that society is constructed of individuals who are characterized in their functioning by independence, autonomy to act and to express opinions, guided by rationality. This element reveals the masculine tendency to construct frameworks based on abstract forms of expression that clearly relate to the adoption of a liberal point of view. This determinant is also clearly expressed in the social constructs of states based on the ideal of liberal democracy, turning towards freedom as a universal determinant of social functioning, within which the figures of the culturally “stronger” have a decisive advantage. This confirms not so much the tendency of the masculine point of view to construct frameworks based upon abstract forms of expression, the formulation and systematic consolidation of the hierarchy of values, but also of the social hierarchy related to sexuality.⁵⁵

The cultural consolidation of the indicated state of affairs was related, as the aforementioned R. Braidotti points out, to the unequivocal presence of masculinism in contemporary social formats (i.e. the constructions and structures that determine daily participation in socio-political communities). The indicated conception takes on a predestination character, it refers to the cultural consolidation of the conviction of the superiority of masculine issues over feminine ones, which is characterized universally by the

53 D. Czyżowska, Płeć a etyka troski i etyka sprawiedliwości, *Psychologia rozwojowa*, 2004, t. 9, n. 1, p. 119.

54 D. Sepczyńska, op. cit., p. 42.

55 D. Sepczyńska, Etyka troski jako filozofia polityki, *Etyka* 45, 2012, p. 42.

approach to the continuous ordering of social relations. The particularity of interpersonal relationships, as well as the sense of obligation to the community on an organic level, which is a determinant of the feminist caring dimension, is recognized as morally less advanced.⁵⁶

Trying to conclude the thought and results of C. Gilligan's research, it should be noted that the indicated dimensions of masculinism and feminism determine the perception of morality in general terms. This is the result of the phenomenon of stereotyping, that is, the unambiguous attribution of character values to individual types of behavior and the classification of their character, from which the conviction of the need to carry out a hierarchy of moral approaches derives where the indicated abstract dimension expressed in the postulates of moral reasoning of a masculinist character is treated as On the other hand, the relational approach and expression of care for community and active participation as a practice of morality is secondary. However, C. Gilligan points out that it is not possible to make a hierarchy of moral reasoning, thus introducing an egalitarian narrative, against the indicated moral approaches, proposing their diversification. He acknowledges, however, that their participation is nevertheless not proportional.

The indicated conclusion is confirmed by the continuations present in concepts not so psychological as philosophical. Regardless of C. Gilligan's conception, although the indicated approach should be treated as a continuation, even within the scope of the subject matter, his concept of the ethics of care in 1984 is presented by Nel Noddings. In

⁵⁶ R. Braidotti, A Concise Companion to Feminist Theory. John Mullarkey, Beth Lord, The Continuum Companion to Continental Philosophy, Continuum, 2003, p. 167.

her book *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, she demonstrated the clear distinctions and social foundations of moral reasoning in masculine and feminist terms. She showed that cultural determinants and the way in which moral attitudes are formulated are central to the formation of moral reasoning in education, as well as having a clear impact on the ethics of care as a theory and social practice. Morality turned towards masculine ethics of justice and became the foundation for building moral convictions and shaping socio-political structures. Crucial to this state of affairs was the direct adoption of a masculine perspective. Noddings, in his critique, points out that the assumptions underlying the ethics of care have a much stronger psychological and ethical foundation than abstract forms of moral development based on immeasurable axioms.⁵⁷⁵⁸

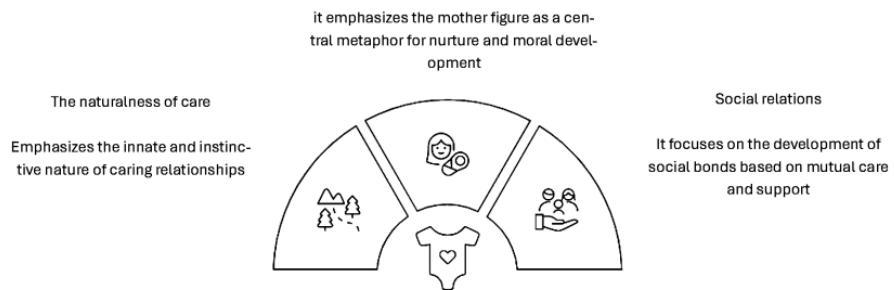
The primary advantage to which Noddings refers is the naturalness of care, or its biologically confirmed presence. In confirming this conclusion, he draws attention to the way in which social relationships are formed based on the metaphor of motherhood. He states that the needs of moral development, as well as their judgments, are natural desires and impulses, alongside the biologically determined need to build mutual relationships. A key figure for the philosopher is the figure of the mother and her relationship with her offspring. The above metaphor refers unambiguously to the biological references of care, which by its nature is the first determinant of moral reasoning, through the very fact of birth. However, an important element of the structure presented by Noddings is the fact

57 N. Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, University of California Press, 2003.

58 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

that the relationship of care is hierarchical, because it is the mother who distributes care to her child, and not the other way around.⁵⁹⁶⁰⁶¹

Diagram 2. Ethics of care as a natural operationalization of moral development



Source: Noddings' own study.

Noddings states that the natural care of mothers for their children (especially at an early stage of development) expresses that the essence of morality, arising from care, becomes its identification. He recognizes that the moral development biologically determined refers to the issues of the basic emotions and feelings resulting from the indicated relationship. On this basis, he makes a significant fragment of the relationship into asymmetric roles reflecting the mother-child relationship. He thus introduces the categories of the caregiver and the object of care. Asymmetric arising from biological and social conditions

59 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 78.

60 V. Held, *Feminist Morality: Transforming Culture, Society and Politics*, Chicago University Press, Chicago 1993, p. 46.

61 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., pp. 103.

is associated with the implementation of actions resulting from the natural feeling and the realization of actions resulting from an attempt to preserve or improve the life of the caring object.⁶²

The role of the object of care, according to N. Noddings, is not to explicitly reciprocate the care, but to identify, positively verify and accept it. Thus, Noddings points to the need to realize care in an environment that is positively characterized emotionally. Despite the clear disparity between the indicated elements of the care system, Noddings emphasizes that the indicated relationship is not of a dominant nature, in which the disparity becomes the cause of the use of the subject (in this case the care object) of the weaker, because within the framework of the moral development, correlated with the biological, the indicated relationship equalizes, i.e. the object of the care depending on the nature of the care. The context can assume the role of the caring subject. The category of care presented in Noddings' view is not continuous. The author recognizes that the basic condition for the existence of care is the need for its emergence. Thus, the relationship of care takes the form of individual acts, outlined in the formula of the bond of care.⁶³

Noddings recognizes that the care thus understood must form the basis of ethical considerations, because it makes it possible to correlate the biological development of the individual with the moral development, which naturalizes the care itself, and additionally establishes care as the source of morality. Within the framework of the

62 A. Kanclerz, Etyka troski Carol Gilligan i Nel Noddings a moralny partykularyzm, Etyka 57, 2018, p. 39.

63 R. Bergman, Caring for the ethical ideal: Nel Noddings on moral education, Journal of Moral Education, 2004, p. 155.

stated ideal of moral development, Noddings introduces the category of the *ethical self*. The moral attitudes presented by the individual are not universal but constitute an individual personality trait. The framework of the “I” is determined by experiences that determine the way we perceive and evaluate behavior, and its source is the compassion and memory of the cares we have received from others, which confirms the individual nature of care in a relational sense.⁶⁴

Joan Tronto, on the other hand, recognizes that care is a specific activity carried out in the individual dimension that allows us to maintain, carry out, and repair the environment in which the individual operates. Tronto extrapolates the personal “I” not only from a physical perspective, but also from a collective perspective in animate and inanimate terms, treated in the category of the environment. The main purpose of care, in the scope presented, is the protection of the individual and the environment and the improvement of social conditions. Despite the existence of a distinctiveness between the individual and the environmental dimensions, J. Tronto points out the co-existence and interdependence of these categories, because, as she states, they are “interdependent elements that form a complex, life-sustaining network.”⁶⁵

Drawing attention to the multi-faceted nature of human life, the author emphasizes the importance of fragmenting considerations of care, while maintaining a holistic perspective. Fragmentation refers to the multiplicity of elements of each person’s life system within themselves

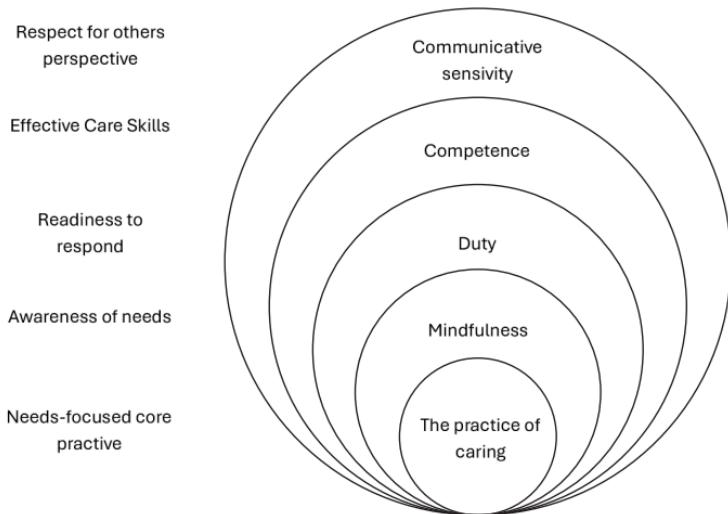
64 D. Sepczyńska, Etyka troski jako filozofia polityki, *Etyka* 45, 2012, p. 44.

65 S. Yuan, et al., Ethical Design of Social Robots in Aged Care: A Literature Review Using an Ethics of Care Perspective, *International Journal of Social Robotics*, 2023.

as well as the environment in which they live. The fundamental problem resulting from this assumption is the need to update it with increasingly new areas of human activity, which make it possible to undertake later analyses of an ethical nature. In our opinion, the concept of J. Tronto makes it possible to formulate assumptions, but above all to select areas of human activity as manifestations of the possibility of the dispersal of care. In the indicated dimension, all the elements of care become instrumental values enabling the achievement of the value that is care. The perspective or view presented by J. Tronto, is a canvas, not only for the presentation of caring actions resulting from the moral order extrapolated from the natural relationship of the caring subject — the object of care (in the example of the mother — the child), but also for the internalized need of the individual to carry out corrective and developmental actions for her/his sake in terms of her/him being present within the community. In the area of maintaining the safety of individuals. J. Tronto emphasizes the interdependence of individuals present within the community in the dimension of interaction for its improvement and preservation of safety.⁶⁶

66 S. Yuan, et al., cit., p. 1638.

Figure 3. Ethics of care in the perspective of the development of individual competencies and the practice of social life.



Source: Own paper.

An important reference point for presenting the development of thought related to the concept of care ethics was the research conducted by Judith Phillips. In her book *Caring*, at the normative as well as theoretical level, the author presents and promotes the ethics of care as a principle of social interaction. She said: "The term care is often used in a variety of meanings, but it is most commonly associated with ideas such as attachment, love, duty, goodness, responsibility, and reciprocity. Care is essential in the development of individual identity because it plays an important role in social relationships — both official, professional, intimate, and friendship. It can manifest itself through contact, action, feeling or body language. It affects

the building of self-awareness and how we are perceived by other people.”⁶⁷

Phillips rightly notes that care is a relational concept. However, it should also be noted that it modifies relationships in a significant way, transforming them from hierarchical to equal, referring to the presence of equal entities. In political and economic interpretations, care does not mean the “knowing” relationship with the “knowing” “not-having”, “non-advisory”, “non-free”, but rather the also “knowing”, also “having”, also “advisory” and “also free” relationship subject. The care relationship in the conventional sense can be viewed negatively as being based on dependency and caring for someone. But the contemporary understanding of it breaks away from dependence and passivity in favor of independence and activity. It assumes a support, not change, of relationships and breaks away from control in favor of creative coexistence. Its boundaries are complex. Behind them lie the politics that determine a particular type of social relationship based on both tenderness and service to the other person. For care, “because of its history and meaning throughout life, is a dynamic concept, not a static one, understood differently depending on the cultural context.” It is shaped by cultural values, its definition and scope of meaning changing, which can inspire discussions about rights, citizenship, risk and justice, theology, axiology, politics, and a sense of security. It is an expression of who a person is, or what society values.⁶⁸

J. Phillips and J. Tronto, argue that care is both a political and moral concept by which society is judged. “The multidimensionality of the concept includes care for one’s

67 J. Phillips, Troska, Wydawnictwo Sic!, Warszawa 2009, p. 7.

68 J. Phillips, op. cit., p. 9.

well-being, which involves perceiving and properly identifying (discerning) needs, understanding them, as well as choosing appropriate means and strategies for action.” There is a feedback loop between these elements and the actors of a care-based relationship that is a response to actions taken. The apparent perception of these dependencies responds to the reciprocity and interdependence of the network of relationships. This process takes place first within the entities involved in the relationship. It affects their motivation combined with responsibility, which is expressed in the willingness to be flexible and honest in the relationship. On this basis, an emotional relationship is developed that determines the final cost of social relations.^{69⁷⁰}

When trying to summarize the assumptions of the ethics of care on the attitude of the interpretative framework adopted by us, it should be noted that the basic dimension of caring requires embedding in the social reality in which the entities involved in community operate. This is a direct reference to the relationship between the entity portrayed in this subsection: caring and the object of care (mother-child relationship). However, this is not the only element that can be interpreted based on the work of noted thinkers (psychologists and philosophers), such as Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Joan Tronto, and Judith Phillips. Thus, when applying the interpretive and moral framework of the ethics of care, it is necessary to look at the socio-political reality through the prism of the contexts that are the consequences of human activity. There is also the need to change the normative paradigms that define the moral horizon of the whole community in the age of

69 Phillips, op. cit., p. 89.

70 Phillips, op. cit., p. 40.

the exhaustion of universalist formulas that were the result of masculine thinking and the need for a change of normative paradigms that set the moral horizon for the whole community: moral development. The presented researchers and other representatives of the ethical trend postulate:

— Transformation of moral theory: As part of this approach, the researchers, primarily Andrzej Waleszczyński, emphasize the importance of the work of Virginia Held, in presenting how feminist perspectives have changed traditional moral theories. They draw attention to the performative influence of feminist thought on the shaping of ways of interpreting socio-political reality, while referring to its inspirational character for bringing about social change. V. Held advocates a moral framework that prioritizes care and relational ethics, in contrast to more conventional, justice-oriented approaches, thus abandoning the current contexts that determine moral development in a universalist sense, which in feminist thought is called masculine.⁷¹⁷²⁷³

— Paying attention to women's experiences. An important inspiration for V. Held, therefore, is women's experiences in formulating ethical claims, the character of which is fundamentally determined by the earlier exclusions of feminism's perspectives on the shape and organization of social relations. Held, as well as the forementioned J. Phillips and N. Noddings, question the universalist way of formulating moral judgments and principles in the context of so-called big ideas such as justice. They propose solutions that are case studies, i.e., situations and experiences that determine the ethical dimension of relationships, treating

71 A. Waleszczyński, *Feministyczna etyka troski. Założenia i aspiracje*, Środkowoeuropejski Instytut Zmiany Społecznej, Warszawa 2013.

72 V. Held, op. cit., p. 33.

73 V. Held, op. cit., 59.

them as the basis for ethical reasoning and the formulation of moral principles.⁷⁴

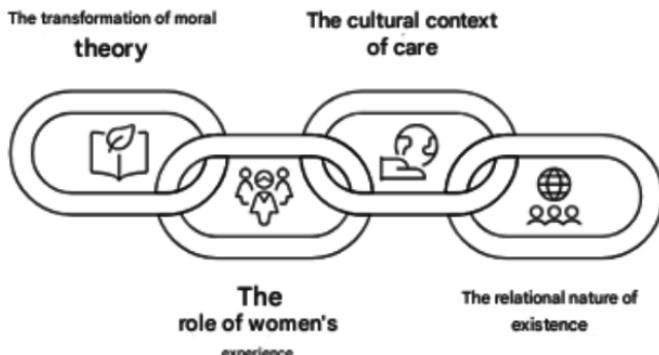
— The requirement to enter a cultural context of caring: An important challenge facing the ethics of caring, as well as the basic context that generates an additional platform for reflection, is the cultural grounding of caring. It is not clear what care is, in theoretical terms, as well as in social practice, and above all in the context of security. According to the assumptions presented by Maciej Kassner, the basic context of considerations of a political (or non-political) nature is culture. Cultural grounding allows us to capture the appropriate research perspective for the concept, but also its derivatives, i.e. caring or caring. It should therefore be stated that the cultural context is the primary basis for the implementation of care in the process of conceptualizing and operationalizing security, both in community and individual terms, which is the main area of interest of this work.

— The Relational Nature of Existence: As part of the ongoing reflection on what the ethics of care are in an axiological sense, there is an ontological element. In addition to turning to the cultural context that defines the way care is understood; the relational nature of care must be pointed out. Caring is not only a value, but a practice that shapes ethical duties. Thus, compared to universalist ways of building moral judgments, the ethics of care argues for a deeper understanding of care as both a dynamic relationship and a moral ideal. From a security perspective, the ethics of caring also refers to understanding the needs of the individual, as well as the entire community network, in the context of threats of the contemporary world, such as marginalization, social conflicts, and economic crises.⁷⁵

74 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit, pp. 192-193.

