

Eryk PIESZAK

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8086-3935>

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## **Anxiety and Safety – the Ideology of the Consumer Society**

In every society there must be something to which its members refer, something that is a determinant, the basis of its members' lives. They can be shared values, confession or ideology. Being able to find yourself in a group is nothing else but finding ways to achieve your goals and simultaneously, something that gives you the security to realize them. Safety is one of the basic human needs. The consumer society must also fulfill this need. However, you can ask how? We will deal here with finding something that can be called the basis of social life in the society of late capitalism. When we start talking about the consumer society or the world of consumption, we quickly come across a trend called postmodernism. Postmodernism is a thought formation, very difficult to determine unequivocally. Within it there are many thinkers with very different views, so you can talk about many types of postmodernism. Conversely, you can easily list at least a dozen or so characters, who, although significantly different from one another, can, however, in a colloquial way, be 'put in a bag with the word postmodernism.' However, it is difficult to find a solid validation for this type of practice.

Just as it is impossible to determine who is a postmodernist, also an attempt to determine what postmodernism is, by definition, doomed to failure. This is because whatever we say, we will have to grasp something intangible, something that eludes and treats its continuous changes as a priority. It is fascinating that despite many definitions (better and worse), it is difficult to actually find a humanist who would acknowledge this way of thinking. Each theoretician attempts to clarify his place in the area of theory with a term that distances him from postmodernism. The humanities have quite accurately explained what grammarology or deconstruction is, what neo or poststructuralism is. The same applies to modern pragmatism. If we find someone who actually deals with postmodernism, we discover that he is 'simply' a theoretician, historian or researcher of the phenomenon itself, not its creator. For this reason, the only thing we can do is to define postmodernism as a phenomenon following modernism, characterized by certain features. Any more precise verbalization, however, leads to the systematization of thoughts, and thus deviation from the bottom line of the phenomenon.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the author's earlier manuscript, realizing that a thinker who belonged to the trend called postmodernism cannot be found, the author discusses this issue using the works of W. Gombrowicz. Today, it seems a certain abuse to the author (concerning the majority of commentators). Gombrowicz has a coherent concept, so defending himself, not quite considering it as a success, he overcomes the phenomenon called postmodernism (Pieszak, 2003).

Trying to answer the question, ‘What is postmodernism?’, the author would like to refer to one of the first mentions about this concept. In the sixties, when the term itself arises, first voices appear that may be of interest to modern commentators.<sup>2</sup>

As Daniel Bell claimed, ‘The postmodern attitude requires that what previously took place only in imagination, really began to happen in life. The difference between art and life has disappeared. Everything that is allowed in art is also allowed in life’ (Bell, 1998: 89). It is this and similar views that justify interpreting literary works as postmodern, while their creators (especially those who are no longer alive) have no chance to defend themselves. Bell and thinkers with similar views mean something completely different. The fact that everything allowed in art is allowed in life as well does not mean that art has become a theory of life. It rather means that at present man would like to afford everything he can imagine. Thus, the customs change radically.

Increasingly, the man of the consumer society, at least the one who surrendered to its processes, wants unlimited possibilities, he wants not to be a creator or artist who is allowed to do more than other people, he wants to be the creator of his own life. The process of creating your own life, yourself, your world is the central part of existence for the consumer. There is no longer arduous creation of your identity, it is a joyful creation. At the same time, the artist does not require the slightest effort, he does not even want to reveal what the idea of the creation was, he rather says: look what I have done, it is beautiful and has a wise message, but you have to read it all. The consumer himself is unable to interpret anything. In this case, life is art in the sense that it does not obey the rules, including the rules of art. Connections do not have to be harmonious, shapes and the message clear. Everything is a kind of breaking, but it is not even breaking rules as no one knows the rules.

It can be said that the process of art here is more a protest of denial of anything – either to set rules or norms, or even lack thereof.

Bell describes this phenomenon on the example of changing morality in America. ‘Protestant ethics and puritanical attitudes set a code that made work, sobriety, sexual reticence, and self-restraint life valued. They defined the framework of morality and social respect. The postmodern culture of the 1960s – as it adopted the name of the counter-culture – was interpreted as a denial of Protestant ethics, a rejection of puritanism and a final attack on bourgeois values’ (Bell, 1998: 91). The way of looking at postmodernism proposed by the author of the *Cultural contradictions of capitalism* enables to avoid previous problems. Therefore, postmodernism is not a ‘new ideology’ replacing the philosophy that occupies this place due to the impossibility of further validating metaphysics. It is rather a grass-roots movement of rebellion against a (bourgeois) social attitude, resignation from the middle-class lifestyle.

