

BLAT, KOMPROMAT, AND THE 'LAW ON THE PHONE' AS ELEMENTS OF INFORMALITY PROMOTING STATE SUPPORT FOR PLAGIARISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Lukasz Kolodziej
AcademyVerity
6/51 Batalionow Chlopskich
Street
33-300 Nowy Sacz
Poland
lukaszkolodziej330@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

It is counterintuitive to think academic misconduct could be actively promoted by governmental organisations, e.g. the Ministry of Education and Science, the Police, prosecutors, judges, and politicians. Mariusz Cygnar serves as the rector to the State University of Applied Sciences in Nowy Sacz, Poland, European Union. A plethora of documents, along with Google search analyses presented in that paper, strongly suggests that the state agencies and politicians have protected rector Cygnar from legal and professional consequences of plagiarism. That unusual scale of protection and unlawful support to rector Cygnar may result from an alcohol & sex scandal. The theoretical framework for studying the scientific sociology of academic misconduct presented here is based on Pierre Bourdieu's teaching on the sociology of science. In addition, sociological apparatus suitable for describing some informal practices, e.g. *blat*, *kompromat*, and the "law on the phone", was applied.

Keywords: Informality, academic misconduct, plagiarism, Poland, European Union.

INTRODUCTION

Mariusz Cygnar, PhD, Eng. serves as a rector of the State University of Applied Sciences in Nowy Sacz, Poland, EU, for the second consecutive term. Moreover, rector Cygnar has not been provided access to the laboratory equipment required to conduct experiments he has claimed to perform personally (Wronski 2021). Despite that, Cygnar has published two academic books and was granted with habilitation degree based on Dr Marcin Noga's original results. Nonetheless, various professional bodies representing the Polish academic community, e.g. the Scientific Excellence Council, provided rector Cygnar with documents ensuring he had conducted experiments personally (Kolodziej 2021). That was done to make rector Cygnar's academic work free of plagiarism.

Before the author came across allegations of plagiarism against rector Cygnar, he had investigated issues related to the quality of teaching in the Department of Health at the State University. At that time, the author was puzzled to see criminal charges of propagating pornography to the public being processed by the local police against him.

Collected bureaucratic communication issued as documents produced by the police, prosecutor's offices, and courts against the author provide evidence of the vital role of informality in state support of academic misconduct. In addition, data available on the Internet on issues related to the rector Cygnar's case was gathered. As a result, it was possible to conduct

further sociological analyses of the role of informality in the propagation of plagiarism in higher education in the Republic of Poland, a member state of the European Union.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scientific endeavour is a formal and well-structured process of creating knowledge. Scientific achievements also significantly influence social and economic development. Academic misconduct, e.g. data fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism, collectively known under the FFP acronym, is a bad example of a scientific outcome. Academic misconduct undermines public trust in science (Penders 2018, Dinis-Oliveira 2020). Hence, it might be expected that it is in the best national interest to support science and counteract the spreading of FFPs.

Science is also a sociological phenomenon. Among many incentives, researchers and academics, in general, are prone to conduct acts of academic dishonesty as a result of immense pressure to secure "authority", "scientific competence", "reputation", "prestige", etc. The reflexive sociology of Pierre Bourdieu may be an instrumental framework for the interpretation of social processes taking place among scholars, researchers, and stakeholders of the scientific endeavour (Bourdieu 1975). Hence, in the light of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the scientific field, academic misconduct can be understood as a struggle to gain and maintain "scientific authority in the fastest and easiest way (Bourdieu 1975). In the most simplistic interpretation, therefore, academics who plagiarise may optimise their chances to convert their formal academic ranks into various forms of capital, e.g. money, social recognition, fame, academic status etc., with minimal effort (Biagioli 2012). However, "the scientist who appeals to an authority outside the field cannot fail to incur discredit" (Bourdieu 1975).

Allegations of academic misconduct have been highly damaging to the scientific authority of a person. That translate into the diminishing social and cultural capital of the dishonest researcher. Similarly, penalties imposed on a researcher who has been found guilty of academic misconduct can diminish various forms of personal capital of a convict. Therefore, not surprisingly, academics accused of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, try to implement multiple strategies to minimalise legal and professional consequences of misconduct e.g. (Faunce and Jefferys 2007).