75 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

Chart 4. Ethics of care as a postulate and a socio-political basis for the functioning of communities



Source: Own paper.

Finally, reflections on the development of ethics of care as both a theoretical concept and a basic postulate enabling the formulation of public policies resulting from duty and responsibility for the formation of relationships within the community. A. Waleszczyński states: "The relationship of care, understood as a unity of values and practices, is supposed to be the source of duty. (...) The inclusion of duty in the relationship allows it to bypass the Hume problem of transition from "is" to "should"."⁷⁶⁷⁷

The inclusion of the relationship category in the ethical construct allows for the redefinition of the sources of morality as the foundations of social interaction. The ethics of care places at the center of the daily practice of care, which not only builds trust, but also strengthens the sense of security in individuals. At the same time, care

76 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 10.

77 A. Wależyński, p. cit., 194.

becomes an obligation for each of them. In the context of contemporary problems such as social inequalities or systemic threats, care enables the integration of individual and community actions, treated as elements of a single care system and at the same time the basis for building a caring society.

An important element to note in the characterization of the assumptions of care ethics is that this perspective responds to the criticism of classical (universalist) ethics, which ignored the specifics of individual experiences, especially women. The practice of care thus becomes not only a method of ensuring well-being, but also an emancipatory tool that redefines the notion of security, treating it as a mutual obligation related to the interaction of individuals within a community. This gives care a normative dimension, allowing for the re-conceptualization of morality as dynamic and based on mutual support of individuals and using extrapolation of mutual systemic support.⁷⁸

This theoretical framework allows for the introduction of security as a concept and a socially relevant idea that constitutes a form of verification of the enforcement of care in socio-political processes. Contemporary threats such as migration crises, climate change, and current social conflicts require a new approach to security management that recognizes and takes into account the needs of

78 Hence the link between the development of feminist thought and the Second Wave of feminism with the concept of the ethics of care clearly expounded in the works and texts of representatives of this trend, but also of political theorists, e.g. Iris Marion Young, who in the aforementioned book *Inclusion and Democracy* addresses the issue of the presence of groups with a reduced level of public representation (including women), as a basis for building new socio-political solutions that can be introduced in a systemic way. Thus, it is important to identify the source of care (in the axiological and community terms) in feminist considerations.

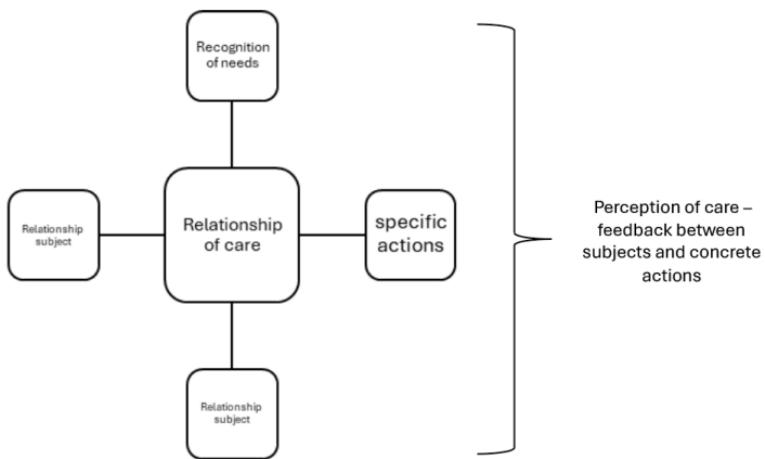
the individual and the social community. Care offers an alternative to traditional, hierarchical models of risk management, proposing an inclusive and relational approach based on situationally delineated contexts. In practice, this means, for example, the creation of public policies, including migration, which focus on integration and support, rather than on the permanent exclusion of individuals.

3. DETERMINANTS OF BUILDING A CARING SOCIETY

Beyond the fundamental considerations related to socio-political processes, as well as the building of normative foundations for social interaction, care can be presented as a moral determinant of new processes for political change. Phillips states: "Although politics is a fundamental context of care, it is not a bilateral relationship: care is not a key issue of policy. (...) Care is a concept that adds depth and quality to the analysis of the welfare state. The three dimensions of care – care as work, as commitment and responsibility, and activity involving costs – combine the action and relational nature of care in a political, economic and social context, providing a basis for analysing changing social policy regimes. The concept of care can be understood on a macro scale within different public and micro sectors. The ethical issues underlying the concept of the state and the individual set the tone for the contemporary reconstruction of the state and a changing narrative about man and his relationship with his environment.⁷⁹

79 J. Phillips, op. cit., p. 43.

Chart 5. Relational of care



Source: Self Study.

Attention should be paid to the relation of care. It is shaped not so much by individual relationships between members of a socio-political community, but relates to a broader view of the issue. In the proposed view, care constitutes a normative basis for building a caring society, but also the basis of socio-political relations, and an analytical tool enabling reflection on the presence of the indicated idea within the framework of implemented public policies. An important assumption is to emphasize the relationality of care based on the assumption of its subjective nature. The very characteristic of the subject in terms of the relation of care refers to each participant of socio-political life functioning within a defined community framework, within which it fulfills its basic needs resulting from the conditions of a biological, psychological and social nature.

In our view, the defining value of the individual's activity is care, which does not assume the character of imposing will, but is a form of prevention or a response to social conditions. Turning towards the subjective perception of the individual directly links the concept of a caring society with personalism as a philosophical and social current. The basis of the personalistic perception of reality is the prism of *person* (in Latin *persona*). However, the indicated perception is not the element that binds the person to his physical representation, but the spiritual qualities responsible for the intentional reference to the relationship between person and community on the principle of reciprocity – person for community, community for person. Thus, in the context of building a caring society, it is important to introduce a context that aims to introduce a reference point related to the absence of a hierarchical dimension of social relations. Each member of a community operating within a socially defined framework performs the same role in the distribution of care within it.

The mechanism underlying care is based on the identification of needs and concrete actions to improve the current state in which individuals find themselves. Within the practical dimension of building a caring society, a certain extrapolation of care should be made, as a normative foundation for conducting public policies, including those relating to individual safety, applying the principle of political realism, i.e., acting on the basis of one's capabilities resulting from prevailing conditions. In the indicated scope, this principle is implemented within the framework of discerning the needs and taking concrete actions resulting from the subjective relationship of the members of the community. The perspective of the ethics of care in the indicated, relational, perspective also allows to make

a theoretical extrapolation related to the presentation of the basic assumptions behind the formation of the caring society, as a new type of community, which stands as an alternative to the democratic-liberal conceptions.⁸⁰

The first is to turn towards the relational way of defining the political-social society. Political conditions can significantly change the point of view. In the present concept, they constitute the basic context of considerations and the ethical basis, in the sense of having a set of key values. Within the framework of the relational concept, we draw attention to the lack of a universalist dimension and level for reflections and expressed moral judgments. The determinant known from philosophical and political considerations is the dimension of the relationship between the individual and the community and vice versa. The perspective of care refers to and presents the immanence of this relationship with an indication of the impossibility of designing and building a theoretical community without indicating the individual dimension. The ethics of care expressed by political thinkers and political psychologists presented the premise of communitarian based on the liberal-personalist view of the social entity as the main determinant of the creation of social cells that make up the entire political community.⁸¹

The absence of universalist principles, such as abstract concepts like justice, democracy, and the reliance on individual case studies to determine the moral perspective, refers to the clearly expressed need to recognize the context for making moral decisions. Thus, care ethics postulates a non-universalist and naturalistic approach to forming,

80 V. Held, op. cit., p. 65.

81 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 175.

first, the relationship of care and, secondly, as a consequence of the first, the construction of a caring society. From a security perspective, care ethics also refers to understanding the needs of the individual in the context of the threats of the modern world, such as marginalization, social conflicts or economic crises.

The identified problems from a security perspective have the character of a kind of generalization enabling the presentation of a suitably broad spectrum of problems and topics addressed by representatives of care ethics. As indicated, the ethics of care has a relational dimension. It determines the basic dimension of understanding in which the conception of care is possible to implement in the socio-political space. Virginia Held and Joan Tronto clearly indicate that the basic dimension of care is the maternal relationship extrapolated to the social dimension. In this way, it approaches the social complexity, interpretively, and translates it into the language of care. The basic dimension, which it thus forms, is the individual dimension and its needs. Care, in the indicated conception presented by the authors, refers to the change of the paradigm of social formation from the overly liberalizing dimension associated with universality and egoism to the constancy, the realization of a sense of security, and in emotional terms of satisfaction and joy. This perspective is post-patriarchal in that it explicitly criticizes basic concepts of power and dominance.⁸²⁸³⁸⁴

82 A. Kanclerz, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

83 M. Eichner, *The New York Times. Government, dependency, and responsibility for caretaking*, red. Daniel Engster, Maurice Hamington, *Care Ethics & Political Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2015, p. 88.

84 D. Sepczyńska, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

Although politics is the fundamental context of care, it is not a bilateral relationship – care is not a key issue in politics. Care, however, is a concept that adds depth and quality to the analysis of the welfare state. The three dimensions of care – care as work, as obligation and responsibility, and activity involving costs – link the action and relational nature of care in a political, economic, and social context. They also form the basis for the analysis of changing public policies. The concept of care can be considered in the macro dimension, encompassing various public sectors, and the micro dimension, focusing on individual experiences and relationships. The ethical issues underlying the concept of the state and the individual shape the contemporary narrative about man and his relationship with his environment, influencing the processes of the reconstruction of the welfare state.⁸⁵

From the individual perspective, care is shaped not only by the relationships between members of the socio-political community, but also by its broader structural dimension. As the normative basis for the construction of a caring society, care becomes not only the foundation of socio-political relations, but also an analytical tool enabling reflection on implemented public policies. The key assumption here is the relationality of care, resulting from the subjective nature of the community members. Social relations should be based on reciprocity and responsibility, where each individual makes an equal contribution to the functioning of the community.

This theoretical and philosophical basis allows the categorization of the basic determinants enabling the implementation of the assumptions of the ethics of care in

85 A. Eichner, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

the socio-political processes in the dimension of building a caring society. In our opinion, the present theoretical proposal can be a new paradigmatic view on the issue of care, as well as new ways of building social property based on the differently perceived foundations of liberal democracy by emphasizing the individual sense of security within the framework of maternal relationships, which allows the extension of perspectives on perceptions of security, as well as care in terms other than just feminist ones. Nevertheless, in the context presented, one can distinguish the basic assumptions resulting from the attempt to implement the assumptions of the ethics of care in the processes of building the structures of a caring society, i.e. the integrative nature of social institutions, the sustainable development of social relations, the strengthening of social capital, the personalization of public policies (including those directly related to security) and the relational responsibility for the common good.⁸⁶

The first element of the structure of a caring society is to pay attention to and emphasize the importance of the integrative character of social institutions. Young's reflections on the fundamental difficulties of achieving a satisfactory level of social inclusion are an important theoretical reference in the present context. Within the framework of inclusion and democracy, public and social institutions must function in a way that promotes inclusion and equality, which are at the same time the basis for achieving the subjectivity of citizens. In a caring society, their primary objective is the elimination of social exclusion through policies and practices that support both individuals and marginalized groups.

86 R. Manning, Care, normativity, and law, op. cit, p. 128.

The second normative foundation of a caring society is the sustainable development of social relations. As we have presented, the basic reference of care is the relationship between the caring subject and the object of care (in the example of the mother-child relationship). They are based on maintaining a sense of security and excluding, among others, selfishness in the process of forming a relationship. Building lasting social relationships, which take into account the diversity of experiences and needs, is the foundation of a caring society. These relationships are based on trust, responsibility and solidarity, eliminating inequalities resulting from social hierarchy. It is also important to note that the reflection and research on care highlights the characteristics of individual needs in the dimension of social activity.

The problem today, especially in liberal democracies that prefer to function within the framework of a capitalist economy, is the introduction of material determinants of comfort as well as of a sense of security. Ethicists and others in the movement correct the perspective, pointing out that the relational dimension is more important than the material one in socio-political processes, including the building of a sense of safety. The very axiological reflection presented in this text testifies to this, but in our opinion, this dimension should be emphasized, because of the process of materialization of public life. Values and their influence on the way individuals participate within the community is, in the present view, the key to socio-political development. Thus, the ethics of care becomes the basis of changing the perception of built relationships, which is represented in the determinants that can be implemented in the process of building a caring society, i.e. strengthening social capital, personalization of public

policies and in the relational dimension of responsibility for the common good.⁸⁷

The strengthening of social capital from the perspective of caring ethics refers to the involvement of individuals in socio-political processes, enabling the extension of social activity to new areas of activity. In this approach, social capital is understood as a resource based on trust and co-operation. The relationships built between participants in public life become a testament to quality and at the same time a key element in the development of a caring society. Fostering bonds between community members leads to an increase in a sense of security and belonging. Thus, on the basis of de-materialization, the indicated elements, in addition to receiving the status of the ontological-axiological social basis, also become attributes of belonging, which leads to an increase in social resources, or strengthening of social capital. Another determinant is the personalization of public policies. In a caring society, the formation of public policies is related to the individual needs of individuals resulting from the previous functioning of communities. The basic problem in understanding the paradigm of relationship formation in normative terms is the aforementioned universalist approach.⁸⁸⁸⁹

When we talk about a caring society, we also mean the personalization of public policies. In opposition to universal public policies, which often fail to recognize the specificities of local communities and individual situations, they focus on responding flexibly to specific needs – mainly in order to protect the common good in the collective as well

87 R. Groenhout, *Of medicine and monsters. Rationing and an ethic of care*, op. cit., p. 152.

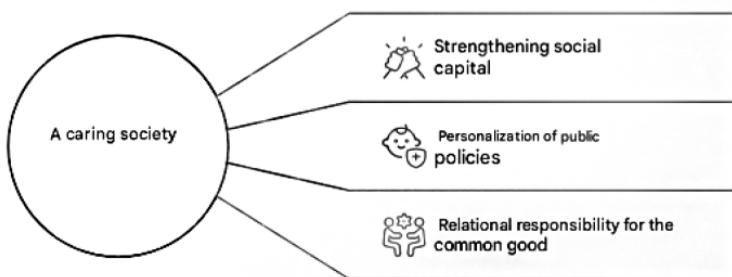
88 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., pp. 174-175.

89 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 121.

as the individual. The particular situations of individuals mean that limiting ourselves to exclusively universalist reactions risk disrespect and exclusion. Meanwhile, under the assumptions of caring ethics, the personalization of the public policies becomes a condition for striving to create a community that is safe and in which individuals can feel recognized and understood on an equal footing with other members. Third, a caring society is based on relational responsibility for the common good. The principle of relationality states that individuals who rely on the community to protect them in particular situations should also actively participate in action for the common good. Relationality builds a community based on trust and ensures the maintenance of appropriately deepened relationships between individuals and society as a whole.⁹⁰

Strengthening social capital, personalization of public policies, and relational responsibility are the foundation of a caring society. Caring promotes both our social life and the non-abuse of community resources. In the absence of them, both the community and the building of a caring society are fundamentally at risk.

Figure 5. Dimensions of a Caring Society



Source: Self Study.

90 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 178.

Caring, as a fundamental ethical and social category, redefines the way we think about the relationship of the individual to the community and of the community to institutions. The construction of a caring society is based on the assumption that each member of the community has the right to shape the social relationships and policies within it, but also a sense of security, support and equal opportunities for development. From a theoretical perspective, the ethics of care, as mentioned earlier, challenges traditional, hierarchical socio-political models, proposing relationships based on reciprocity and cooperation.⁹¹

A caring society is not just a utopian model – its assumptions can be implemented in practice through public policies focused on such things as inclusion, sustainability, and relations. In the context of security, care offers an alternative approach to risk management that not only protects individuals but also strengthens their ability to cope with the challenges of the contemporary world. On the other hand, in systemic terms, it enables the development of social impact tools more quickly. In light of these assumptions, the concept of caring cities, which will be covered in the last chapter of this book, is an interesting topic to explore.