More precisely, Bell says, ‘The collapse of the traditional bourgeois system of values was essentially a product of the bourgeois economic system, or more precisely – the functioning of the free market’ (Bell, 1998: 91). In this view, postmodernism turns out to be a counter-culture forced by the free market. The essence of a bourgeois

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<sup>2</sup> The author would like to emphasize here a certain perspective which is important to him as a researcher, namely: changes in the society that are currently taking place in Central Europe (transformation of society into consumer society) have been noticed and criticized in the Western world (exactly in this time).

way of life developed its antithesis through the free market in the form of an impossible to characterize an anti-ideology of the middle class.

Bell's prognosis seems to be surprisingly inscribed in the considerations regarding the thought formation that we are considering here. The postmodern attitude, which gives the impression of a human conglomerate of doctrines, divides into two directions. Philosophically – this is a kind of negative Hegelianism as in the case of Michel Foucault who treats man as a short-lived historical incarnation, a 'trace in the sand' that will wash away the waves, after which nothing remains. 'Ruined, controlled by the plague, the city of man called the 'soul' and 'being' will be deconstructed. This is to be not only the end of the West, but the end of all civilization. Most of it is fashion, a word game that pushes the thought to the absurdity of logicalness' (Bell, 1998: 87–88). Bell also notices the other direction, a postmodern attitude that has serious consequences in the name of liberation, eroticism, freedom of desires, etc. It provides a psychological tool of crime against the values and motivational patterns of 'normal' behavior. 'This is the meaning of the postmodernist doctrine, it occurs in everyday garments. This means that we are on the verge of a crisis of the middle class values' (Bell, 1998: 88).

If, however, we treat postmodernism as a natural ideology of late capitalism, responding to the crisis or being the essence of this crisis associated with globalizing culture, we can see that it is a natural ideological creation that is built by the so-called 'invisible hand of the market.' This means that it is an ideology created for the needs of market functioning, improving it and making sense do not exist, there is no truth, no security, and the market can find the antidote for anyone. Obviously, the author does not mean to say that it is also not a response to modernism and a doubt in its ideals. Rather, the emerging opposition has become an ally of certain mechanisms that it wanted to refute. Therefore, postmodernism is both appealing and repulsive, being an expression of opposition, it has become a consent. Fighting with the ideal of modernity, reason, rationalization, etc., postmodernism has become a permit for marketization. 'Cultural problems have fallen into the background. In fact, they have not lost their fundamental importance. In the preface to *Capitalism Today*, the author wrote with Irwing Kristol, 'You cannot understand important changes taking place in modern society, not fully aware of the difficult capitalism self-awareness. It is no longer just an ideological superstructure, but one of the most significant and fundamental factors for the future of the system.' These changes are so fundamental and weighty as they concern people's aspirations and character as well as the legitimacy and moral justification of the system, that is what sustains society' (Bell, 1998: 118).

As in modernity the ideological superstructure was thinking in bourgeois terms, nowadays an absolute revolution of that type of thinking had to take place. Capitalism<sup>3</sup> does not accept fixed situations, just as it does not accept values. They inhibit development, they stop production and thus destroy the free market. The driving force is a change that allows you to exchange one product for another, similarly exchange one value for another, exchange one information for another. Liberalism means absolute freedom in temporarily satisfying needs through consumption. For this to happen, one

<sup>3</sup> Writing 'capitalism,' or the 'invisible hand of the market,' the author means individuals who unite in their efforts to build, expand the mechanism in free market conditions, that is those who believe in its more or less objective existence.

should stimulate consumption by changing the perception of reality. The man must learn the change, be afraid that he will not be able to learn it and, each time, buying other goods, discover that he is safe.