Blat is a word taken from the Russian language and means the usage of social networks to get things done informally, secretly, at the expense of others (Ledeneva 2014). In the previous paper, the author has shown how *blat* might be involved in the academic career of Mariusz Cygnar (Kołodziej 2021). *Kompromat* is a compound noun derived from the Russian language from two words, "komprometiruyushy" and "material". In line with the definition provided by Ledeneva, a leading scholar on informal practices in the Russian speaking countries, *kompromat* refers to "discrediting information that can be collected, stored, trade or used strategically across all domains political, electoral, legal, professional, judicial, media, or business" (Ledeneva 2011). *Kompromat* is to discredit opponents and, therefore, can serve as blackmail. Criminal allegations of spreading pornography in public to silence an inconvenient critic of the State University of Applied Sciences in Nowy Sacz meet the definition of *kompromat*.

"Law on the phone", known in the Russian language as "*telefonnoe pravo*", is another type of informal practice known in the countries of the former Soviet Union (modern Russia) (Ledeneva 2008). Under the communist regime in Eastern countries, the juridical system heavily depended on political influences (Wasilewski and Wnuk-Lipiński 1995, Solomon 2012). Interestingly, between the 1945 – 1989 Republic of Poland was a satellite country of

the Soviet Union, with the juridical system subjected to the political decisions of the ruling party (Kühn 2004).

Pierre Bourdieu twisted famous Hegel's expression and expressed the state's power to pass a verdict in a quote: "the judgement of the state is the last judgement" (Bourdieu and Farage 1994). Hence, the ability to influence the court's judgments via informal practices may provide additional social capital required to protect scientific authority despite misconduct allegations. Those who struggle to legitimise their scientific prestige due to misconduct allegations may prefer seeking the verdict from the judges rather than from academic peers. That is because the state has the power to impose legally binding rulings. These considerations explain why academics accused of misconduct have been eager to sue whistleblowers and apply strategic lawsuits against public participation.

METHODOLOGY

The author has been engaged in Mariusz Cygnar's case since October 2018. Materials described in that paper were collected between 2019 and 10th July 2022. Documents referring to the rector Cygnar's case and lawsuit against the author have been scanned and published in Polish on the SlideShare platform as primary raw data. A sworn translation from the Polish language into English of selected documents was ordered as an independent commercial service. Each document available in the English language was given an individual Digital Object Number (DOI) and was published on the ResearchGate platform as secondary raw data.

A report on rector Cygnar's business activities was bought from the InfoVerity service (<http://www.infoveriti.pl/>) on 30th May 2020.

Google search analysis was conducted in May 2022 with keywords related to whistleblowers' information. Websites have been translated automatically from the Polish language into English using Firefox Browser add-on TWP translate Web Pages by author Filipe Ps, version 9.5.1.

Once the website was translated into English, print screens were taken and processed in the Microsoft Paint editor. Figures have been prepared using Venngage's commercial service (<https://pl.venngage.com/>).

RESULTS

Whistleblowers informed the author that Mariusz Cygnar, a rector plagiarist, might be protected from legal and professional consequences of plagiarism by local Police and Patryk Wicher, a member of parliament (MP) representing the Law and Justice party. Informers claimed rector Cygnar was associated with Wicher, MP, and Jacek Lukasik, a local member of the Police in Nowy Sacz, via business activities in the non-governmental organisations. Thus, it was mandatory to verify information provided by the local activists and investigate the social connections of a rector plagiarist with the members of the local elite (search for patronages of rector Cygnar).

An independent business report from the InfoVerity commercial service on Cygnar's business activities was bought. As it can be read, rector Cygnar shared business activities with Patryk Wicher, MP and Jacek Lukasik (figure 1A). Google search analysis provided information that Przemyslaw Czarnek, the Minister of Education and Science representing the Law and Justice party, visited the University in Nowy Sacz on 20th June 2022. Minister Czarnek has provided

rector Cygnar with a core grant of over eight mln PLN to be spent on any given purpose related to the statutory activity of the School (figure 1B).

Patryk Wicher, MP, published on his official profile on FB information that Minister Czarnek was invited to Nowy Sacz by his invitation (data not shown). In addition, Google search analysis has demonstrated that Wicher, MP, decored Lukasik with a medal in recognition of his outstanding service to the police (figure 1C). That shows the social capital of the rector plagiarist and mutual support between rector Cygnar's social network members.