91 A. Waleszczyński, op. cit., p. 46.

CHAPTER 2 /

THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE ETHICS OF CARE – AN ATTEMPT AT OPERATIONALIZATION

2.1. DIAGNOSIS OF THE PSYCHOSOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF MODERN HUMANS

The next decade of the twenty-first century will be a time of turbulent changes in the international, regional and local environment. Clearly, these changes affect a person, animate his life and thus define in him the set of attitudes and beliefs that shape the environment of her/his life. Globalization impulses resonate in social groups, which is expressed through social activity or by giving up on this activity. Denial is not merely an individual act, but part of a broader dynamic that includes overstimulation and behavioral conditioning. Globalism, the immense dynamic pace of change, and the deepening of differences in socio-economic and political development, cause opposing trends and tendencies to appear in the social fabric that increase the chaos associated with the lack of certainty of the community about the basis of its action. Their common denominator is the contagion of previously developed ideas and styles of being and living. Pope Francis

sees it this way: “However, we are moving in societies of mass consumers who live from day to day, dominated by the rhythms and noises of technology, without much patience for the processes demanded by the interior.” In turn, Harari reads that “this branch of industry that is human care – care for the sick, children and the elderly – is likely to remain a bastion of human workers for a long time. Moreover, (...) care for the elderly is likely to be one of the fastest-growing sectors of the human labor market.”⁹²⁹³⁹⁴

92 The literature of the subject is very rich in different views of the issues raised. It is impossible to list all the items which, due to their high cognitive value, bring freshness to the approach to these issues. In our analysis, we based our reflections on, among others, the theses of the Nobel Prize lecture given by Olga Tokarczuk, the books of Yuval Noah Harrari, Peter Sloterdijk, Joseph Ratzinger and the teachings of Benedict XVI, the biographer of Angela Merkel and her book *Freedom*. The theses contained in the Ignataianum publishing series Social Dictionaries’ are inspiring. Interesting reflections are provided by the 2024 series Social Dictionary. Globalization and interdependence. This trend combines a holistic view of the complex problems of our time, with an emphasis on their global nature and the need to work together at different levels to solve them. Some of these authors discuss the moral condition of modern humans, the threats posed by technological progress and its impact on human life. Others, in turn, predict the end of man and foretell the time of the robotization of social life. They are united by the belief that there will be another, but more significant than previously, re-evaluation of social rules and the prediction of their consequences. Some of these authors encourage a return to the past, renewal and giving new meaning to traditional humanist values. Others, in turn, redefine them in the context of technological progress and urge us to keep up with it in the name of human genius. As a result, we are tasked with creating a new or updated narrative for the world, a meta narrative that understands man in the light of resentment towards social hierarchy, man’s disorientation towards the surrounding reality, a crisis of trust and new technologies including artificial intelligence, big data, bioengineering and others.

93 Pope Francis, *Dilexit nos*, the Holy Father’s Encyclical on Human Love about the Divine Heart of Jesus Christ, Taken from: “*Dilexit nos*”. The new encyclical of Pope Francis – Catolico, Accessed Nov. 9, 2024.

94 Y. N. Harari, 21, op. cit., p. 46.

On the opposite side of this narrative is the glorification of progress and development, the dehumanization of man in favor of artificial intelligence, the strengthening of the privileged class of people who know the present, and who co-create it, over the mass of people who feel despised. Peter Sloterdijk alludes to this dichotomy when he writes that the mass loses the understanding of its participation in it, washes away from individual, group subjectivity, and changes the point of reference of the mass to reality. It subjects them to stimuli, moderates the behavior of others through stimuli whose nature is short-lived, variable, rapidly transient. Today's masses have essentially ceased to be masses of gatherings and have become part of a regime in which the character of the mass is not expressed by physical gathering, but by participation in mass media programs. The mass has become a mass subject to a certain program – as such, it has by definition ended with physical gathering in one place. In this new mass one is a mass as an individual. One is a mass without seeing others. As a consequence, today's or whoever you prefer, postmodern societies are no longer primarily oriented toward bodily experience of themselves, but are observed only through media symbols, through discourses, fashions, programs and preferred values. This mass loses its political potency, the relativization of its previously formed attitudes and beliefs, its susceptibility to volatility and thus impermanence, the foundation that stabilizes the individual, the social group or society as a whole is lost. In the mass one loses the individual, the individual, the attractiveness and uniqueness. It is a mass without potential, a sum of micro-anarchism's and loneliness. It builds its relationship with its environment either with the impression it makes or on distrust and fear. Fear becomes the basis of modern

subjection as a reasonable care for oneself in the face of an overt or covert threat of annihilation.⁹⁵

If the barometer of the social condition of postmodern man is the accompanying fear, or sense of threat, then the need for security develops in him, sometimes inadequately to the actual needs. The unthreatened man does not require rescue, care, is less susceptible to a political message that uses the tools of fear and fear to induce desired political behavior. Fear is a control tool, and it is intentionally controllable. It can become a common motor of action. Because of the role it plays in society, it will involve trying to make something uninteresting the most eye-catching, it will involve linking triviality with special effects.⁹⁶

Karen Horney writes in this context about contemporary culture based on competition, the innate hostility that results from someone being a winner and someone being a loser. Competition permeates all types of interpersonal relationships, which are conditioned genetically not culturally. “The result of potential hostile tension between people is constant fear—fear of possible hostility from others, reinforced by fear of punishment for one’s own hostility. Another source of anxiety in a healthy person is the prospect of failure followed by ... failure in a rival society brings with it real frustration.” It leads not only to economic danger, but also to a loss of prestige and all sorts of emotional frustrations, Horney writes “competition and the accompanying potential hostility between fellow human beings, fear, lowered self-esteem – lead to appropriate psychological consequences in the form of feelings of isolation. (...) It is difficult for anyone to bear,

95 P. Sloterdijk, *Pogarda mas*, Wydawnictwo Aletheia, Warszawa 2012, pp. 22-23.

96 Ref. P. Sloterdijk, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

but it becomes a real misery when paired with fear and insecurity in one's self-esteem". „In a world of immense demand for love, attention and care, the loved one feels less isolated, less threatened. Love and care become the cure for all the problems of postmodernity. They are hyperbolized; they are like "a screen for the fulfillment of desires that have nothing to do with them."⁹⁷⁹⁸⁹⁹

The ethics of care, in its very premise, operates within the dynamic of mass versus anti-mass. It builds and nurtures relationships between people on a micro scale and through this imprint supports the emergence of a caring society, the construction of which begins with the individual and is developed by the institutions of political life, which carry out in the spirit of caring the tasks of public policy. It is only in this sense that the ethics of care is far-reaching. It prefers non-mass narratives of life such as: slow life, mindfulness, minimalism, responsible and integral development.

Changes in attitudes and social motivations are natural and fundamentally beneficial because they support development. However, the latest wave of change is stronger, faster, and amplified by the effects of the recent Covid-19 pandemic. The global disease has exposed many of life's fragilities and called into question mass life forms and deepened human alienation in both actual and virtual reality. Pope Francis writes about this in his recent encyclical: "However, when we are tempted to move on the surface, to live in haste, without fully knowing why, to become

97 K. Horney, op. cit., p. 236.

98 K. Horney, op. cit., p. 237.

99 K. Horney, op. cit., p. 237.

insatiable consumers and free-market traders, the meaning of our existence cannot return.”¹⁰⁰

Just as technological romanticism, which saw an opportunity to solve all of humanity’s problems, set the direction of technological development, we have now begun to return to what should be the essence of good living and the good governance of the public sphere, namely care for people and for ourselves. The background of changes in the political and economic environment of social systems clearly shows that fear is an important tool for guiding social and political behavior. Even the analysis of political programs of parties (in European hemisphere) reveals that fear-based proposals attract support of the voters. Their demands, from many points of view, seem to threaten the liberal vision of the state. Their questioning of the right to be, attracts supporters of programs classified as populist. A message in which each side is right, each side questions the right to be the other side of the argument, leads not to agreement, but to aggression. Aggression built on fear.

This is what Karen Horneh, in her book on the neurotic personality of our time, has analyzed in the behavior of her patients in order to create a set of characteristics that define the forms of behavior and their source. The author points to four ways to cope, in the modern world, with the underlying fear that lies in each of us. She writes about:

1. Love strategy – securing love in any form can effectively protect against fear.
2. Submissive strategy – towards people as well as towards institutions.

¹⁰⁰ Pope Francis, *Dilexit nos*, the Holy Father’s Encyclical on Human Love about the Divine Heart of Jesus Christ, Taken from: “*Dilexit nos*”. The new encyclical of Pope Francis – Catolico, Accessed Nov. 9, 2024.

3. Power strategy – strengthening a sense of security by achieving power, success, admiration, intellectual superiority, etc.

4. Withdrawal strategy – defense against danger consists in withdrawing from life, taking actions that make you independent from others.¹⁰¹

Each of these strategies can be classified as: technological, informational, addiction to psychoactive drugs, legal romanticism which sees in legal regulations the solution of difficult interpersonal relationships, environmentalism, social egoism, pretentiousness, vulnerability to extremes, depression, relationship porosity, social phobias and others. Against this background, the programmatic assumption of the ethics of care seems to respond to most of the challenges faced today by man building conscious social relations.

Compassion can be associated with feeling sorry for something, or for someone. Apparently, it is a simple linguistic calculus from the English Language. However, this interpretation is incorrect and rather the term should be used as such: compassion for other people, and towards oneself the term forgiving, caring, caring for oneself, and so on. In the literature translated into the English Language, the term compassion is presented as one of the greatest forces that drive and sustain the world. Thanks to it, we can support each other regardless of who we are and what ties we have in common. We may come from very different backgrounds and cultures, have very different opinions and preferences, not be related to each other, and even dislike each other; but it is the cultivation of attributes, skills, and virtues of compassion that allows us

¹⁰¹ In. K. Horney, Neurotyczna osobowość naszych czasów, Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, Poznań 2004, pp. 85-87.

to support each other. Compassion is, among other things, the source of our strength for survival. The willingness to build relationships based on compassion may seem strange, sometimes naïve and out of step with large social groups. It is characterized by a departure from stereotypes and thus a departure from moral and ethical judgments. Slow down the relationship and reflect on it. The only measure of ethical judgment in such relationships is the calculation of the losses and gains that the subjects of the relationship suffer. Compassion eliminates competition in relationships, rejects their hierarchical nature, and reduces the possibility of fear and anxiety.¹⁰²

The ability to be aware of what is happening within us is the basis of mindfulness. It is a mental ability that allows us to stand aside, look at the processes going on in the mind and the dramas unfolding in it, and experience what it is like to become a neutral observer. This ability, which is reflected in contemporary trends such as work-life balance, slow life, discernment and mindfulness, is consistent with an individualistic approach based on care for the person, her/his well-being and integral development. Alternatively, the “drive to something”, transforms the public service sector into services devoid of compassion and care. Productivity is often associated with reductionism: manpower, time and resources. It focuses on statistics, which are the measure of success and quality. It objectifies humans in their social roles by massaging their individuality in a mass of statistically developed trends, not infrequently stereotypes and extreme attitudes and beliefs.¹⁰³

¹⁰² J. E. Wahl, Preface to the Polish Publication of P. G. Choden, *Uważne współczucie*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Sopot 2018, p. 5, trans. A. Sawicka-Chrapkowicz.

¹⁰³ P. G. Choden, op. cit., p. 43.

In actual fact, as a result of evolution, we as a human species are more emotionally inclined to cooperate and to help each other: “Compassion is not only attuned to the details of suffering, but also, to a large extent, in appreciating all living beings who surround us and whose actions enable our survival and lead to our survival.” Empathy is a social mentality that develops only within relationships. The social mentality develops only within a relationship. When activated, it “seeks” response from other people. „If you want care, you need others to provide it. “Compassion is not a manifestation of excessive weakness or tenderness. It is rooted in the mind’s basic ability to use intelligence to focus on the intentional cultivation of motives such as compassion.”¹⁰⁴¹⁰⁵

2.2. SOCIALLY ACTIVE INDIVIDUALS MOTIVATED BY THE ETHICS OF CARE.

Modern society is grappling with challenges arising from global socio-economic change. On the one hand, the democratization of political structures and the development of the capitalist economy have brought about a number of positive changes, such as the expansion of the rights of individuals, the increase in the availability of goods and services, and technological development. On the other hand, however, the promotion of individual competition and the focus on maximizing profits have contributed to the emergence of atomistic attitudes in which rivalry, selfishness and greed dominate over community values. Such

¹⁰⁴ P. G. Choden, op. cit., p. 49.

¹⁰⁵ P. G. Choden, op. cit., p. 71.

tendencies lead to social exclusion, deepening inequality and the erosion of interpersonal ties. In this context, the ethics of care, which integrates relation, empathy and compassion, becomes particularly important as a tool for shaping a more sustainable society.

The ethics of care, which stems from feminist moral theories, highlights the importance of interpersonal relationships as the foundation of social life. As Carol Gilligan points out, care is a key component of morality, especially in the context of women who build their moral identity around relatability and responsibility for others. However, care is not limited to family relationships but finds application in various areas of social life – from public policy to social organizations, to the workplace. As Sandra Laugier notes, the ethics of care is the foundation of *everyday politics*, which is based on strengthening bonds and solidarity between people, particularly in the context of marginalized social groups.¹⁰⁶

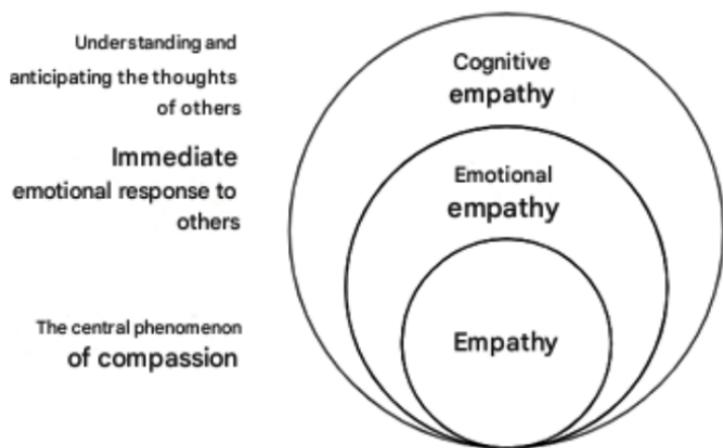
Introducing care as a guiding principle in public policy can bring measurable benefits at both the individual and community levels. As J. Tronto points out, care-based actions have transformative potential – they can strengthen social bonds, reduce inequalities, and promote more equitable social structures. Caring, as a relational concept, can overcome divisions by promoting integration and inclusion of diverse social groups in decision-making structures.

Empathy, which is one of the pillars of the care ethic, is a complex psychological process that includes both emotional and cognitive components. The ability to empathize with others enables the building of deep relationships that are essential for the functioning of communities. As the

106 P. G. Choden, op. cit., p. 49.

PWN Encyclopedia notes, empathy can be understood as an emotional response to the suffering of others (emotional empathy) or the ability to accept the perspective of another person (cognitive empathy). In social practice, the two aspects work together, enabling effective action on behalf of others.¹⁰⁷

Chart 6. Dimensions of empathy



Source: PWN Encyclopedia.

Tenderness, which is another essential component of caring ethics, includes the ability to be mindful, compassionate, and reflective of the needs of others. As Nel Noddings points out, tenderness is not only an emotional response, but also an attitude that requires a conscious commitment to relationships with others. Tenderness not only allows you to understand the needs of others, but also to build lasting bonds that strengthen social cohesion.

¹⁰⁷ Encyklopedia PWN, keyword: empathy.

Applying caring ethics in the workplace can benefit both employees and the organization. As Dutton notes, implementing caring and compassionate practices can reduce stress and tension in the workplace and foster an atmosphere of mutual trust. Employees who experience caring from their superiors are more engaged, loyal and productive. In this context, compassion-based leadership can be seen as a strategy that not only improves the effectiveness of an organization, but also strengthens its social responsibility.^{108¹⁰⁹} Caring is also applicable in a broader dimension of public policy, particularly in areas such as health care, education, and social assistance. However, the introduction of caring principles into public policy requires a paradigm shift – from the perception of public action as bureaucratic and hierarchical, to an approach based on empathy, solidarity, and dialogue.

The inclusion of an eschatological perspective in the analysis of the ethics of caring provides, in our view, a missing component of human knowledge. In the light of the ethics of care, this perspective refers to reflection on the meaning of life and the purpose of human existence. In this context, care is seen as a tool for spiritual growth and for building a relationship with transcendence. In eschatological traditions, care for other people and the world often stems from the belief that actions have not only a temporal dimension but also an eternal one. In Christianity, care for one's neighbor, mercy and support for those in need are essential elements of preparation for eternal life. The evangelical call to "love your neighbor" can be interpreted

108 J. E. Dutton, P. J. Frost i in., *Przywództwo w bolesnych chwilach, Zarządzanie w sytuacjach kryzysowych*, Harvard Business Review, One Press, Helion 2007, trans. A. Papala, p. 28.

109 J. E. Dutton, P. J. Frost, op. cit., p. 29.

as an ethical obligation from an eschatological perspective. In Buddhism: although it eschews traditional eschatology in the sense of eternity, caring for others in the spirit of compassion is the path to enlightenment and liberation from suffering. In Judaism and Islam, caring for justice and helping others is closely linked to waiting for eschatological fulfillment (e.g., the coming of the Messiah in Judaism or the final judgment in Islam). As Rosi Braidotti notes, caring ethics can be read as an expression of a deep humanism that integrates diverse spiritual and cultural traditions. In turn, the feminist perspective on the ethics of care focuses on criticizing patriarchal social structures and promoting gender equality. Feminists such as Judith Butler and Carol Gilligan argue that care is not only a moral duty, but also a tool for women's emancipation and building a more just society. Including care as a central value in public policies can contribute to greater inclusivity and sustainable social development.