Bauman writes about this kind of constant education, 'If in the conditions of fluent modernity, education and learning are to be useful, they must be continuous and indeed last a lifetime. It is difficult to imagine any other model of education or learning. The 'formation' of one's 'self' or one's own identity must take the form of a continuous, always unfinished re-formation' (Bauman, 2007: 229). This constant transformation of the 'I' is an indispensable condition of our choices. We need education throughout our lives so that we can choose. We also need it even more to save the conditions that make this choice possible and real (Bauman, 2007: 135). Education is used to enable us to know between what we can choose and what must be done so that the choice is possible and it does not have to be institutionalized education. It is supposed to cause that still as individuals we will remember about danger and should give – or rather make it possible – that safety. It is hard not to notice, however, that if education is to last, it is to have a continuous character not only in the scope of acquiring knowledge, but also in deepening knowledge of the final topics. What is life, how does it end, where is it going, what is its essence and how can this essence be achieved?

According to Colin Campbell, consumer activity 'became a kind of a template or model for the way in which citizens of contemporary Western societies began to perceive all their activities. Ever since (...) the 'consumer model' has assimilated more areas of modern society, we should not be surprised that metaphysics of consumerism that was hidden in it became a kind of default philosophy of all modern life' (Campbell, 2004: 41–42). However, if one can agree, at least partially, with the first part of this statement, it is difficult to accept the second without serious objections. Indeed, the consumer model requires that all activities be perceived as related to consumption. The reservation will concern the possibility of perceiving all activities as one kind of activities. Even if instead of looking for the answer to the question 'about the meaning,' we get something that disrupts our attention as part of the market exchange, the question will come back. What we need here is some ideology that will legitimize the consumer's actions. But can it be metaphysics?

The market requires consistent behaviors, which, however, cannot be permanent. The 'metaphysics of consumerism' is so much related to philosophy that it is sometimes encouraged by temporary metaphysics. What is now is not necessarily tomorrow. Today, the consumer is to be convinced that this product not only 'is' ('is a being'), but it also determines reality, existence or being a consumer. However, what 'is' today, what confirms 'being,' tomorrow ceases to 'be.' The market rejects everything that is permanent.

Rorty describes the difference between metaphysics and modern solidarity as follows, 'While the metaphysician recognizes morality of other human beings as a reference to a more powerful universal power – for example, rationality, God, truth, history – the ironist thinks that a morally significant definition of a person, the moral subject is 'something that is subject to humiliation.' The sense of human solidarity is based on the feeling of a common threat, not shared ownership or shared power' (Rorty, 1996: 130). Solidarity of the threat turns out to be very important here. It is the threat Rorty

has invoked that can become the main engine of the market and the main drive of the emergence of a constantly changing ideology. The threat of losing: rationality, God, truth, history, the threat of humiliation. The threat we are talking about here is made possible by the acceptance that these determinants of reality will be rejected by the followers of the consumer society, i.e. the followers of growth. Undermining everything and everywhere will lead to constant searching for something solid, at least in the short term. It is a search for transcendence that you can buy.

Rorty also explains that the metaphysician thinks, ‘the intellectual’s job is to preserve and defend liberalism by supporting it with some real claims about extensive issues’ (Rorty, 1996: 133), while the ironist ‘thinks that the task is to develop our recognition skills and describing all kinds of good things around which individuals or communities live their fantasies and their lives’ (Rorty, 1996: 133).

The existence of fantasies, their recognition, the possibility of their fulfillment and the threat of dissatisfaction seem to be the basis of the market ideology. Where there is a choice, the fear of dissatisfaction and omnipresent fun, all aspects of the consumer market can be developed. Let us have fun, after all it is a joy of life, a kind of worship of life that is to lead to its full affirmation. I live, I am, I want to participate in what belongs to every man – joy and happiness is what the market is meant to bring to me. This is how one can briefly summarize the aspiration of an individual who wants to be an individual of the consumer society fully. However, according to Rorty, we are today witnessing an irreversible breakdown of Enlightenment efforts to base human rights and liberties on some transcendent or transcendental basis, free from basic randomness. Even the course of historical events can no longer be understood as a uniform process by means of some engulfing metanarrative (the Marxist narrative on history as a class struggle no longer applies, according to the author of *Contingency, irony and solidarity*). This means that metaphysics has been ‘removed,’ at least by the consciousness of some part of the society, especially by some of today’s humanists.

We do not have to consider the question here whether there is any metaphysics today, but to think about what took its place and why it happened. This problem is clarified by Ewa Rewers, recalling Baudrillard’s thought, ‘Both the transcendental source of light and the light of this human recipient have been removed from this type of discourse. The language of metaphysics is extremely difficult to translate into the language of electronics and vice versa. Hence, what Baudrillard wrote about – ‘the whole metaphysics is falling down’ (Reverse, 2005: 134). One can therefore see a departure from metaphysics in a new way of perceiving the world, expressing thoughts and participating in a new order in which ‘light,’ expressing, for example, transcendence, has been turned into an ordinary light bulb, meaning at most underexposure. Security is here about having a backup light bulb and not building confidence in a time when I do not see the light.

