

## Summary

### Reflection of Simmel's work in Bauman's writings

This paper aims to compare the writings of Georg Simmel with the work of Zygmunt Bauman. It is checked up in which substantial areas, as well as sociological methods, Zygmunt Bauman has followed Georg Simmel.

In the first chapter there is described the objective and methods of this thesis. In this paper an application of comparative method prevails. The examined phenomenon is decomposed into elementary components that are subsequently compared.

Bauman appreciates Simmel especially for his way of writing; however, he follows him also in substantial matters. The use of sociological essay is typical of works of both authors. Both speak about intersubjectivity, not about objectivity. This is typical of post-modern authors. Simmel and Bauman use a concept of "social type" for their explanations. Both explain phenomena with the aid of ambivalence. Simmel and Bauman are both focused on the life in a metropolis. They delineate a way of life there, and try to show alienating consequences for a human being.

In the second chapter of this paper I try to trace substantial forces that could influence a way of work of both authors, and furthermore, I try to discover similarities and differences. Both are Jews; for this reason they had often problems in their life and academic career. Both were living in time of crisis of modernity. Bauman was strongly influenced by his experience with holocaust. Thus, unlike other post-modern authors, we can find a call for humanity and for abidance by ethical rules in his books.

In one of the further chapters there are described methods of work of both authors. Simmel's way of work is strongly influenced by Immanuel Kant. This fact enables Simmel to connect several things that are essential to the description of social reality: an observer of social reality, an object of observation and the unity of society. Simmel is one of the first representatives of pluralism in social sciences. He found that the knowledge is fragmentary and its content depends on the interpretation. Bauman follows these ideas by using a so-called hermeneutical method. Bauman's results are similar to those of Simmel; however, he stresses much more ethical and moral problems. Bauman as well as Simmel cancel a dichotomy between a method and a theory.

In the following chapters I demonstrate concrete aspects of work that occur in writings of both sociologists. Thus, I show what they mean by "ambivalence", how they use a concept of "social type", why they speak about alienation and how they envisage modern - or post-modern - society. Both share a view that institutional frameworks in society are disrupting and, consequently, a modern life is of liquid character. Simmel states that even honest people could commit bad things. It stems from the fact that in our type of society the individual relationship to certain phenomena is broken. Simmel applies this rule when he speaks about money; Bauman uses it while analysing holocaust. Indifference, suppression of responsibility, alienation and aloofness are typical features of current society according to both scientists. Thanks to Simmel's analysis of monetary economy it was possible to turn the orientation of economics from production to consumption. Simmel's view on society shows that society does not have not to be considered as a hierarchical order, it is rather a complicated net of relations.

Bauman's ideas are undoubtedly similar to those of Simmel. However, we cannot prove that Simmel's writings are the source of Bauman's findings. Particular features occurring in works of both are typical also of other authors. Nevertheless, the similarity of a *set* of traits is striking, and therefore, we can say that Simmel has markedly contributed to our understanding of post-modern society that is analyzed in Bauman's works.