The ethics of care, based on empathy, tenderness and compassion, offers an innovative approach to contemporary social challenges. Its implementation in public policies, organizations and interpersonal relationships can lead to the construction of a more just, supportive and sustainable society. Both the eschatological and feminist perspectives provide an inspiring framework for the further development of this concept, allowing it to be adapted to diverse cultural and social contexts.

Care in the context of eschatology also has a practical dimension. Whether we are talking about traditional religious eschatology or more secular ideas (e.g. responsibility for the future), care is a mode of action. In religion, care for one's neighbor and the world is the way to eternal life or salvation. In ecology, care for the environment is a form of

“saving” the Earth from destruction. From an ethical perspective, care is an answer to questions about the meaning of life and responsibility for the fate of future generations.

2. 3. ETHICS OF CARE AND THEORY OF POWER – SELECTED DEPENDENCIES

In this subchapter, we undertake an analysis of the relationship between ethics of care and the theory of power. We focus on the interdependence and tensions between these concepts and the systems of social relations proposed by them. In both dimensions, an important element is to turn towards normative theory related to the formation of basic social relations. The basic premise is to construct a set of distinctions between power and care. Of course, the very existence of a subject involves a certain bias in the accepted research position. But we also draw attention to the similarities between these categories and defragment them by pointing to the elements required for the existence of power as well as care.

A reflection on the essence of humanity from a political point of view involves several dimensions. First, it is an examination of the essence of power, regardless of its type. In the relationship of power, we have at least two reference points. The first relates to the subject endowed with power, and the second relates to the subject to power, managed. From a psychological point of view, power is understood as the ability to influence others and to control others. The relational model of power developed after World War II refers to its several sources: power of reward, compulsion, reference, expertise, information, and legitimization. It has been argued that „(T)oday, in psychology,

power is also defined as the ability to change the state of other people through the ability to provide or withdraw resources, and the application of punishment, or administration of them".¹¹⁰¹¹¹

The connection between care and the theory of power is only seemingly impossible. For since care is the reservoir of motivation for the social activity of the subject in various dominant and sub-dominant relationships, then care ethics brings into these relationships a non-hierarchical model of action related to the discernment of needs, emotions, feelings, information, mindfulness and interest, which are expressed in joint action, rules of reciprocity, collective initiatives, and more precisely identification of actual social needs. Care ethics can motivate and reinforce informal activities, bringing to those formally based on role and position in the group, an informal motive, but referring to those resources that existed before the dominant subject gained a role and position in a group. Kazimierz Obuchowski argues that in the variable, relativized structure of the subject culture, the necessary reference to people's existence, the condition for their stability as persons and the maintenance of the necessary orientation of their actions, is an abstract, superior, private philosophy of life. As a rule, it is contained in some overriding philosophy or ideology, proper to a given civilization. It is its revitalization, complement, and only meaning.¹¹²

The ethics of care supports the intentional "I", that is what a person creates consciously and intentionally on

¹¹⁰ In., E. Mandal, Miłość, władza i manipulacja w bliskich związkach, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2008, p. 14.

¹¹¹ E. Mandal, op. cit., p. 15.

¹¹² K. Obuchowski, Człowiek intencjonalny, czyli jak być sobą, Wydawnictwo Rebis, Poznań 2000, p. 95.

his own. The intentional “I” builds and initiates intentional relationships aimed at influencing the behavior of the object of the master relationships. The conscious “I” is the relational “I” because “everything is co-created”, based on relationships. All the molecules in our body are determined by the compounds of the atoms that create them. There is no great designer who assembles atoms together to form molecules, joins molecules to form proteins, joins proteins to form an organism, and so on. All elements are created through patterns of relationships. Furthermore, Choden writes, “Everything new depends on the processes and laws that govern the interactions between them.” We are interdependent with each other.¹¹³

Stereotypes and stereotyping present in a given community can be an important background to the actions of rulers. Eugenia Mandal points out the ethically important effect of using stereotypes in social relationships. She says: “Stereotyping of other people is associated with limiting their rights and freedoms. In fact, it makes it difficult for them to achieve various life goals, it becomes a cause of prejudice and discrimination.” This means an asymmetry of control between the stereotyping and the stereotyped person. Stereotyping is a cognitive category-based reaction to other people; it consists of beliefs about others (cognition), prejudices (affect) and discrimination (behavior). There are two aspects to this: descriptive and prescriptive. The descriptive aspect cares what other people are like as we see them. The prescriptive aspect, on the other hand, cares what we want people to be, what they should be like if they belong to a certain social group, having a certain age, occupation, gender, etc; i.e. characterizing their

¹¹³ P. G. Choden, op. cit., p. 47.

characteristics. Stereotypes simplify relationships with others and schematize them. In the political space of relationships, the power-voter is an average of the characteristics of the electorate, ignoring their deeper discernment and indicating the sources of social needs and political demands. Stereotypes delay the reaction of political groups to the dynamically changing electorate of their party. They inhibit the feedback between the political decision at the exit from the system and the expectations and demands addressed at the entrance to the system. They stifle social expression because they “force stereotyped individuals to self-control in social interactions.” They may feel controlled, supervised due to the need to submit to the power of the stereotype. This type of relationship introduces a hierarchy to them.¹¹⁴¹¹⁵

However, the care is that we will be drawn to more detailed discernment, not by a subject who “knows better” and wants to be sure that he or she actually knows, but by a subject who actually seeks to know about the conditions of the subject’s life. This conclusion is consistent with the subordination hypothesis, which assumes that people who lack power more than people who have it are motivated to focus their attention on others and to make an accurate, insightful, far from stereotyped, careful assessment of them. Hence the tension between patriarchy and matriarchy, the definition of gender, the assessment of morality and motivation for action, and modern secularism and fervent faith, wealth and poverty, hierarchy and equality, and so on. These tensions could be multiplied.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ E. Mandal, op. cit., p. 17.

¹¹⁵ E. Mandal, op. cit., p. 17.

¹¹⁶ E. Mandal, op. cit., p. 18.

Thus, we refer to an important element of power, which is its contextuality. The contextual nature of power distinguishes it from dominance, that is, from the relatively constant tendency of individuals towards assertive, confident, or forceful behavior.

In this context, the thought of Anne Applebaum, who in one of her recent books, *The Twilight of Democracy*, suggests that the line of social division runs through those who see the world as a set of vessels connected, interdependent, not quite definite and in some sense relative; and Simple-minded people who dislike divisions seek their safe haven. The danger to democratic governments and local communities is the observed revival of nostalgia, disillusionment with meritocracy, the allure of conspiracy theories (fueled by the apparent pluralism of the media) and argumentative human nature. We have long known that for closed societies of people unaccustomed to expressing their differences of opinion in public, the advent of democracy can be frightening and too violent. It breeds irritation, uncertainty, incomprehension, and a lack of faith in the media message formulated in an age of disinformation that deliberately provokes extreme emotions. The questioning of existing values and social authorities has deprived society of balance, of a safe anchor. For the more contradictory and uncertain the messages, the greater the vulnerability to anger, the reception of a simple message that interprets reality in an uncomplicated way with simple recipes to change the situation. In an information sphere devoid of both authority – political, cultural, moral – and reliable sources, it is difficult to distinguish conspiracy theories from legal ones. False biased narratives, often deliberately misleading, spread faster than fact checkers can keep up. They

build and reinforce stereotypes that electrify people and distort reality.¹¹⁷¹¹⁸

It is in these contexts that ethical assumptions that recognize the contextuality of human behaviors, motivations, and attitudes are antipopulist, supporting the deliberation that is the foundation of democracy. They can form the basis of an antipopulist revolution that requires human commitment and a social and political subjectivity. They form a thoughtful, coherent concept that demands more from citizens of a neighborhood, a city, a country: participation, dispute, intellectual effort, toil, mutual respect, and seeing the context of human life in conjunction with nature and technology. Readiness to face the people who form the foundations of liberal democracy.¹¹⁹

Drawing the psychological and philosophical foundations of the ethics of care, attention was paid to the question of the relational understanding of the relationship between the person caring and the subject of care and their circularity. This addresses the problem of the relationship occurring on the axis of the ethics of care and the theory of power. Recognizing that the ethics of care within its relational structure has been adequately characterized, we attempt to build an appropriate reference point to the theory of power and operationalize its content in ideological, normative and theoretical terms.

As Krzysztof Pałecki states, power is ubiquitous in the socio-political space. At the same time, it determines the characteristics of the relationship present in it. This is a common experience for every participant in the social

¹¹⁷ A. Applebaum, *Zmierzch demokracji. Zwodniczy powab autorytaryzmu*, Warszawa 2020, p. 134.

¹¹⁸ A. Applebaum, *up. cit.*, p. 138.

¹¹⁹ A. Applebaum, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

system of interaction. However, the basic problem that arises at the conceptualization stage of the concept of "power" is how to define power *per se*. The author of Power Theory clearly emphasizes that the indicated stage can cause a certain cognitive discomfort, clearly referring to the problem of defining power relations and certain variability depending on the accepted research perspective. Thus, there are many definitions of power present in the literature of the subject. Therefore, it is important to pay attention not so much to the definition, but above all to the question of the characteristics of the phenomenon which is power. In our opinion, this approach makes it possible to discern it more fully.¹²⁰

Within the framework of theoretical considerations on power, two basic approaches can be encountered, i.e. power as a specific type of human interaction and power as the achievement of intended values-goals through the use of different states of subjectivity. The third, cognitively interesting approach proposed by Pałecki refers to power as the epiphenomenon of the *normatization* processes.

The first type of power characterized by Pałecki is to treat it as a specific type of interaction between people. Interaction in the author's conception present in the article "What is and what is not power. Notes on the Margin of the Normative Theory of Power" is understood as the interaction of social activities. How should interaction be characterized in the indicated context? Pałecki refers directly to the basic conception of interaction as actions, or "activity", to which subjects give a particular rationalization. By adopting the indicated dimension of approach

¹²⁰ K. Pałecki, Czym jest, a czym nie jest władza. Uwagi na marginesie normatywizacyjnej teorii władzy, *Historia i Polityka* 41(48), 2022, p. 88.

to interaction, he shows the essence of the realization of social activities and the possibility of achieving basic goals (dimension of rationalization) only in terms of subjective extension, i.e. he indicates the impossibility of their realization and achievement individually. „The “epistemological consequence” in the scope presented is the fact that cooperation can be described and explained without being reduced to an individualistic position.” This is a form of realization that the autonomy of power is impossible to achieve and requires the functioning of certain relationships that enable it to exist.¹²¹¹²²

Thus, the relation of power in terms of cooperation refers to the requirement of the existence of other entities that guarantee the formation of the relationship of power. This relational approach adopts the formula presented by Nel Noddings regarding the requirement of the existence of a caring person (who formulates a policy of care in terms of actions taken that express care) and an object of care. Thus, both power and care as phenomena materialize in the interaction of social actors present within the created relations that are part of the system. The analogy of the materialization of power to the materialization of care in theoretical and practical terms takes the form of subjective codependency, i.e. for a relationship of power (or care) to occur, the basic requirement is the participation of individuals who can participate in that relationship.

K. Pałecki and N. Noddings draw attention to the possibility of relational asymmetry both in power relations and in care. In the common sense view, asymmetry refers to the lack of equality between entities that are part of society,

121 K. Pałecki, op. cit., p. 89.

122 K. Pałecki, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

which is intuitive as well as verifiable. The relationship in the indicated sense takes the form of interaction between the dominant entity and the subordinate entity. However, the existence of the indicated relationship is normatively conditioned. Without an adequate basis, they cannot occur. Pałecki points out that it is important to continuously create, depending on the prevailing socio-political conditions, a normative framework enabling the formation of power relations. The indicated reference takes the form of a basic distinction between the formation of the relationship of power and the relationship of care. As N. Noddings points out, the basic condition for the occurrence of the relationship of care is the biological dimension, which guarantees the natural hierarchical relationship of care and the naturalness of its occurrence, because it refers unambiguously to the maternalistic relationship between mother and child. N. Noddings, by indicating this basis, shows the possibility of extrapolating to other fields of activity within the framework of socio-political realities, including the relationship of security. Thus, within the framework of the indicated approach, it should be noted that there are points of contact between the formation of power and care in the basic scope, that is, the requirement of their support within the relationship.

On the other hand, however, the relationship of care, in contrast to power, has more stable foundations resulting from the formation of the indicated relationship. This is because, as K. Pałecki points out, in order for the relationship of power to arise, it must exist within the established socio-political system and in a certain normative framework having the character of permission for the existence of power. The relationship of care does not require the indicated consent, because it is established in relationships

that assume a natural character, namely corresponding to the relationship of the mother with her offspring.¹²³

Another dimension of power presented by Pałecki is the way of achieving the intended values-goals through the use of different states of subjectivity. Power as a phenomenon, which has been previously indicated, is always present in the public sphere as a relationship between at least two social entities (persons). In the perspective of the theory of power, the very fact of the existence of the indicated relationship is not a natural effect, but the result of certain prevailing conditions. The primary conditions for the formation of power relations are established within the framework of normative, norm-forming content (values, ideas, etc.). The support in the indicated dimension allows for the conditional ordering, i.e. the basics by exposing norms, as well as their subsequent realization in the social structures created within them. The collectivity in the presented dimension allows us to identify additional elements that make up an identifiable social order. If it is ready, it can accept them and implement them into the practice of individual as well as social life.¹²⁴

According to K. Pałecki, the social order exists in a dichotomized social space between anarchy and order, which takes a gradual form in the normative sense. This means that the coexistence marked by the indicated framework allows us to determine the degree of ordering. As the author points out, both forms take the form of a social order delimited by the degree of organization.¹²⁵

123 K. Pałecki, op. cit., pp. 90-92.

124 K. Pałecki, op. cit. p. 93.

125 K. Pałecki, op. cit., pp. 93-95.

Understanding power as a concept as well as an idea requires ongoing research into the intermediate states of the social order. An important assumption of the indicated concept of power is connected with its quasi-natural need for the functioning of individuals in orderly societies, guaranteeing stability of existence. As part of the ongoing reflection anchored in the indicated social framework, it can be observed that in basic terms regardless of the demonstrated social order, it is possible to identify community norms and social practices. Therefore, their implementation and socialization is also possible.

Social interactions take different forms. In the perspective of the indicated basis (interpersonal interaction), power should, in K. Pałecki's view, be defined in the category of a characteristic type of relationship, which does not so much involve decision-making, but constitutes a specific dependence between individuals. The indicated interdependence refers to the systematics of relationships between individuals, but it is also crucial for the existence of power relations. An appropriate metaphor for illustrating this phenomenon is observable relations on the officer-soldier line, which assume a hierarchical character because of the officer's authority. The same values, or schema, assume the relation of power in general. The indicated assumption in relational terms assumes inequality as the basic dimension of the existence of power. The stated assumption, in the perspective of ethical care, is acceptable under certain conditions. As already indicated, despite the acceptance of certain inequalities arising from the hierarchical relationship between the subject and the object of care, this relationship fluctuates, based on normative frameworks that order social interactions toward equality. Authority, as in the case of a police officer regulating traffic, works only

when the individuals involved in this relationship accept its normative assumptions. This means that power is not merely a trait attributed to an individual or institution, but the result of a shared acceptance of rules.¹²⁶

In the context of care, it is important to understand how these norms define the roles of support and dependence in relationships between people. Power in social interactions is not limited to normative structures – just as important is the manipulation of subjectivity. It can take the form of influencing emotions, habits or mimetic reactions. This mechanism is especially evident in situations where formal authorities are absent, and individuals look for alternative leaders. We have described this diagnosis of reality in previous chapters. However, this assumption is crucial for opening up to the ethics of care in the practice of social life. It is based on the natural predisposition of a person to give his or her being to something or someone. The void of authority can be filled by the implementation of the indicated assumptions of the ethics of care.

From the perspective of care, the manipulation of subjectivity can be both a threat – leading to the instrumentalization of care – and a tool for strengthening relationships when it promotes empathy and reciprocity. A relationship of power that loses its reciprocal character transforms into dependency, thereby losing its key characteristics. Paradoxically, unilateral power ceases to be effective, transforming itself into a tool of domination rather than cooperation. In the context of care, the one-sided relationship can lead to abuse and the marginalization of those in need of support, which is contrary to its ethical foundation. The division of power into political, religious, customary and

126 K. Pałecki, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

ethical categories makes it possible to understand how different forms of power affect the dynamics of care. For example, ethical power, built on moral values, promotes reciprocity and support, while political power may treat care as an instrument of legitimacy.

This approach allows us to capture the variety of ways in which care can be incorporated into power structures and thus into the practice of its exercise as well as specific public policies. Balanced power relations require a combination of normative principles with practical possibilities for their implementation. In the context of care, this means that supportive relationships must not only be declared, but also empirically possible to realize in everyday interactions. Power that does not take into account the real capabilities of how individuals transform care into an empty ritual, devoid of real value. This way of understanding power in the context of care opens the field for the further analysis of social relationships as a space in which normative assumptions can support both individual autonomy and community solidarity.