One can therefore ask whether postmodernism is actually the ideology of capitalism, or rather the result of special transformations in the post-industrial world? Perhaps it is different, maybe the ideology of the market is more connected with the order similar to the Enlightenment perception of reality. Pierre Bourdieu writes about it, reflecting on the content of advertisements, ‘The similarity between the subject mat-

ter of the advertising vulgate – long used to speaking the language of *desire* – and the most typical topics for high philosophical popularization, as well as correspondence between the social policy of the dominant class (which resigns from the old alternative ‘all or nothing’) and new pedagogy (widespread as strictly bourgeois, which hopes for liberalism and civil liberties), would be fully enough to show that new ethics, flourishing in the vanguard of the bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie, perfectly suits a certain form of Enlightenment conservatism’ (Bourdieu, 2005: 456–457). Liberalism would be closer to Enlightenment ideals than postmodern anti-metaphysics. This would mean that the ideals of the market are based on some lasting ideals, whether approaching the ‘Enlightenment mind’ or ‘desire’ as the main element of being. The market would then have its own philosophy, a certain narrative that could be compared to all other great narratives, such as religions or Enlightenment ideals. But would desire be able to replace Reason or God? If it is a desire to refer to all kinds of rituals that are to help the man to fulfill himself, to satisfy himself, then suddenly we can see that we deal with a certain similarity as if marketing saw what faith is for a person and used other ways to satisfy the same needs in this place. You do not have to believe in any God and eternal life if you have a free market that can give you happiness and peace of life, and (thanks to insurance) after its completion. You do not need to learn the truths of faith since you can learn the truth of fashion and the correct ‘admired’ way of being in society, you do not have to participate in the rituals of reading some ‘holy books,’ if you can read the press and listen to blogs of modern creators. Everything that marketing uses strangely resembles behavior based on faith, but with a serious difference that marketing emphasizes the change. The god of this religion is growth, and it is constantly expanding the search area. It awakens new ideas, shows what else you can try, where else you can stay and so on. Height is a deity that includes more and more. It is a factor introducing change and, at the same time, it is something that can trigger uncertainty, and thus the irony of everything that seems constant in all classical metaphysics as well as drawing attention to the thought we call postmodernism.

Pierre Bourdieu notices that this new order is consistent. As he writes, ‘You can even ask yourself whether morality of liberation does not offer the economy of an ideal consumer, which the economic theory dreams about from the beginning, and not only by pushing to constantly consume new products. The most important contribution of the new morality could consist in the production of isolated consumers (in spite of all associations, statistical groupings of activities perfectly adding up) and thus having the right (or forced) to stand in a dispersed formation on separate markets (for children, teenagers, ‘third age’ people, etc.), generated by the new economic order, and without restrictions and brakes imposed by collective memory and anticipation, in a word – consumers freed from temporary structures appropriate to domesticated individuals, with their life cycle, perspective ‘planning,’ extended for several generations and collective mechanisms defensive against the brutal and direct demands of the market’ (Bourdieu, 2005: 457). As we can see, according to the author of *Distinction*, the most important factors that would interact with the market are desire, liberation and isolation. Thus, metaphysics of the market, according to this author, requires, by isolation, to substitute the Enlightenment reason for the market desire. One wonders whether metaphysics of the Enlightenment has evolved into metaphysics of desire. The Enlightenment reason was nothing else but

the desire to rule. Validation, which reason could not have become, has evolved into the desire for legitimacy, and this one, in turn, in the satisfaction of desire. In this way, the Enlightenment actually becomes the cause of the conditions conducive to the emergence and development of the market. However, this does not contradict the fact that the consequence of the Enlightenment is postmodernism, a ‘metaphysical lie’ – without validation and even without creators (thinkers who would admit it).