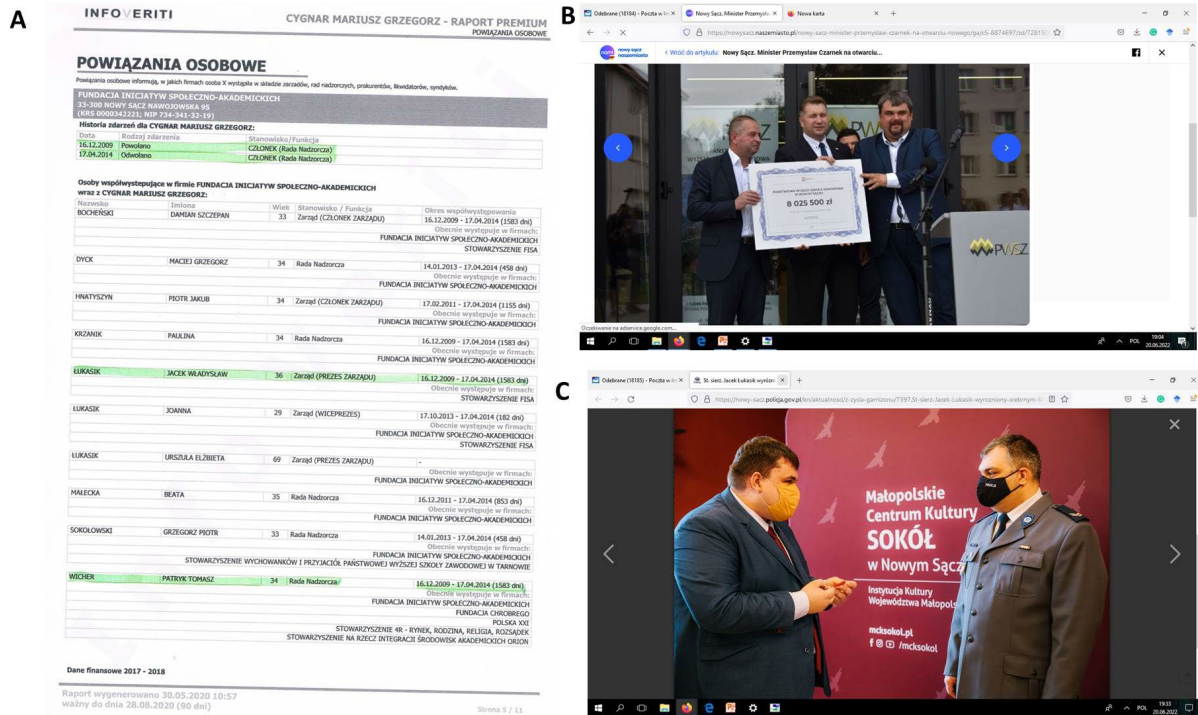


Figure 1. Social capital of the rector-plagiator and his patronages from the Police and the Law and Justice party

In 2021, the Ministry of Education and Science, run by minister Przemyslaw Czarnek, denied access to the information regarding the disciplinary committee arranged to investigate allegations of plagiarism against rector Cygnar (table 1, document I). Przemyslaw Czarnek might protect Cygnar from the professional consequences of plagiarism. As mentioned in the previous section, in 2022, Przemyslaw Czarnek provided a core grant money to be spent on any given purpose related to the University. However, in 2021, the author was denied by the authorities of the University access to information about collaborators providing commercial services to the University, though enquiry was made upon the Freedom of Information Act (table 2, document A). All these facts suggest rector Cygnar's social network can accumulate monetary capital and redistribute it under inadequate public scrutiny.

Table 1. the bureaucratic communication issued in relation to the rector Cygnar's case available in the Polish language and in the English