The last type of power introduced by Pałecki, and at the same time adequately profiled for consideration on the implementation of the assumptions of care ethics, is power as the epiphenomenon of *normatization* processes. Cooperation is a fundamental dimension for the existence of power as well as care. Pałecki, however, emphasizes that regardless of the accepted perspective, cooperation always requires a certain level of organization and ordering, which leads to the crystallization of patterns of behavior and rules prevailing in society. The basic organizing format is normative messages, which refer to individual as well as social duty, later transformed into a dimension of collective norms internalized by community members.

These considerations assume, in addition to the normative dimension, a systemic dimension, i.e. they introduce the concept of the dependence of norms on normative messages. Thus, care, just like power, can initially assume the dimension of communication, and later become the basic norm shaping all processes of *normatization*.¹²⁷

The ethics of care offer, in the scope presented by the authors, a novel view of power. In the perspective of care, power is not a tool of domination but changes its dimension and becomes a means for building a more just society. The indicated relationality, together with the required co-operation, enables the construction of more stable social structures. Placing care as a social foundation also offers an opportunity to re-evaluate existing views on the basic dimensions of social life. Of course, as has already been pointed out, both care and power take on the dimension of inequality, resulting from the caring subject's other resources and ability to influence the social space as opposed to the object of care. However, unlike the dominant relationship, care does not present a dominant motivation. Depending on the context, as well as the individual relationship, it fluctuates, i.e. the roles of the caring subject and the object of care can change. This is due to the fundamental dimension of the care relationship, namely the biological one. In the case of power, a regulated social relationship, there can be conflicts in terms of non-consent to the hierarchization of members of socio-political communities, which is one of the main arguments for the preservation of social order and care rather than power.

The number of social phenomena and problems that contemporary society is facing, in accordance with the

¹²⁷ In. K. Palecki, op. cit.

principle of continuous social progress, is the greatest in history. They draw attention to the hierarchies associated with the conditions of liberal democracy in European countries. Power as an organizing tool, interpretive formula, or basic social relationship is beginning to run out. Care, according to that presented by the authors, can form the basis of social change, as well as provide greater opportunities to adapt to increasingly new conditions. In times of crises such as migration, climate, etc., the ethics of care provide tools for a more holistic approach to policy making and the creation of new social solutions. It should be noted, however, that in the current context, cares are devoid of clear empirical evidence. In our view, as well as Iris Marion Young (*Inclusion and Democracy*), a fundamental element for care to exist is the requirement to change the perceptions of political hegemons in order to activate marginalized groups. We view this proposal as a necessary condition for the existence and accentuation of care as a basis for social change, but also as a guarantee for the safety of individuals treated as members of various socio-political communities.¹²⁸

128 I. M. Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, 2003.

CHAPTER 3

THE UNITARY DIMENSION OF SECURITY

3. 1 FROM GLOBAL SECURITY TO URBAN SECURITY

An analysis of the scope of conceptual security, and its subjective significance, points to several possible classifications that introduce order in the science of security. As opposed to what or who is the subject of the research, we can divide it into:

- Global security;
- International security;
- Regional security;
- State security.

State security can be viewed through the prism of two perspectives: internal security and external security. The subject of research on internal security of the state will be the analysis of, among others, the functioning of services, inspections and guards. They are responsible for security and public order, the crisis management system, and the early warning system, the national rescue and firefighting system, rules of cooperation between the services and the administration. I believe that is a very important part of what we are trying to do. In turn, the studies on the

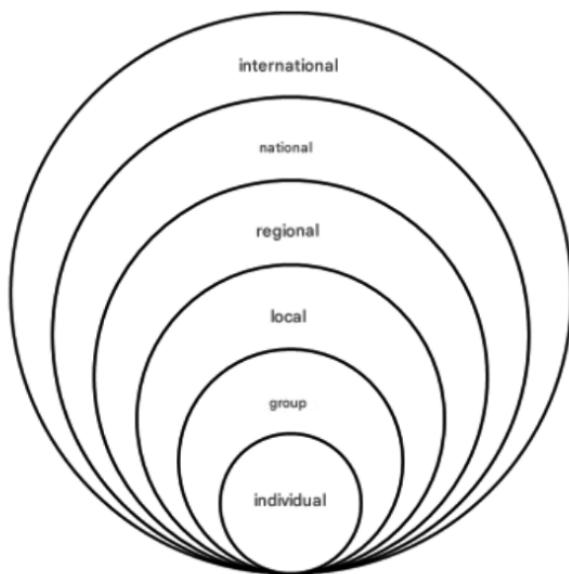
external security of the state will take into account the forces and military resources available to the state, activity in the structures of military-military alliances, signed bilateral agreements on matters caring for the security of the state, stability of its political situation, economic cooperation and other conditions, e.g. geographical conditions constituting important circumstances. This also concerns, whether a country, or a group of countries, have a favorable geographical position from the point of view of peace and security, etc.

Given that we are dealing with the concept of security as it is commonly understood (i.e. also as a general social need), we have difficulty in establishing the basis of its conceptual classification. In this case, there is a fairly general consensus that the more science depends on subjective opinions, the more difficulties it faces in categorizing key concepts. Thus, it is difficult in the social sciences to achieve a degree of categorization that can be considered ideal. It is hard to disagree with Jerzy Stańczyk writing that “security is evolutionarily considered in human consciousness through the sense of the existence of dimensions of time and space. This dimension of consciousness gives meaning to actions for security undertaken by individuals acting individually, collectively and institutionally.”¹²⁹

Figure 7 below illustrates the subjective-spatial approach to security.

¹²⁹ J. Stańczyk, Formułowanie kategorii pojęciowej bezpieczeństwa, Poznań 2017, p. 150.

Figure 7. Subjective-spatial (environmental) approach to



Source: J. Stańczyk, op. cit., p. 167.

In the course of the evolution of security research, dating back to the end of the Second World War, a slow but consistent departure from state-centrism in favor of non-military research approaches can be observed. Analysis of non-state behaviors, actors of international security, and non-strategic dimensions of this concept gain importance from security studies. These include, among others, social, economic, political and ecological security. The perception of security actors extends beyond states as the subject of research to other actors and subjects of scientific analysis. This results in the fact that today current theoretical concepts build their constructions on the basis of the analysis of factors having a combined impact on the security of individuals or social groups living in specific

geographical conditions (in cities, villages, regions, functional areas of cities) and active in real and digital reality

Hence, for example, an interesting area of research involved the conditions of an individual's security. This is important in terms of drawing standards of well-being of a person in specific legal, social and economic circumstances. The degree of their fulfillment depends on the individual's sense of security, and this has an impact, among others, on the political and social stability of the state. Variables dependent on the subjective definition of security include, among others: age, gender, social class, education, average income, place of residence, childhood, religion, sexual orientation, etc. Taking these variables into account, research can be conducted in the field of:

- Security of senior citizens;
- Security of women;
- Safety of certain professional groups;
- Security for shopping malls;
- City security;
- Safety for rural dwellers;
- Internet users' safety, and many others.

A clear shift away from security research towards human security has made human security research more prominent in recent years. This trend redefines the approach to security by focusing on the security of the individual. The essence of the concept is the concentration of research on human life, the dignity of humans as a subject of security research. According to Stańczyk "Care should be understood as addressing the satisfaction of individual human needs, rather than focusing almost exclusively on the political and military aspects of state security, as has traditionally been the case." Within this approach, the relationship between the global conditions of human life

and the prospects for the development of people's living conditions, the possibility of satisfying their living needs is recognized. A characteristic feature of human security is the interest in research by scientists representing different fields of knowledge, which gives the discipline an undoubtedly interdisciplinary value. This is hardly surprising, because the conditions of a human's life, the realization of her/his humanity in specific environmental, social, political, geographical, psychological and other conditions are, as can be seen, multifaceted, heterogeneous and thus to varying degrees affect the objective and subjective sense of security. In this context, it should be mentioned that one of the basic life needs of humanity is to satisfy the need for security, which ranks in the hierarchy of needs.¹³⁰

In the context of the ongoing considerations around the ethics of care and security, the perception of dependence is that the higher the level of danger of subjective and objective individuals and social groups, the greater the social pressure to seek narratives that introduce predictability, which are therefore perceived as safe, orderly. Thus, security is seen as the surveillance and control of what threatens cherished values and thus allows for the control of possible threats based on available legal, technical, organizational and other tools.

One may get the impression that in the literature on the concept of the security of the individual, there is a peculiar conceptual and meaningful chaos and sometimes eclecticism. On the one hand, this concept includes human rights and the rule of law that guards them. On the other hand, emphasis is placed on the humanitarian security of the individual and examines the efforts of international

130 J. Stańczyk, op. cit., p. 159.

institutions to deepen and strengthen, among others, international law. On issues of war crimes, refugee law, defense of civilians and others, the two above concepts, focused on fundamental human rights and the practices of taking them away, contrasting sharply with a broad view of the security of the individual, which seeks to encompass various forms of threats to the foundations of the individual's livelihood and well-being: economic, environmental, social and otherwise.¹³¹

In reference to the assumptions of the ethics of care, when studying the security of the individual, we are forced to face the methodological criticism that such an approach fragments the subject of research and obscures the goal of the security of an individual by illusory political hopes. It should be noted that the conditions of an individual's security are different, and a person's sense of security is conditioned by her/his psychophysical state. Hence, when planning the disposal of forces and means to ensure security, we encounter the dilemma of purpose, limited resources and inadequacy of tools to an unlimited number of stimuli. However, the theory of care does not encourage such individualization of actions. Rather, it tends to observe that the conditions of a person's well-being change dynamically and sometimes they have an incidental character. In turn, the overstimulation of an individual can cause his instability and reactions and expectations of actions ensuring security that are inadequate to the circumstances.

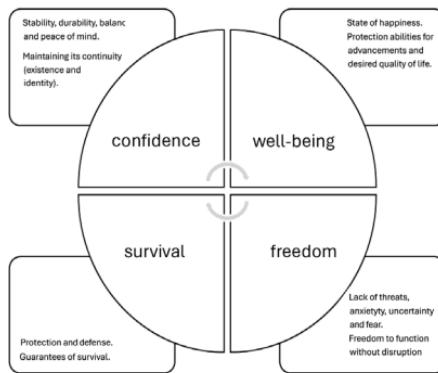
In the spirit of ethics, care would be an action that, departing from the pattern of conduct, falls within the legal framework of organization and competence. It does not

¹³¹ F. O. Hampson, *Bezpieczeństwo jednostki*, P. D. Williams, *Studia bezpieczeństwa*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2012, p. 227. trans. W. Nowicki.

involve discussion about the reasons, but recognizes the conditions and tries to offer support. Such assumptions can be implemented into the practice of public administration, which, through good discernment, for example, through social consultation, expectations and needs, designs actions addressed to the general public. Thus understood, the security of the individual can be developed at the local level. Therefore locally, the safety of the individual and the sense of security can be perceived as the absence of threats to important values, and the risk of extraordinary events threatening them at an acceptable level for this individual. Hence, actions to ensure the safety of the individual will rely on such management of public affairs that protect human life and develop in the long term. These are planned actions, undertaken in response to a threat, which build a culture of local safety.

To summarize this part concerning the considerations on the subject of security research, it is noted that alternative definitions of safety are gaining scientific significance. These definitions and concepts are developed as a result of intuitive investigations in intersubjective communication between researchers using both intellect and intuition. The alternative understanding of the content of the conceptual category of security consists of the following meanings, to which specific meanings are ascribed: security, well-being, survival and freedom. The dynamically developing study of security, changing the subject and subject of research, poses many intellectual challenges. The theoretical orientation of the researcher and his assessment of the current international situation is of great importance in setting the directions of research. The perception of the interdependence of forces and means, factors constituting the sum of megatrends of social, economic and cultural changes,

raises new research questions and broadens the research field of security science. The study of human nature and motivations for actions can be the basis for analyzing the decisions of political decision-makers and thus also the motives of the states that co-create international political, military and other relations. “The issue of the necessity to choose between conflicting values belonging to the sphere of security of the individual (...) is attracting more and more attention.” By exploring the tensions, which arise within the framework of clear ethical and normative positions, it is not always possible to reach agreement, but certainly horizons are broadened and there is a better understanding of the issues. Such an analysis allows us to see more clearly the essence of the choices made between values and makes societies, responding to perceived threats to the individual’s security, make decisions with greater ethical awareness. In the figure below, four research assumptions are presented that may form the basis for the development of research on individual security.¹³²¹³³



¹³² J. Stańczyk, op. cit., p. 171.

¹³³ F. O. Hampson, op. cit., p. 222.

These are consistent with the research motivations that ethical care theorists undertake. Their common feature is the belief that with the improvement of an individual's well-being, with actions that enhance his subjective sense of security, it is possible to improve local, regional and international security. But the idealistic belief in man, his good nature, is the weak point of this course of reasoning. Realists and neorealists will argue that competition is embedded in human nature, which contributes to the race and rivalry in the field of security, thus intensifying the rivalry of states and maintaining an atmosphere of natural conflict, the dynamics of which sets the tone for a set of actions confirming the correctness of the assumptions of the theory of rise and fall.

3.2 ETHICS OF CARE AND THE SAFETY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Two ways of perceiving security are clearly outlined in the scientific and didactic works. The first is to think of security as an accumulation of power. According to this line of reasoning, the subject who wants to be safe must possess other valuable goods such as assets, weapons, an army and financial resources. In this understanding, security is the strength of human resources and capital of knowledge and experience.

The second approach refers to the individual approach in security research. It treats security as a state dependent on care for justice and the functioning of human rights. It is described as the relationship between actors in a negative perspective – security as the absence of threat and positive – security as the circumstances that foster it.

It requires joint commitment from partners. This engagement creates a degree of credibility between them, which in turn translates into trust and predictability.

When we ask about security, about how to provide security, we have to assume that we already know what it is and what it is not, and that there are also actors who are capable of shaping the future in a way that is desired.¹³⁴

The literature on the subject points to at least three concepts of human security. These are:

- Legal – defining the security of the individual in the category of natural rights and the rule of law.
- Humanitarian – defining humanitarian intervention as a means of restoring and safeguarding fundamental human rights.
- A broad view – analyzing various forms of threats to human well-being, especially in relation to well-being: economic, ecological and social.

The human security approach, making the human being the primary subject of reference to the world around her/him, calls for looking at global security through the prism of the security of individuals, social groups, smaller socio-economic and political organisms, closer to humans and their problems. This is because the threat to the fundamental interests of the individual has a powerful influence on the level of global security. Hence, the main area of research on human security will be the global, regional and local security conditions of individuals, their analysis, classification and hierarchization. This trend perceives a kind of relationship between one individual to another and between people and the environment around them, including technology. Disparities in these relationships,

¹³⁴ Manuscript of lectures by Prof. J. Konieczny, own archive.

such as differences in income, access to knowledge, new technologies, the latest achievements of civilization, prejudices and stereotypes, historical memory, etc., increase the likelihood of violence and war, and thus increase the vulnerability to conflict and unsettling forms of its resolution.

By asking the question of safety in the light of the assumptions of the ethics of care, we ask who is supposed to be safe? The reference is a person who is active in himself – who carries out his or her life in a particular moment in history, in a social cultural context and as a a socially active person, who co-creates the identity of a group and who becomes fully formed through participation in particular social groups. Finally, a person who is a citizen of a state.

A safe state	For years, there has been a dispute and discussion about the security principles of the international system
A safe society	Shaping the group identity that makes up various systems. Bureaucratic, civil, regional, religious, cultural, etc.
The security of the individual	Which is not considered through the prism of military resources, but in the context of human dignity. That dignity is ultimately determined by the number of children who have not died, the diseases that have not spread, the ethnic riots that have not erupted, the dissidents who have not been shut up, and the humanity that has not been broken.

Source: Own study based on the manuscript of George W. Bush's lectures

In reference to the content of chapter two, it can be seen that an emotionally fractured society, under pressure from global megatrends of development, articulates much more frequently and clearly the need for care for her/his security. It seems to recognize that the security challenge and one

of the effects of globalization is the risk of exclusion and the deterioration of people's livelihoods and the international situation, especially in marginalized regions and areas of poverty. An example is healthcare, social security and differently perceived human well-being. The concepts of an individual's well-being and security therefore grow out of her or his own care for her or his security. They are then elevated to the prominence of the agendas of political movements and associations, that feed into the electoral programs of political parties and influence the shape of the national security strategy.

This argument is based on the belief that the global nature of the changes, their scale, scope and object increasingly touch on the sources of yesterday's civilization, the set of values, norms and beliefs that so far constitute the world and define the conditions for a secure existence. The relativization of reality, the scale of disinformation, technological progress, the fall of previous authorities, the secularization of social life, the risk of pandemics and other manifestations of the mass of society, make one of the leading areas of security of the individual his mental state. Among the questions addressed to security psychologists, then, are those relating to what affects the fact that individuals in different communities perceive security threats differently? What are the reference systems for these threats? Can the perception of threats deviate from the objective assessment of them? If some of the current thought trends divert from the concept of objective truth and encourage the development of agreed truth and beliefs, what effect will this change have on the meaning of security? Thus, the pluralization of thoughts and beliefs, and their relational nature, may result in methodological difficulties and inconsistencies in the theory and concept

of security of individuals and social groups. The very perception of the inevitability of threats places the individual and security institutions in the relationship of a passive observer and an inevitable victim, or an active actor who, with the help of modern forces and means, with the use of the latest technological advances, will be able to model and thus reverse and mitigate the threats and vulnerability to them. An important element that could sort out this sometimes-seeming cognitive chaos is a return to thinking about the ethical foundations of the interpersonal relationship, between man and the rest of nature and technology.