Many researchers see the negative effects of postmodernism, and it seems that they even value this trend negatively, instead of looking at its consequences. Daniel Bell wrote, ‘Avant-garde does not exist anymore because nobody in our postmodernist culture today defends order or tradition. There is only a rush to the new – bored with both the old and the new’ (Bell, 1998: 88–89). This part of the text is very clearly in line with what has been said earlier about consumption and its foundations. The rush to the new is always a rush to new boredom, if the new one was interesting, it would cause reflection and would have some meaning. The lack of movement towards boredom results in the lack of consumption. The consumer must be bored and every promise to release him from boredom must only be a better promise.

The sense instead of a promise would set a new path. Finding sense would cause that the individual carried by his discovery would find satisfaction himself. However, as Jean Baudrillard wrote, ‘There is no more hope for meaning. Without any doubt it is just that the meaning is deadly. This is why it imposed its short-lived reign, which it wanted to destroy, to introduce enlightened rules, namely appearances – they are immortal, indestructible and not even affected by nihilism of the sense and meaninglessness. This is where seduction finds its origin’ (Baudrillard, 2005: 196). The sense in this approach had a short time of reign. What remains after it, however, is immortal. On the immortal usurping of desirable states one can build a real world in which everything tempts, seduces, gives something although no one knows what he really got, and by looking at what he got, he does not even know if he ever wanted to. The lack of sense entails searching. The search must lead to satisfaction, but since there is no real satisfaction, one can seek satisfaction in the ritual, in constant renewal of the same activities, in calling to the world for one moment of satisfaction, a look, a purchase, a recall – ‘the presence of satisfaction.’ Therefore, a salesman appears here like a priest evoking a longed-for state.

This seller will offer any type of ‘gratification.’ In every field he will have the right ‘talismán.’ Let us say clearly, ‘Postmodernism [...] signals the logical extension of market authorities over the entire range of cultural products – writes David Harvey – Precisely because capitalism is expansive and imperialist, cultural life increasingly gets into the power of the vicious circle of money and the logic of the capitalist circulation of goods and services’ (Harvey, 1998: 62). One cannot say that postmodernism is the ideology of the free market, just as one cannot say that the free market has created or led to the creation of postmodernism. However, in their company the market and postmodernism feel very good. It seems that the interpretation that they are guided by the same laws, expanding to all aspects of human activity, has its basis, which can be observed without much difficulty.

Moreover, it is difficult to overlook the fact that, in a way, both postmodernism and the free market have something shaky, which is not connected with any rational order,

at least for recipients. Both in one and in the other case, those who are theoreticians can see such a basis. In the free market it is growth, in postmodernism – the uncertainty of any system, the structure of general rights and the like. In combination, however, we are dealing with the symbiosis of the free market and postmodernism. Where there is nothing certain, there is uncertain growth with its patterns, arrangements, with its change. It seems that there is something giving a more or less constant determinant of order, at least in the social world. Interestingly, the individual must first believe that nothing solid can be built to then believe that in a wavering performance, a vision of a constant pursuit of a better world one can find support. While on the one hand it may look like a diagnosis, on the other it is similar to some blind obedience, trust, faith...

Following the reasoning of the theoreticians of the consumer society, at the very beginning of the road one can notice in their statements a certain double vision of the problem perception. On the one hand, it is the result of rationalizing human activities within economic processes, improvement of production processes, sales processes and satisfying needs, on the other hand, it is a total reevaluation, lack of constant values, confusion, anxiety resulting from the lack of permanent references. This duality is expressed – on the one hand – by the impersonal nature of the processes that take place on the market, and on the other – it is known that the market can be created only by conscious individuals. They can achieve their goals differently. They may follow others, as in the case of the ‘Veblen effect,’ or ‘imitation of the behavior of people in higher social positions’ (Appadurai, 2005: 102). However, there are other ways to find out in this reality. We cannot overlook the fact that we not only attract attention by imitating others through consumption. Getting rid of consumption can also draw attention and bring social consequences (Appadurai, 1986).

Both are looking for some basis for their actions. Both need something permanent that will give security. Money can be such a basis. Consumers need it to safely consume, those who refuse consumption to protect themselves.

Money can thus become something that sets the basic social relations. Therefore, to our considerations an interesting topic can bring issues related to money and its role in human life. Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry, referring to Chris Fuller (Bloch, Parry, 2005: 226), recon that the role of money is underestimated in the ethnographic descriptions. A. Appadurai emphasizes the importance of this factor, mentioning five paintings-landscapes: ethnic, media, technology, financial and ideological ones (Appadurai, 2005). The term ‘landscape,’ which appears here, emphasizes that they have a fluid, irregular, overlapping character (Kuligowski, 2007: 17). The author would not like to dwell on the essence of the landscape anymore as he would only like to show that financial matters occupy an extremely significant place here. Since the inception, money has played an important role. The man attributes the causative power to it, and, simultaneously, from the time of Marx, many people have repeated that capital is not able to create anything by itself. Therefore, raising capital and desire for profit is not a job.