No	Document's symbol	Document issued by	Link to the original document stored at the https://www.slideshare.net/	Link to the original document held at the ResearchGate
1	Document I	Piotr Gajewski, the Ministry of Education and Science	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/finansowanie-systemu-rzeczelnosci-naukowej-w-ministerstwie-edukacji-i-nauki-w-latach-2011-2020 [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361903032_the_Ministry_of_Education_and_Science_protects_information_about_rector_Mariusz_Cygnar (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.21267.76320) [accessed: 18.07.2022]
2	Document II	Krzysztof Pijaj, the regional prosecutor in Cracow	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/lista-pijajaj-o-powizanych-z-cygnarem-prokuratorach [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361880278_Krzysztof_Pijaj_the_Regional_Prosecutor_on_Cygnar (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.10598.50242) [accessed: 18.07.2022]
3	Document III	Paweł Rygiel, the Judge, the Appellate Court in Cracow	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/sad-apelacyjny-w-krakowie-przychylny-rektorowi-plagiatorowi [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361902758_Pawel_Rygiel_SSA_the_Judge_on_rector_Cygnar_case (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.24623.20647) [accessed: 18.07.2022]
4	Document IV	Małgorzata Czajka, the Judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/selektywne-dobor-sedziow-do-sprawy-cywilnej [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361902916_Monika_Swierad_SSO_the_Judge_resignation (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.11201.43365) [accessed: 18.07.2022]
5	Document V	Piotr Borkowski, the Judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/piotr-borkowski-sso-podtrzymuje-decyzje-sadupdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361902611_Piotr_Borkowski_SSO_the_Judge_on_rector_Cygnar_case (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.28817.51040) [accessed: 18.07.2022]
6	Document VI	Anna Serwin-Bajan, the Judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/sedzina-anna-serwin-bajan-nie-chce-badac-pochodzenia-materialu-dowodowego-pdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361880183_Anna_Serwin_Bajan_the_Judge_on_evidence (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.36183.75689) [accessed: 18.07.2022]
Documents relevant to figures provided in the paper				
7	Document VII	Sebastian Jagoda, the Judge in the District Court	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/sebastian-jagoda-ssr-na-temat-seks-afery-w-nowym-saczupdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361880323_Sebastian_Jagoda_the_Judge_on_pornography (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.24020.27522)
8	Document VIII	Anna Serwin-Bajan, the Judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/sedzina-anna-serwin-bajan-wycisza-seks-aferepdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361880416_Anna_Serwin_Bajan_the_Judge_on_pornography (DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.27375.71842) [accessed: 18.07.2022]

Table 2. the bureaucratic communication issued to the rector Cygnar's case is available in the Polish language only

No	Document's symbol	Document issued by	Link to the original document stored at the https://www.slideshare.net/
1	Document A	Marek Reichel, vice-Rector, the State University of Applied Sciences in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/odmowa-decyzji-w-sprawie-wysokosci-stypendium-naukowego-dla-pracownikow-pwsz [accessed: 18.07.2022]
2	Document B	Anna Serwin-Bajan, the Judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/anna-pater-sso-przyznaje-sie-z-zwiazkow-z-cygnarempdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
3	Document C	Aneta Hladko, prosecutor, the prosecutor's office in Zakopane	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/prokurator-aneta-hladko-w-sprawie-cygnarapdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
4	Document D	Sebastian Jagoda, the Judge in the District Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/sdzia-sebastian-jagoda-wspiera-mariusza-cygnara [accessed: 18.07.2022]
5	Document E	Katarzyna Romanczyk, the Judge in the District Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/areszt-za-pisanie-o-plagiacie-rektora-uczelni-publicznej [accessed: 18.07.2022]
6	Document F	Katarzyna Romańczyk, the Judge in the District Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/rezygnacja-z-aresztu-dla-krytyka-mariusza-cygnara [accessed: 18.07.2022]
Documents relevant to figures provided in the paper			
7	Document G	Edyta Śliwa, police, Cracow	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/policja-o-nagraniu-z-kolekcji-prokurator-bochenskieipdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
8	Document H	Lukasz Brytan, prosecutor, Gorlice	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/umorzenie-zarzutow-o-szerzenie-pornografii-za-badanie-habilitacji-rektora [accessed: 18.07.2022]
9	Document I	Paweł Dutka, assessor, the prosecutor's office, Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/postanowienie-o-zatrzymaniu-do-sprawy-z-pornografiipdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
10	Document J	Police, Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/protok-zatrzymaniapdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
11	Document K	Rafał Adamczyk, police, Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/zmiana-zarzutow-dla-sygnalistypdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
12	Document L	Paweł Dutka, assessor, the prosecutor's office, Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/medykalizacja-zarzutow-o-szerzenie-pornografiipdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
13	Document M	Paweł Dutka, assessor, the prosecutor's office, Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/przymusowe-doprowadzenie-na-badania-do-pornografiipdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]
	Document N	Dominik Mąka, assessor, the District Court in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/asesor-dominik-maka-o-zasadnosci-zatrzymania-do-zarzutow-o-pornografiep [accessed: 18.07.2022]
	Document O	Paweł Dutka, assessor, the prosecutor's office in Nowy Sacz	https://www.slideshare.net/ukaszRKoodziej/pawe-dutka-skada-zazalenie-na-umorzenie-zarzutowpdf [accessed: 18.07.2022]