An analysis of the assumptions of the ethics of care, even fleeting from the point of view of the great theories of international relations and their importance for the security of the individual, leads us to consider the constructivist approach as one that demonstrates the convergence of research assumptions in the relationship of care and the individual and its security. The basic dependent variable in this approach is the recognition that behaviors, interests, needs, expectations and relationships are socially shaped and therefore are susceptible to change as frequently as human nature is. So, if we are able to name the determinants of social change, then we can predict threats and estimate their risks. If it is possible to predict risk, it is therefore realistic and necessary to identify ways to respond to risk and plan actions to mitigate that risk. A key skill in this area is good discernment.

If we can demonstrate a correlation between the accepted values and motives of human activity, then it is possible that adopting assumptions of ethics of care will improve security and contribute to building measures of trust and cooperation for peace. As Hampton writes,(T) he assumptions of constructivism resonate well with the

formation of feminist theory – including that it assumes the constructed nature and variability of social, political, and economic relations”¹³⁵

The ethics of care thus create the axiological basis of politics, in this case in the field of security, giving new meaning to the norms and values on which security actors stand, and on which relationships between them are shaped. The ethic of care creates a new code of interpersonal relations that pays attention to the dignity of each person, subjectivizes the individual and her/his need for security without engaging in polemic with the relative variables on the basis of which the individual’s security is valued or denied the possibility of satisfying that need. It introduces order to the relational nature of threats. It is based on the non-hierarchical nature of inter-personal relationships, a respect that does not deprecate other meanings, and it gives new impetus to the importance of humanity’s relationship to nature, presenting it as one of the elements of the network of conditions of local, regional and finally global security.

The ethic of care can claim the right to fill the sphere of relations between individuals, the individual and social group, as well as between social groups. It complements, interprets and points to norms and values, attitudes and beliefs that have historically changed customs, moral precepts and political rights. It can be seen as a universal norm of social control, which can be both a political norm and a barometer of security. The concept of political norms is understood to be those that regulate some of the social relationships between large social groups and between groups and individuals. Norms of social control either express a social desire to do something that is valued

¹³⁵ F. O. Hampson, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

positively or formulate an injunction to refrain from actions that would be socially valued negatively.¹³⁶

The assumptions of ethics of care is not the secular equivalent of religious values. However, they are not only based on the legacy of the great religions, but also on the experiences of secular society, redefining them and giving meanings acceptable to the majority. A set of these norms as a form of social control is an expression of the actual commands and prohibitions in society, the violation or respect of which generally causes certain group reactions called sanctions. It creates a set of beliefs and values of a theoretical and motivational nature, supporting the realization of positive values or defending against negative values. These norms are characterized by the fact that they appeal to the individual as a person, to what is acceptable and what is not acceptable to the other person and the environment. Thus, the care ethic defines personal patterns i.e. the ideal of a person acting according to a defined hierarchy of moral values in relation to the relationships he builds with his own “self”, the other person, the environment and Nature and technology, giving ethical value to the relationships formed with them.

3.3 INDIVIDUAL SAFETY ETHICS

The remarks made in the previous paragraphs indicate that the individual safety dimension from the point of view of the care ethic refers to an individual's sense of security, which is the result of caring relationships and responsibility for others. In the context of security, care

136 In. Z. Najder, Wartości i oceny, Warszawa 1971, p. 64 et seq.

ethics assumes that care for the well-being of the individual should include not only meeting her/his basic needs but also creating an environment in which the individual can feel protected and respected. This is reflected in its networked nature.

From the perspective of this ethic, safety is not just a state of non-danger, but a dynamic process that requires mindfulness, empathy and active support for the individual in difficult situations. This means that individuals and institutions responsible for providing safety must take into account the specific needs of different social groups, including their experiences, fears and expectations.

In practice, this means that the individual safety dimension includes aspects such as ensuring access to adequate healthcare, creating public spaces that are accessible and safe for all, and providing emotional support in crisis situations. Care ethics is about understanding that security is not only a matter of physical protection, but also a care for the emotional and psychological well-being of an individual, taking into account her/his specific needs and life situations in this context.

There are also studies in the literature that, in part based on the main idea of care ethics, develop another concept and concept called security ethics. This is a new field of research in the field of ethics, which encompasses the security of the individual in an interdisciplinary way.

Jessica Hessen proposes that by the concept of security and sense of security, we understand a state that objectively presents itself as protection from or absence of objective threats. Subjectively, perception is understood as an individual's confidence about the reliability of the security devices that protect their interests, the need for security. The expert points out that security means the relative state

of risk management that occurs under certain conditions, depending on time and environment.¹³⁷¹³⁸

According to Hessen, the need for research focused on safety ethics was born from the fact that security is becoming a major topic of discussion, a major social need articulated by different individuals active in different social spheres. „We talk about investment security, faith and food security, and safe sex. We talk about the need for the safety of young children, the need for state security, the safety of pensions, the safety of drinking water, the safety of electricity supply and the sense of safety of people at night.” Especially in recent years, with the development of tools called artificial intelligence, the issue of the security of our data, cybersecurity, has played an increasingly important role.¹³⁹

The concept of security in our personal and social lives is now taking the form of a fundamental value. This means that either security competes with other values or is seen as a basis for their implementation. Safety ethics no longer legitimize acquired knowledge, already developed safety technology, or already made policy decisions. Safety ethics is also not a prelude to a pre-clear and detailed rule that would make the world a good place if everyone followed it. Ethics in science is not a culmination, an end, but part of the process of scientific work itself. In this way, it does not moralize, but shows the conditions for action alongside the possible consequences and alternatives to action. In dialogue with representatives of various fields of social activity, such as politics, economics, technical sciences and

¹³⁷ More broadly: Nowy Leksykon Meyera, 1994, s. 12, p. 12.

¹³⁸ J. Hessen, Sicherheit, Macht und Ethik, [in:] R. A. Qiunn, Sicherheitsethik, V.S. Spronger 2014, p. 78.

¹³⁹ J. Hessen, op. cit., p. 79, own translation.

civic initiatives, it seeks to ensure that ethical problems are recognized in a timely manner, critically discussed and resolved to the best possible extent. This is where its power is revealed. It draws on its openness to interdisciplinarity. Ethics in the context of security is interested in developing criteria for security conduct, asking questions about its adequacy and moral correctness, and analyzing the impact of security activities on social concepts. At the same time, it deals with a clear presentation and analysis of the supposed assumptions underlying a particular form of security-making. Security ethics fits into the context of cultural ethics. Both the concept of security and the concept of ethics are intertwined. Security appears as a material and symbolic dimension of culture and can never be reflected only in a view of a single security decision, of security texts, of security techniques". The security ethic is intended to help place the urgent requirements of security and related security creation processes in the context of "doing right" and "living well."¹⁴⁰¹⁴¹

Researchers in this field see the increasing importance of security studies taking into account their political, economic and social conditions. However, they ask additional questions related to the ethical dimension of the actions taken, the use of force and the means deployed to improve security in different areas of social life.

The most important research challenge for security ethics is to reflect on the kind of security that is necessary for society. It is important to search for possible answers to the question of how, on the basis of which norms and values, can a certain level of security be achieved? The

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem, pp. 8 and 9.

research questions posed by security ethicists fall within a set of questions that border on public safety and the personal freedom of individuals. Among them, there are also questions and reflections on the relationship between the concepts of justice and security, or on the principles governing the development of protective measures such as those based on biometrics and visual surveillance.

There exists a security paradox. For while increasing importance is placed on the global technological determinants of individual security, and with technological progress, despite the efforts and many efforts made by different social groups, we can observe an increasing sense of insecurity. Contemporary social trends: advancing globalization, secularization, and individualism make relationships increasingly difficult to diagnose. On top of this, economic and ecological challenges are mounting, generating new needs and reinforcing the yearning for security.

CHAPTER 4 / IN SEARCH OF CARE

4.1 THE CONCEPT OF A CARING CITY

BY DAVID SIM

It is not easy for a politician or other political actor to introduce the tenets of the ethics of care into political practice. This does not involve the proclamation of a set of rules for a caring society or the adoption of a legal act under which these or other guidelines will be decreed. For it is difficult to assume that the practice of social and political life will be incorporated into the letter of the law on the basis of which the behavior of the addressees will be expected to be modified. It would also be naive to expect that the social narrative that motivates human actions will suddenly change. The ethics of care, without a deeper understanding of its nature, can be met with reserved, sometimes hostile, attitudes. It therefore requires social leaders, opinion leaders, politicians and politicians to possess the capacity for self-reflection. First, these actors should want to understand the benefits of reconfiguring the foundations of social life in accordance with the tenets of the ethics of care. This is not a revolutionary change, but an evolutionary change, the positive results of which will start to encourage the wider implementation of the principles of a caring society.

The change of the social foundations, values and attitudes that organize the sphere of social and political relations is a process in which the will to change and engage in it, is declared by both sides of the relationship. As a result of their implementation and socialization, a new social and political identity is created that is the source of action. It should be emphasized that the people who hold social and political functions, who decide on political issues, who manage the goals and measures of public policies on a daily basis, have a greater responsibility for the direction of change and the pace of its implementation. They are active actors of social socialization and therefore bear greater responsibility for the quality of social life.

The implementation of the assumptions of the ethics of care into the practice of social life requires the awareness that this change is possible and serves social development in today's geographical, cultural, social, economic and political conditions. Changing the consciousness of political elites involves making an intellectual effort and reflecting on the actual source of changes in political preferences and demands, the ways in which they are articulated and the thematic areas from which social needs arise. The changing nature of the social environment of human life causes the preferences and behaviors of the system to change with it. Naturally, the system changes and evolves further.

Examining the assumptions of the ethics of care, from the point of view of politics and security, especially in relation to security in the city, encourages a re-examination of selected contemporary concepts and trends of research on the city.

In an extremely valuable book on the history of cities, Ben Wilson justifies the need to increase interest in cities for several reasons. First, cities are the centers of life and

thus are the reference point for the most important aspects of human existence. Second, by 2050, cities will be home to two-thirds of humanity. Our past and our future are inextricably linked to cities. We are currently witnessing the greatest migration in the history of the world, the culmination of a six-thousand-year process that will lead to us becoming an urban species by the end of this century. Cities are like a stage in a theatre with great potential for scenery changes, in which actors – residents – play their vital roles, each according to their own script. Together, they create a world that is adaptable to the changes that take place on the stage, in the audience and behind the scenes. Understanding the dynamics of social behavior in cities allows us to describe and analyze them and to modify them in terms of the challenges we face every day. The study of contemporary cities is important for many reasons, because cities are dynamic centers of social, economic and cultural life.¹⁴²¹⁴³

Many concepts of the development of contemporary cities can be found in the literature of the subject. They primarily emphasize the analysis of the impact of global challenges on human life and its immediate environment. They also define how, in order to remain resilient to the negative effects of a turbulent urban environment, one can prepare for, respond to, and perhaps prevent them. With regards the concept of urban research, consistent with the ethics of care, it is necessary to:

- Perceive the impact of climate change on city life.
- Perceive a relationship between human lifestyle and the pace of climate change.

¹⁴² In. B. Wilson, *Metropolis. Najważniejszy wynalazek ludzkości, Czarna Owca*, Kraków 2022, 10 et seq.

¹⁴³ Ibidem, p. 9.

- Promote participatory forms of urban governance.
- Observe a relationship between architecture and urban planning and the quality of life in the city.
- Move away from purely capitalist pro-development motivations to promote the integral development of the individual.
- Pay attention to the psychosocial determinants of life in the city.
- Study the relationship between humans and technology and the environment.
- Change the nature of the relationship and communication style between residents and local political elites
- Take into account gender differences affecting the way cities are planned and managed.
- Identify social needs and select legal, financial instruments appropriate to circumstances and opportunities.
- Increase emphasis on improving the quality of life in the city in an integral way by identifying different aspects of human well-being and others.

With reference to the above, selected characteristics that characterize this trend of urban research and development, the starting point in the context of care, is the experiences of the caregiver-care receiver relationship. As discussed in the first and second chapters, we often assume—based on stereotypes—that the caregiver occupies a hierarchical position over the care receiver, who is typically viewed as someone needing guidance, while the caregiver is known best what is possible and necessary for the patient. He decides for the patient, while limiting his decision-making autonomy by appealing to the care arising from knowledge. This relationship can be referred to the relationship between the authorities and the citizen, between authorities in the city and its inhabitants. We see that the future of

the city as a place of life is closely linked to the nature of the relationship between the authority and the inhabitants. It is the power of the authorities that influences how the city will be organized. Its legitimacy for urban development can be legitimized in an electoral act, once every few years, or on an ongoing basis as a result of its use in city management, the instruments of deliberative democracy.

The motivation for action that grows out of the ethics of care reformulates hierarchical relationships in favor of a non-hierarchical approach, in which the caregiver makes a diagnosis, takes care actions not so much based on a set of their own attitudes and beliefs, but on the basis of the patient's discernible expectations. It discerns needs, examines expectations and asks the patient how it can help to make her/him feel better. It does not question, there are no ready-made unequivocal solutions, but it diagnoses and moves away from stereotypes in favor of an individualistic approach. It adapts possibilities to local circumstances and needs.

In this sense, the ethics of care is dialogic – it prefers participatory forms of discernment of individual and social problems and needs, and develops non-schematic solutions based on them. The deliberative background of the activities motivated by the ethics of care involves changing the perception of the political leader, the official by himself, and thus his role in local politics, in the local community. Change is a willingness to relinquish attachment to one's own visions and concepts in favor of discerning needs and taking other opinions into account. It is a willingness to ask, in a relationship with the other person: What can I do to help? What more can I do? What are your needs? What can we do together to meet those needs? Can and when do you feel safe? What affects your sense of security?

Criticism of a caring approach to city functioning can point to an inadequate selection of management tools in difficult times, when other priorities are supported by a team with different values. It seems that we are once again at the stage of the neorealist narrative in global and regional politics. The attributes of power, which focus on protecting interests and zones of influence, are once again gaining importance. They link power and the struggle for it to the anarchic nature of social reality and the combative nature of man. In this view, care can be the justification for violence, the violation of the rights and freedoms of other people. It is in this context that Harari sees that the last three global narratives: fascism, communism, and liberalism, which ordered social and political reality, have lost their power. The common man feels irrelevant, his mental system is deregulated, his social and political life is plagued by a crisis of confidence, and liberal thought seems to her/him, according to Harari, be oblivious to modern challenges. The core social challenge lies in constructing the foundations of a collective sense of security. Yet, once again, we witness a resurgence of simplistic, combative motivations – those that derive strength from division, submission, and hostility, particularly in the face of technological and systemic challenges.

The ethic of care sees this reality differently. It seeks to understand and discern it and argues that the selection of forces and resources necessary to ensure a sense of security in the city will be better and more effective, if preceded by discernment, recognition of interdependence and differences. Moreover, it recognizes that in an age of explosion of social diversity, urban development, spillover and increasing attractiveness, it is necessary to change the old tools of city management, reformulate the style of

policy and change its priorities to better reflect the needs of individuals. The Ethic of Care is not the same set of new, revolutionary slogans, but is a reformulation of them, which changes the role and importance of social activists, politicians, and administrations in the performance of their tasks and functions. It emphasizes that diversity is not a threat, but a creative tension that unleashes new fields of activity of the inhabitants, recognizes differences in the political preferences, in the postulations of the activists, and without questioning their rightness, comes out to meet them.

Despite the understandable criticism formulated in relation to the concept of the Caring City, we are already able to imagine:

- Effective public consultation, e.g., in the field of planning and spatial planning, which does not zone the city, but integrates the different functions of space into a set of interdependent functions supporting integral human development.
- Formulation of rules of local life, writings and instructions of officials and information posted on local media – in plain language and in the language of national minorities.
- Flexible planning of urban mobility with the participation of residents' representatives, e.g., expressing their opinions in the formula of the council
- Non-competitive empowerment of local politics and cooperative inclusion.
- Working with teachers, parents and students, taking into account local needs and opportunities, to develop a municipal education development strategy; viewing educational institutions through the prism of their

non-educational role, animating local life, residential community, district and others.

- Using new technologies to improve the resilience of local communities to emergencies.
- Establishing women's councils with their budgets and real-world impact on city policy.
- Conducting civics' lessons and, for example, promoting school participatory budgets.
- Considering the needs of its users in the design of the urban space.
- Opening of the local government unit offices not within the framework of service hours but as a Dialogue Center or Resident Service Center.
- Functioning of social activity incubators.
- Ongoing evaluation of the programmatic activities of any municipal policy and no fear of correction and its continuation etc.
- Selection of forces and means necessary to improve the health security of the community.
- Reformulating the working style of the local administration and adapt it to the needs of the residents.
- Designing a space that will be oriented towards social integration – inclusive.