However, let us notice that in order to maintain a variable determinant of the value, which is supposed to be money, other values must be constantly challenged. Thus, if we have an undeniable, expressive value, for example ‘human life,’ we can convert it into a financial dimension. You can calculate how much a particular person earned and

if he/she died for reasons dependent on someone, multiply his/her potential life time by the average earnings and you will know how much compensation the family should be paid. In this way, only the financial reference becomes certain, and not the 'value of life' itself.

You can find concepts that attribute the elimination of the absolute morality to money, but 'Money has completely different meanings in different cultures, [...] it can have a different meaning even within the same culture. Money presented as destructive to social relations can also be seen as an instrument for maintaining it' (Bloch, Parry, 2005: 240). Money was invented to facilitate certain processes, and since it has been functioning in so many cultures, in such different dimensions to this day, it means that people see how much it can make life easier. Money itself, like consumption or many other phenomena that we deal with here, cannot be negatively valued. One can, however, wonder what has changed in its use, and especially how some people start behaving differently in relation to money.

Maurice Godelier explains that today 'social existence is not possible without money, without means; ultimately, physical existence becomes materially impossible. And this is the source of problems. The social existence of individuals depends on the economy and the individuals, when they lose or find no job, they lose much more than just employment. The capitalist society is characterized by a certain paradox – the economy is the primary reason for the exclusion of individuals, but this exclusion does not apply only to the economic sphere' (Godelier, 2010: 8). However, is this type of exclusion something new? You can of course say that we have been smoothly moving from the time when people could live on collecting or farming until the times when most people work in large enterprises, but the lack of money in the Western world has always been the cause of exclusion. If it were not, there would be no begging in the Middle Ages or a wave of relocations to industrialized cities in the times of industrial development. One might even be tempted to say that social exclusion itself, which willingly evaluates negatively, is a certain socio-cultural mechanism that helps find its place in the group, fight for a better position in it, or motivate the individual to work. The difference that can be seen between money once and today is the greater universality of belonging to a group of 'not excluded.' Someone who once would be excluded by dangerous diseases, disability, origin, past, today thanks to the possession of larger resources can take a high place in the social hierarchy. Once he could provide it only through good birth or healing (sick – as unclean – he had to be cleansed). The greater role in reaching the position by money is not yet a revolutionary change.

What makes the impression of a significant social change is the possibilities and scale in which money can replace the achievement of a social position. Let us notice that certain borders could not be crossed until recently, even with a very large amount of money. Birth, social status, assignment to function or knowledge were once ways to reach positions that would be difficult to cross even with a lot of money. Birth and nobility – these determinants of the social position were once impassable. You can, of course, 'buy yourself' affiliation, acquire the right documents, but the environment would not easily accept such practices. Such a transition could sometimes happen, but it would require a lot of good will on both sides. The same applies to knowledge. You

cannot buy it for money. Simultaneously, knowledge alone does not give such a status as money that can be obtained through it. Often, there is also a situation in which – if knowledge does not translate into income – the person possessing it can be perceived as helpless. Money can, therefore, replace more and more determinants of a safe social position.

In conclusion, it should be added that the market may be wrong, but it cannot be perceived as a threat in itself since in that case consumers could turn away from it. It is not about any conspiracy theory. The market lives its own life and cares about it. It is a force fully rationalized by rational individuals who participate in it. Therefore, if consumers learn that their consumption behavior is threatening them, the market must accept the change. That is why profits are not at all the most important, at least at first glance. Consumers must be cared for by the market. Resignation from high profits means that, for example, cigarettes are still sold to people who are not afraid of the risk of nicotine or compounds absorbed into the body during smoking. In addition, the substitutes market is beginning to develop either in the form of e-cigarettes or measures to help in quitting smoking.