One concept that relates, not directly, to the assumptions of the ethics of care is the concept by David Sim called The Friendly City. The author bases his concept on the belief that cities are not the problem, but the solution to contemporary problems. In terms of diagnosing the condition of the social fabric, he sees that "the fundamental difference between living standards and quality of life is that the standard of living depends on how much money we have and how we spend it, whereas the quality of life

depends on how much time we have and how much we spend it.”¹⁴⁴¹⁴⁵

Sim describes the concept of the city, which focuses on the relationship between man and nature, between man as a consumer of goods and technology that can improve his life. It's an image that visualizes the other person in a positive light. Sim's concept promotes social diversity, efficient communication with the promotion of zero-emission means of transportation, including pedestrian traffic and a human-scale city that facilitates social interactions, thus reducing the human distance created by the spatial and functional segregation of different parts of the city, even within a single quarter. Sim admits that “a city divided into zones is not so much uncomfortable on a daily basis but also contributes to social problems because different groups of people (...) do not come into contact with each other in a natural way”, as the idea of neighborhood disappears.¹⁴⁶

The concept of the soft city is a construct that supports friendliness through mutual knowledge, relationships, counterpoint and complement of the smart city and a turn toward already proven, not always expensive, human-centered solutions. It is characterized by gentleness, softened and therefore perhaps better suited to current social needs, urban policy tools.

“A friendly city seeks simple solutions that can mitigate the impact of climate change and neutralize extreme weather conditions so that residents can comfortably spend their time outdoors”, he said. The city is a network

¹⁴⁴ D. Sim, *Miasto życzliwe. Jak kształtać miasto z troską o wszystkich*, Wysoki Zamek, Kraków 2020.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 119.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 121.

of relationships. “It is a place where many overlapping connections coexist – public, private, communal and individual, formal and informal”. This is the concept of the functioning of urban political elites, administrations, which are not just a brick-and-mortar political shell, but a complex combination of hardware and software. “The common denominator of all these elements is the combination of density and diversity of everyday life, which allows people to function better together”, Sim said.¹⁴⁷¹⁴⁸

The principles of the city
1. Diversity of building forms
2. Diversity of outdoor spaces
3. Flexibility
4. Human scale
5. Accessibility to pedestrians
6. Sense of control and belonging
7. Pleasant microclimate
8. Limited carbon footprint
9. Greater biodiversity

Source: Own development

The concept of D. Sim’s *soft city* refers to the ethics of care in at least two aspects. The first is the care for nature, on the basis of which the author develops the idea of the eco-city. The second aspect is the care for

¹⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 213 et seq.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 246.

human-supporting spatial development. In reference to the first thought, the eco-city in accordance with the assumptions of care supports:

- Revitalizing yards with the aim of preserving their microclimate.
- Biodiversity;
- Planting trees along streets;
- Setting up microgreens, winter gardens and so on; Green roofs that better conserve scarce water resources.
- Locating social life along rivers.
- Breaking down the division of urban areas into public and private in favor of shared space.
- Exploiting natural sources of energy and light, e.g., through the development of renewable energy sources.
- Enabling frequent human contact with nature.
- Favoring small-scale solutions rather than large-scale solutions.

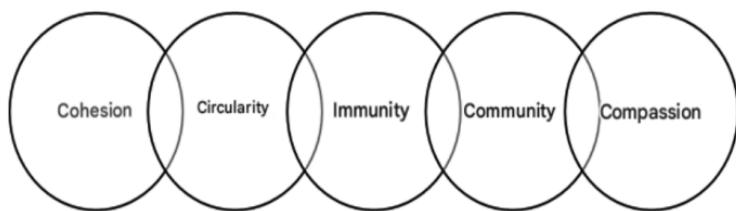
In this concept, the emphasis is placed on the simplicity of solutions, convenience, naturalness, mutual friendliness, accessibility of urban infrastructure combined with a compact structure with a variety of purposes and uses.

4.2. J. F. P. ROSE'S CONCEPT OF A WELL-TUNED CITY

The concept of a caring city is developed by a work by Jonathan F. P. Rose entitled *A Well-Tuned City*. In it, the author reflects on the role that modern science, ancient civilizations and human nature can play in charting the directions of development of modern cities. The figure below

presents the principles that Rose believes should be guided by city managers when thinking about their future.¹⁴⁹

Figure 1. The Principles of a Well-Tuned City According to J. F. P. Rosea



Source: J. F.P. Rose, Well-Tuned City, Caracter, Kraków 2019

As an important starting point for the study of contemporary cities, the author, like the researchers like him, considers that modern cities show a much greater pressure towards the interdependence of their individual elements and entities of urban life. This is the first point of contact with the ethics of care.

Comparing cities to adaptive systems that show a tendency towards homeostasis and symbiosis with the environment of the system, along with building analogies of the urban organism to the organism of natural systems, is innovative and creative. At the heart of this concept is the belief that cities can be designed and managed in a way that meets the needs of their inhabitants, while respecting natural resources and the environment. These systems consist of many moving parts, linear development and predictability, specifically understood cyclicity. This dynamic

149 J. F. P. Rose, Dobrze nastrojone miasto, Wydawnictwo Karakter, Kraków 2019.

view of the city corresponds with the recognition that the main subject of urban policy is the active person, developing in a dynamic environment. The city is, according to Rose, the most complex system ever created by humans. "Healthy cities must have both strong authorities capable of responding to change. M. T], as well as a culture in which residents feel responsible for the common good and for each other.¹⁵⁰¹⁵¹

The concept of the common good, and an urban culture that cares about it, is another element that supports and develops the ethic of care at the heart of urban research. In this concept, mutual trust, social capital, growing inequalities and divisions, and fear of the future of modern cities are important aspects of building resilience to events. Rose compares contemporary urban challenges to circumstances that in the U.S. military are called VUCAs, i.e. volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. He goes on to say that the best way to address these megatrends is to think creatively to build urban systems that are more integrated, resilient, and flexible, ready to prevent extraordinary and predictable events based on an analysis of the impact of climate change on man and his environment. According to J. F. Rose, coherence is a fundamental condition for the prosperity of cities. It is expressed, among other things, in the development of new urbanism that includes and eliminates existing divisions in the allocation of urban areas. Coherence is also postulated in research on the metabolism of cities.

¹⁵⁰ J. F. P. Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁵¹ J. F. P. Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

We share J. F. P. Rose's view that cities have their own metabolism. Energy, information and matter flow through them. „One of the best responses to dangerous megatrends such as the consumption of natural resources is to develop circular, closed metabolic systems. Today, they are linear. They must take a circular form, consistent with the course of things in nature. Coherence, circularity, community, resilience and care are key elements of this concept. They provide a healthy balance between the interest of the individual and the well-being of the collective. Caring and compassion, Rose argues, “allow us to bridge the gap between “I” and “we”, pointing toward something greater than an individual’s fate. Caring for others is a path toward our own sense of fullness – toward the fullness of the society of which we are a part.”¹⁵²¹⁵³

Introducing the concepts of “compassion” and “care” into the narrative about contemporary cities, presupposes the pursuit of development goals based on altruism. Rose writes that, “Cities also need a pervasive culture of compassion – rooted in neighborhoods, disseminated in temples or places of reflection and repose, reinforced by the collective effectiveness of for-profit or nonprofit activists”. “Society can only grow on the soil of trust.” The author, quite ideally, assumes that by introducing the principles of moral altruism into interdependent social, economic, political and other systems, we gain the necessary synchronicity and reinforcement of resilience to destabilizing threats that threaten the safety of urban dwellers. One of the most important challenges for urban communities is their rapidly increasing religious, traditional, and

¹⁵² Ibidem, p. 36.

¹⁵³ Ibidem, p. 38.

racial diversity. Hence the need to weave a unifying and interweaving language into the narrative of the city that supports the composition and union of humanity with nature. Rose also emphasizes the importance of combining modern technologies with traditional values and knowledge, drawing inspiration from ancient civilizations that created their cities in harmony with nature. *A well-tuned city* is a vision of sustainable, equitable and resilient urbanism that puts people and their relationships with their surroundings at the center. It is an essential set of beliefs consistent with the tenets of caring ethics and the economics of feminism.¹⁵⁴

4.3. FEMINIST CONCEPTS OF CARING CITIES

Feminist notions of caring cities and feminist economics are the concepts most consistent with the tenets. However, we recognize that without recognizing the richness of feminist concepts, the ethics of care can be met with unjustified criticism and labelled as a feminist theory, especially in relation to left-wing feminism.

Urban feminism is a current that focuses on introducing gender equality into the design, planning, and management of cities so that urban space meets the needs of all residents, regardless of gender. It stems from a reflection on how patriarchal structures influence the way cities are shaped, often ignoring the needs of women and other marginalized social groups. Women, in a variety of social roles, often have different needs from men regarding safety, access to care infrastructure, public transport or services

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 421.

close to where they live. This trend also stresses the importance of safety in public spaces – both physical and emotional – through adequate street lighting, planning for open spaces, or eliminating “dead zones” in cities. It also calls for considering the needs of women who do unpaid care work, such as proximity to nurseries, schools, or easier access to transport to travel with children. It is also important to ensure that women have an equal voice in urban planning decision-making processes, which allows them to better respond to their needs and expectations. Urban feminism seeks to create more equitable, accessible and inclusive spaces that foster diverse ways of living. This approach not only reinforces equality but also improves the quality of life for all residents by promoting the vision of cities as safe, functional and friendly places for everyone. It is important to emphasize that the feminist movement is not an homogeneous one.

Unlike secular feminist concepts of urban development, Catholic urban feminism is an approach that combines the principles of urban feminism with the values derived from Catholic social teaching. It emphasizes the need for social justice, solidarity and care for the common good in the context of urban spaces, whilst taking into account the specific needs of women as an integral part of the community. In this regard, particular emphasis is placed on protecting the dignity of every human person, in accordance with the Catholic vision of equality, which is based on the belief that all human beings are created in the image of God and have equal value.

Catholic urban feminism can be expressed in the desire to design urban spaces in a way that supports the family, strengthens local communities and promotes human solidarity. It takes into account the needs of women in their

different roles – as mothers, workers, caregivers or active participants in social life – with an emphasis on ensuring easy access to care infrastructure, workplaces, recreational and religious spaces. In addition, Catholic urban feminism draws attention to the need to create public spaces that are safe and friendly for all, especially for families with children, the elderly and people with reduced mobility. In line with the principle of intergenerational solidarity and preferential treatment for the poor, it promotes urban solutions that eliminate inequalities and ensure access to basic resources for those most in need.

This is an approach that fits in with the call to care for the common home, contained in Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si*, which stressed the need to protect the environment, human dignity and social justice in cities. Catholic urban feminism encourages the construction of urban spaces as places that not only respond to the needs of residents, but also promote a culture of encounter, respect and support, in a spirit of Christian love thy Neighbor. Among the leading representatives of this trend are Pope Francis, Margaret Hebblethwaite, Dorothy Day, and Elisabeth A. Johnson.¹⁵⁵¹⁵⁶¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ M. Hebbelthwaite, *Motherhood and God*, London 1984. *Motherhood and God: Hebblethwaite, Margaret*: Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming: Internet Archive, Downloaded November 25, 2024.

¹⁵⁶ She's a candidate for the altar.founder of the Catholic Woman Movement.

¹⁵⁷ E. A. Johnson, *She Who Is, The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, Crossroad 2009.

There are many concepts of urban design and management that are supported by feminist research currents. Despite their diversity, the starting point of urban feminism is the observation that until now the subject of research on cities has been dominated by men.

The second assumption is that urban space and its shape, affects the forms of activity of each person. The mere observation that traditional technical professions are under-represented by women means that the shape of urban space, the design of infrastructure and social solutions are decided by men, and their recipients are also women. In addition, in the sphere of political activity, at the level of executive power, there is also an over-representation of men who design and manage cities according to their needs.

Feminism recognizes the important role that cities play in the social revolution initiated in the 21st century. The city is no longer seen by women as a source of moral corruption and a dangerous place for them, but as a chance to break free from provincial norms, to escape from traditional values. For example, due to the differences in the culture of mobility between men and women, women are more likely to use urban space and explore it on foot. The knowledge gained from these experiences allows them to identify architectural barriers and communication inconveniences more frequently than men.

For some feminist circles, those classified as secular feminism, at least two pieces of literature are representative of urban issues. The first is by Leslie Kern called *City for Women*. The second is Caroline Criado Perez's book entitled: *Invisible Women. How Data Creates a World Tailored for Men* Leslie Kern argues that her own urban experience is deeply gendered. Gender shapes the way we move around the city, the way we live every day, and

also affects the use of opportunities that the modern world offers.¹⁵⁸¹⁵⁹¹⁶⁰

L. Kern describes the impact that urbanization and urban development have on the division of roles in society. On the one hand, their spillover into the suburbs was a driving force for the development of transportation infrastructure and supported economic growth through the boom of the construction sector, but it gave rise to many challenges and problems that many smaller municipalities that form agglomeration systems around the major cities struggle. From a social point of view, there was the problem of transport exclusion and reduced access to other services traditionally concentrated in the centers of large cities. In turn, city life became less attractive for various reasons, and as the financial condition of many households improved, the development of the banking sector and the popularization of mortgages occurred, there were processes described by geographers as depopulation and suburbanization. These changes have involved the strengthening of archaic social roles that make it difficult for diverse models of family and professional life to function. Further social changes result in increased diversity and the redefinition of social roles, according to L. Kern.

158 L. Kern, *Miasto dla kobiet*, Wydawnictwo Czarne, Wołowiec, 2023. Tł. M. Tomczak. B. Wilson's book on metropolises raises in subsequent chapters the problem of the presence of women in the city, the perception of their role and tasks in cities over the centuries. Worth a look: B. Wilson, *Metropolis. Najważniejszy wynalazek ludzkości*, Czarna Owca, Kraków 2022, pp. 65, 96, 227, 282 and pp. 63, 69, 73. Joanna Kuciel-Frydryszak's book, *Chłopki. Opowieść o naszych babcach*, Wydawnictwo Marginesy 2023, is of considerable importance for the perception of women's roles in the history of Polish cities and villages.

159 C. C. Perez, *Niewidzialne kobiety*, Karakter, Kraków 2020. trans. A. Sak.

160 L. Kern, op. cit., p. 15.

Kern sees a shift in the politics of contemporary cities to address phenomena such as gentrification, the breakdown of traditional social bonds, migration, and changing social roles. She sees that they “need a more expansive and liberating vision of the city that includes issues of caregiving, improved safety, and a change in urban assumptions that make the default user of the city the architectural norm: white, able, cisgender male. Rather, I mean that freedom, a sense of security and autonomy are the foundation of a city where people want to connect with each other and with the nature around them.”¹⁶¹¹⁶²

Leslie Kern also highlights the intersectionality of urban issues, drawing attention to how race, social class, ability and gender affect urban experiences. In her book, she cites examples of grassroots feminist initiatives, such as public spaces designed with groups that have been marginalized, and urban activism that fights for safer and more accessible cities. Projects such as safer transportation systems or community-centered spaces like those in Kigali or Copenhagen reflect Leslie Kern’s vision of transforming cities that value care, collaboration and diverse social relationships.

The concept of a feminist city, according to Kern, is not just a theoretical ideal, but a continuous experiment in creating fair and equal urban spaces. Kern also criticizes *corporate urban feminism*, warning against feminist spaces that unwittingly support gentrification processes and perpetuate class and racial hierarchies.

Another author, C.C. Perez, speaks in a similar spirit. Both Kern and Perez share similar views on the discriminatory impact of spatial planning on the quality of life and

161 L. Kern, op. cit., p. 69.

162 Ibidem., p. 135.

safety in the city. They see the blame for this in the way cities have been planned and managed by men. Their beliefs are based on anti-paternalism, supported by feminist economics and declared androgynous. Criado Perez argues that “urban planning that does not take into account the risk of sexual assault violates women’s equal rights to public space – and failure to provide decent sanitary conditions is just one of many ways urban planners exclude women”. The author devotes part of her book to the fear caused by the use of urban space by residents of multi-ethnic agglomerations. Fear and anxiety can relate to crime, racial and sexual violence, and pedestrian safety in traffic. She blames the lack of safety primarily on urban planners and local politicians, who, when designing and managing the city, often insufficiently take into account all aspects of their decisions. The lack of awareness is also due to the fact that “women don’t report these incidents for a variety of reasons. Some of them have a social background: stigma, shame, fear that the person reporting will be blamed or that no one will believe them, and the authorities can do little about it. It’s society that needs to change.”¹⁶³¹⁶⁴¹⁶⁵

Analyzing Caroline’s work from the perspective of care ethics, Criado Perez sees at least one convergence. She sees that interpersonal relationships, responsibility and care for others, are particularly important for marginalized groups. The care ethic underpinned by feminist economics emphasizes that care, including care for equal access to resources and equitable treatment, should be the foundation of societies functioning. In this sense, Perez’s book reveals

¹⁶³ C. C. Perez, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 74 and 75.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibidem.*, p. 79.

how designing spaces, services, and policies in a way that doesn't take women's experiences into account leads to ignoring their needs, which runs counter to the principles of care that assume diverse perspectives and needs should be taken into account.