The most important thing is for the consumer to feel that someone cares for him and that he is safe. The free market is in the consumer society like a nice nurse who cares for his patient, but it is not a qualified doctor who gives all medicines, knows their advantages and side effects. The nurse listens to specialists, their advice and believes in their knowledge necessary in the treatment process. However, she does not have this knowledge herself. She knows that the patient must be nourished, he cannot get bedsores, he must undergo healing, but if the doctor prescribes the wrong medicine, then the nurse is not responsible for it. Similarly, the market constantly cares for the patient, for his well-being and the opportunity to achieve it as much as possible, for his health and for satisfying everyone, even the most sophisticated needs. However, when it turns out that for many years consumers have bought goods that do not meet their expectations or even those that have been dangerous or even caused illnesses or death, the signal from sales specialists is clear: we trusted specialists, we showed them in advertisements, our clients were misled, and we are outraged by this state of affairs. Even if consumers receive information that the research was forged for sale, it was not everyone who wanted to lie. It is a pathological situation, not a rule. After all, even among nurses one may be found who performs this profession for money and not a vocation. The market may be wrong, but it always cares about the well-being of consumers. This is the basic security message that is to be provided to consumers.

But how does this safe world of the consumer look like? Building a safe world is a utopia. The presented sentence is not a discovery and it does not bring much. However, if there is no safe world, why is it so important and why are there areas of the world in which for many decades there have been no wars? You cannot look at all of Europe in this way. And yet the richest countries in the world are waging war not on their own territory, but going beyond that they are guarding global security. It is sometimes difficult to say whether these activities were necessary for safety. One should rather ask what type of security we meant. Therefore, a justified question is whether in the consumer society the security of financial turnover is not the most important one.

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## ABSTRACT

One of the basic human needs is safety. The article assumes that the consumer society must fulfill this need. The aim of the analysis of scientific research on consumer society and its ideology is to try to answer the question: how is this happening?

It is difficult to answer the above question clearly. It can be said, however, that a consumer-oriented market may be wrong, but it always cares about the consumer's good. This is the basic message concerning safety that is to be provided to consumers.

How does this safe world of the consumer look like? Building a safe world is a utopia. The presented sentence is not a discovery and it does not bring much. However, if there is no safe world, why is it so important and why are there areas of the world in which for many decades there have been no wars? You cannot look at all of Europe in this way. And yet the richest countries in the world are waging war not in their own territory, but going beyond it, they are guarding global security. It is sometimes difficult to say whether these activities were necessary for safety. One should rather ask what type of security we meant. Therefore, a justified question is whether in the consumer society security of financial turnover is not the most important one.

**Keywords:** consumer society, safety, ideology

## NIEPEWNOŚĆ I BEZPIECZEŃSTWO – POSZUKIWANIE IDEOLOGII SPOŁECZEŃSTWA KONSUMPCYJNEGO

### STRESZCZENIE

Jedną z podstawowych potrzeb człowieka jest bezpieczeństwo. W artykule założono więc, że społeczeństwo konsumpcyjne musi realizować tę potrzebę. Celem analizy badań naukowych dotyczących społeczeństwa konsumpcyjnego oraz jego ideologii jest próba odpowiedzi na pytanie: w jaki sposób to się dzieje?

Trudno jednoznacznie odpowiedzieć na postawione pytanie. Można jednak powiedzieć, że rynek ukierunkowany na konsumenta może się mylić, ale zawsze dba o jego dobro. Tak wygląda podstawowy przekaz dotyczący bezpieczeństwa, które ma być zapewnione konsumentom.

Jak jednak wygląda ten bezpieczny świat konsumenta? Budowa bezpiecznego świata jest utopią. Zaprezentowane zdanie nie jest odkryciem i wiele nie wnosi. Jednak jeżeli nie ma bezpiecznego świata to dlaczego jest on tak ważny i dlaczego są takie obszary świata, na których od wielu dziesiątków lat nie było wojen. Nie można w ten sposób patrzeć na całą Europę. A jednak najbogatsze państwa świata prowadzą wojnę nie na swoim terytorium, lecz wykraczając poza nie pilnują światowego bezpieczeństwa. Trudno czasem jednoznacznie stwierdzić czy dla bezpieczeństwa działania te były niezbędne. Należałoby raczej zapytać o jaki rodzaj bezpieczeństwa tutaj chodziło. Zasadnym jest więc pytanie czy w społeczeństwie konsumpcyjnym nie jest najważniejsze bezpieczeństwo obrotów finansowych?

**Słowa kluczowe:** społeczeństwo konsumpcyjne, bezpieczeństwo, ideologia