The concept of a kind city therefore calls for an overhaul of decision-making in various areas of social life, such as healthcare, transport and technology, which have often been designed with men in mind. It calls for not only improving the status quo but also creating systems that take into account the needs of different groups, including women, at every stage, especially in areas that may seem neutral but are in fact biased. Their core value is to build more inclusive, equitable and sustainable social structures that are based on mutual respect, understanding and responsibility for the good of others.

The translation of these theoretical assumptions into the practice of cities managed according to the idea of caring ethics are attempts to implement them by some think-tanks and local activists. As a rule, the arguments in favor of caring cities are raised by those environments that operate on the basis of feminist economics, patriarchal counter position and androcentric urban perspective. The perspective of gender studies in urban studies, as Zofia Łapniewska and Katarzyna Puzon argue, is not new. The authors postulate that the gender dimension should not be reduced only to drawing attention to the presence of women in urban spaces, but above all by emphasizing the importance of gender in the process of experiencing the city and its influence on the creation and transformation of the urban fabric structure. Andrzej Szahaj, sees in post-modernity that social ties undergo further atrophy, supported by deepening ideological and ethical pluralism,

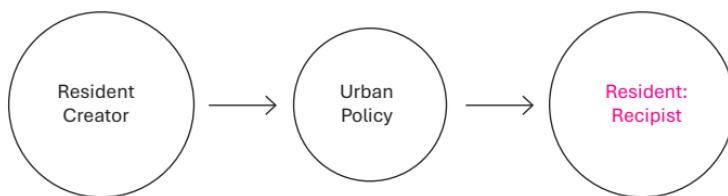
mistrust and the greater role of law than custom as the basis for regulating human relations. These ties are formed and can develop in a city, which is the result of the actions of actors in a web of complex systems.¹⁶⁶¹⁶⁷

The theoretical basis of the city is the development of the Scandinavian trend of research on the city, present in ecological, humanistic, sociological and political orientations. Its representatives include David Sim, Peter Walker, Janette Sadig-Khan, Johnatan F. P. Rose and others. Each and every one of these authors, designs visions of the city by recognizing the variability of the circumstances of its functioning, the mistakes made in urban planning and in the spatial planning policy of cities, and the conclusions of research that take into account the dynamics of contemporary social relations. These cities create a space for the inclusion of citizens in their history, and the means to do this is the subjectivity of the inhabitants of the city in relations with authority. Giving new meaning to the relations between citizens and local authorities and their complement, with the perspective of the co-creator, is one of the starting points of the debate on equal urban policy. This relationship is illustrated in a simplified way in Figure 1.

¹⁶⁶ Z. Łaniewska, K. Puzon, *Płeć i miasto*, Downloaded from: <https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/server/api/core/bitstreams/66faodb3-aa04-4ced-ab06-c9a3e10f2025/content>, Accessed 11/02/2024, p. 38.

¹⁶⁷ In. A. Szahaj, *Ponowoczesność i postmodernizm dla średniozaawansowanych*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2021, p. 113. et seq.

Fig. 1 Relationship between resident and urban policy maker



Source: Own development

The aim of empowering residents in relation to the city authorities is to improve the quality of urban space, taking into account the natural differences between the inhabitants (the demand for equality) and to support continuous civic participation.

Sofia Jimenez Castilion and Esther Moreno Lopez are the authors of a report on Zaragoza and the concept of a caring city. In it, the authors develop a social vision of the city that they believe could serve every resident. This concept is supported by three pillars: policies implemented by specific institutions, civil society and the activity of social movements. It is based on three perspectives: the feminist perspective of urban studies (anti-patriarchalism, anti-neoliberalism, anti-colonialism and environmentalism); cross-sectoral projects; and the combination of many individual experiences. A caring city [Stadt der Sorge] is a city that cares about people. Its administration – the Center for Social Needs – implements social projects on a micro scale, thus making a closer connection between social needs and urban politics. A change in the philosophy of the city is that it shows that cities only function because people provide their care, often free, to others. We are dependent on this work. The city is a space dependent

on opposing dependencies, and as a whole it can only function when its smaller parts function well. The authors see the differences between urban neighborhoods. Seeing these disparities, they outlined the proposed methods to reduce them. According to them, the policies of care are:¹⁶⁸

- Social justice.
- Community support.
- Areas of action: education, social assistance, systemic care, community housing, the elderly.
- Sustainable mobility.
- High-quality jobs.
- Pro-health policies.
- An urban space adapted to the needs of the inhabitants.

According to the authors of the report, a caring city is a city of good life, in which the main principle is democracy and institutions open to the urban society; community and solidarity practices of everyday life; development of public services; good material and spatial conditions – urban space dedicated to the inhabitants and intangible ideas and beliefs such as: solidarity, responsible development, work life balance, promotion of interpersonal relationships.

The concept of a caring city is also supported by caring for the safety of its inhabitants. It is also about security in the material sense: the institutions, infrastructure, forces and means necessary to build systems of resilience to the threats visible today. But a friendly city also refers to care in the intangible sense: it is care for a dignified, just human living conditions, care for his well-being.

¹⁶⁸ Sofía Jiménez Castillón und Esther Moreno López DAS PROJEKT „SARAGOSSA ALS SORGENDE STADT“ Eine feministische Vision, Downloaded from: Das-Projekt-Zaragoza-als-Sorgende-Stadt_dt_FINAL.pdf, Accessed 1.XII.2024. Own translation.

In the same spirit, Izaskun Chirchilla Moreno wrote her book. Analyzing life in the city from the perspective of its inhabitants' sense of security, the author invites us to rethink architectural and urban models. She prioritises not so much the technical, formal and abstract knowledge sought by urban planners, but rather the public and civic dimension of the residents' experiences as they seek to take care of themselves, others or themselves. It is not without reason that the concept of a caring city as dynamically as in the sphere of social policy is developing on the basis of architecture and urbanism. The reason for this is the underlying concept of a caring city: the relationship of man with his environment and the appreciation of the influence of architecture on a person's sense of security. In addition, it is recognized that the architecture of an urban space is as it is planned, and thereforit can be adapted to the needs of the inhabitants by arranging social space.¹⁶⁹

There are many studies devoted to this issue. These include Julie Darris's work "The Caring City". „Ethics of Urban Design" and reports from many NGOs. The movement to create inclusive and safe cities for women, girls and people of diverse gender identities has been developing since the 1970s. Historically, urban planning often overlooked these social groups' needs, leading to the creation of unsafe and inaccessible public spaces. The change came with the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It stressed the need to incorporate a gender perspective into urban planning. Over time, this concept has evolved from simple violence reduction to a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to

169 Broader: J. Ch. Moreno, Caring city, Actar Publishes, New York, Barcelona 2022.

integrating a citizen's development and the environment in which they live.¹⁷⁰¹⁷¹¹⁷²

In 2011, the Third International Conference on Women's Safety in New Delhi, titled "Building Inclusive Cities", highlighted the importance of ensuring women's safety in urban environments through an integrated approach combining spatial planning, community engagement, policy making, and law enforcement. The key role of involving local communities, especially women, in decision-making was also highlighted, to ensure that their needs are taken into account. These themes are continued and developed by, among others, an association of mayors from over 100 cities around the world operating under the name C40.¹⁷³

Classifying the concept of a caring city only with a feminist orientation is a kind of cognitive simplification. A notable disadvantage is that this concept, using feminist language and meanings, limits the perspective of the city and reduces it to a very limited interpretive tool. Thus, it significantly limits the implementation potential of this concept. However, it should be noted that adopting an equally limited male perspective would result in the same result. Therefore, an interpretive framework in the form of the ethics of care is a category that allows us to eliminate the indicated threats. It allows us to reduce bias and turn towards relativity, as well as the contextual dimension of life,

170 J. Davis, *The Caring City. Ethics and Urban Design*, Bristol University Press 2022.

171 Project Change. More: City Hub and Network for Gender Equity, Access 9.12/2024.

172 Broader: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 18 December 1979.

173 More about the movement: About us C40 – C40 Cities, Access 10.12/2024.

as well as preserving the safety of individuals in the city. The ethics of care, within its determinants, draws attention to the important elements of urban life and allows for the implementation multi-dimensional solutions . However, it should be noted that the masculine and feminist perspectives already adopt different starting assumptions resulting from a different hierarchy of needs, biological aspects, language (in terms of articulating one's needs), but also predisposition to perform social roles. The indicated predispositions can be defined in the gender dimension, but from the perspective of the ethics of care, they need not be determined by it.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ethics of care is an important element of contemporary moral reflection, offering an alternative to traditional, hierarchical ethical approaches. Its key assumptions, such as relationality, contextuality, and the meaning of emotion, indicate that care is not merely an individual moral act, but a fundamental normative category that can shape social ethical structures and public actions. The integration of care into social systems makes it possible to eliminate inequalities while strengthening community cohesion and solidarity.

In the context of ongoing considerations around the ethics of care and security, the perception of dependence is that the higher the level of danger of a subjective and objective individual and social group, the greater the social pressure to seek narratives that introduce predictable, and therefore perceived as safe, order. Thus, security is seen as surveillance and control over what threatens cherished values and therefore allows us to control possible threats based on available legal, technical, and organizational tools. We develop this idea and accept that in light of the ethics of care and security, especially in its individual dimension, is not only a state of absence of danger, but a dynamic process that requires mindfulness, empathy and active support of the individual in difficult situations. This means

that individuals and institutions responsible for ensuring safety must take into account the specific needs of different social groups, including their experiences, fears, and expectations. Actions should be taken to strengthen feelings of safety, care, and trust. These are preventive measures that are often undervalued in the current implementation of local security policies.

The concept of a caring society combines the ethical and the practical dimensions, pointing to the need to harmoniously combine care with the safety of individuals and communities. Therefore, we believe that social relations based on mutual care promote the building of social capital, while strengthening a sense of belonging and stability. However, the practical implementation of such a model requires the redefinition of public policies and their adaptation to the diverse needs of citizens. Analyses presented by researchers such as Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Joan Tronto, and Joan Phillips demonstrate that the ethics of care is a dynamic process, based on the interdependence of actors and their relationships.

Another insight developed in the course of the book's work is the recognition that moving away from hierarchical relationships in favor of egalitarian interactions creates the foundation for democratic and inclusive societies. In such structures, care becomes an expression of both moral responsibility and political commitment. The implementation of the principles of care ethics in the area of public policy can be an effective tool for overcoming systemic hierarchies. The implementation of care-based solutions allows us to design inclusive mechanisms that respond to real social needs. At the same time, they strengthen civic dialogue and foster greater involvement of communities in decision-making processes.

In the context of global crises – social, ecological and technological – the care ethic serves as a catalyst for change. Its normative framework, based on solidarity and co-responsibility, provides answers to contemporary moral challenges. The solutions offered by care ethics take into account both the individual needs of individuals and the common good, creating space for actions that support sustainable development. Caring, in this sense, ceases to be just a moral category – it becomes a normative perspective whose importance grows with the rise of civilizational challenges.

In our view, the ethics of care is an integral part of building an inclusive and supportive society. Its potential extends beyond interpersonal relationships, to include systemic actions in areas such as politics, education, and healthcare. Implementing care as a guiding principle allows us to shape communities that not only respond to the needs of individuals but also strengthen their capacity to participate in the construction of just and resilient societies. In the face of rapidly changing global conditions, care remains a key tool in achieving sustainable and inclusive development.

We have spent a lot of time discussing the fear we perceive in society. By analyzing the available bibliographic material, as well as looking more broadly at the conditions of recent elections in Poland, France, and the United States, we have observed that the background of changes in the political and economic environment of social systems clearly shows that fear is an important tool to guide social and political behavior. A message in which each side is right, each side questions the other's right, leads not to agreement, but to aggression. Aggression built on fear. Ethics of care, as a normative and practical approach,

offers a range of opportunities for social transformation based on the values of empathy, co-responsibility and relationality. Its implementation in various areas of public life can contribute to building a more inclusive and sustainable society. The following are key recommendations for the application of ethics of care.

1. The ethics of care is only seemingly utopian

A caring society is not just a utopian model – its assumptions can be implemented in practice through public policies that focus on inclusion, sustainability and relation, among others. In the context of security, caring offers an alternative approach to risk management that not only protects individuals, but also strengthens their ability to cope with the challenges of the modern world. On the other hand, from a systemic perspective, it enables the development of social impact tools more quickly. In light of these assumptions, the concept of caring cities is presented interestingly in the last chapter of this book.

2. A socially active individual motivated by the premise of caring ethics can develop his or her humanity in the real world today.

This is a person who takes action for other people or communities, guided by values such as empathy, compassion and responsibility for the well-being of others. The key traits of such a person are empathy and sensitivity to the needs of others and s/he is able to see and understand the difficulties that other people are facing. S/he puts their needs first and tries to address them, guided by a deep sensitivity to suffering. An ethics of care emphasizes the

importance of interpersonal relationships. A socially active person, basing her/his actions on this ethic, seeks to build and strengthen bonds, and also acts for the well-being of the community. Action motivated by care rather than profit or duty – Unlike an approach based on formal principles or moral obligation (as in the ethics of justice), an ethics of care focuses on practical support and assistance where needed. The motivation is a care for the welfare of the other person, not external rewards or coercion. Pragmatic approach to problems – instead of theoretical considerations, the person focuses on concrete actions that can improve the situation of others – e.g. organizing help for people in distress, working in local social organizations, supporting those in emotional need. Moral responsibility for the other person – in the ethics of care, responsibility is not understood as an abstract commandment, but as a natural obligation arising from being part of a relationship and community.

3. Incorporating the ethics of care into educational programs is an important component of social change.

An essential step in implementing the ethics of care is to introduce it into educational programs at all levels of education. Education that focuses on the development of empathy, communication skills and a sense of co-responsibility is the foundation for building a society based on caring values. It is particularly important to include in curricula modules on soft skills, such as conflict resolution, group cooperation and sensitivity to the needs of others. Such activities not only strengthen social capital, but also promote pro-social attitudes, which are key to strengthening community cohesion.

4. Public policies based on the principles of care ethics are already being implemented.

The development and implementation of public policies based on the ethics of care is another key area of action. We see the value of implementation in the field of health security. In practice, this means designing solutions that take into account both the material and intangible needs of individuals. Particular attention should be paid to aspects such as sense of security, emotional well-being and the ability to realize social potential. Examples of such actions include psychological support programs, the development of networks of care institutions or initiatives promoting equal access to educational and cultural resources. Implementing these solutions also requires cross-sectoral collaboration, bringing together the efforts of the state, NGOs and local communities.

5. Promoting the idea of “caring cities”

Inspired by the concepts of David Sim and Jonathan F. P. Rosa, the idea of “caring” cities should be developed that put the quality and standard of living of residents first. Caring-based urban projects promote social inclusion, inclusion and building people-to-people relationships. Public spaces such as parks, squares and community centers should be designed with the needs of residents in mind, taking into account age and cultural and economic diversity. The creation of caring cities contributes to strengthening social bonds as well as improving the quality of life, which in the long run can lead to a reduction in problems such as social exclusion and alienation.

6. A holistic approach to the concept of individual security is necessary.

We note that alternative definitions of security are gaining scientific significance. These are definitions and concepts developed following intuitive investigations in intersubjective communication between researchers using both intellect and intuition. An alternative understanding of the content of the conceptual security category consists of the following meanings, to which specific meanings are ascribed: security, well-being, survival, freedom. The dynamically developing field of security studies poses many intellectual challenges. The theoretical orientation of the researcher and her/his assessment of the current international situation are of great importance in setting the directions of research. The perception of the interdependence of forces and means, factors constituting the sum of megatrends of social, economic and cultural changes, raises new research questions and broadens the research field of security studies. The study of human nature, motivation for social actions, can be the basis for the analysis of the decisions of political decision-makers and thus the analysis of the motives of the states involved in international political, military and other relations.

The ethics of care can play a key role in formulating sustainable safety strategies. Integrating the material and intangible dimensions into security efforts allows for a more comprehensive approach to social problems such as poverty, exclusion and health crises. Holistic security strategies should take into account both physical aspects, such as health care infrastructure, and psychological aspects, like access to emotional and social support. This makes it possible to build more resilient communities that can respond more effectively to diverse crises.

7. Understanding through dialogue – strengthening democracy

Ethics of care can also play an important role in the development of deliberative democracy. The implementation of inclusive mechanisms that enable citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes helps build social trust and remove systemic barriers. Care, as a tool supporting civic dialogue, allows for the creation of space for the authentic participation of different social groups in discussions on key political and social challenges. Examples of such activities can be citizen panels, public consultations or deliberative forums that engage diverse stakeholder groups in co-decision processes.

The recommendations presented above highlight the potential of care ethics as a tool for social transformation. Its inclusion in educational programs, public policies, urban strategies, and security systems can contribute to building more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable communities. In the context of contemporary challenges such as global social and environmental crises, care ethics provides a normative and practical framework that fosters solidarity, co-responsibility, and civic engagement. Implementation of these assumptions, however, requires collaboration between different sectors and a paradigm shift in thinking about public policies and social structures.

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