In addition to Jacek Lukasik, rector Cygnar has also been associated with Witold Bodziony, a former chief Police commander in Nowy Sacz and a very controversial figure (figure 2A). Bodziony has admitted to personal conflicts with other members of the local police publically (figure 2B). In addition, Bodziony, like Lukasik, has also been an active collaborator with the University via "Tarcza", a non-governmental organisation (figure 3C). Finally, Bodziony has been employed by rector Cygnar as a lecturer.

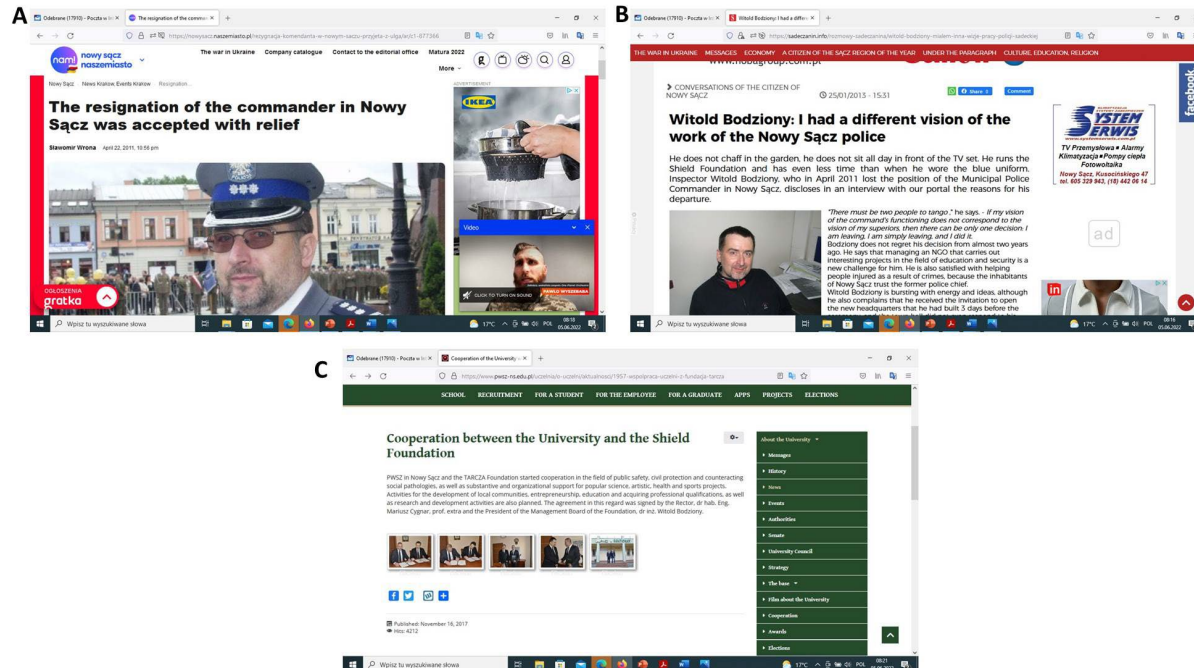


Figure 2. A controversial former Police commander in Nowy Sacz collaborates with the State University of Applied Sciences in Nowy Sacz

A document issued on 28th October 2019 and sent to the author by Krzysztof Pijaj, the regional prosecutor in Cracow, states that up to five public prosecutors have been associated with rector Cygnar via business, family, and other types of connections (table 1, document II). That suggests that rector Cygnar may have influential friends in the police and prosecutors' offices.

Google search analysis has also revealed that professor Dariusz Resko, a husband to Maria Resko, the Judge in the District Court in Nowy Sacz, has been working at the University (figure 3A and 3B). There is also information on the Internet that professor Resko was accused of plagiarism and forgery of financial documents (figure 3C and 3D). In addition, in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz, judge Anna Pater, a daughter of Janusz Pater, a former vice-rector, serves her duty (table 2, document B). Therefore, rector Cygnar has influential associates representing prosecutors, judges, politicians, and high-profile policepersons in Nowy Sacz.

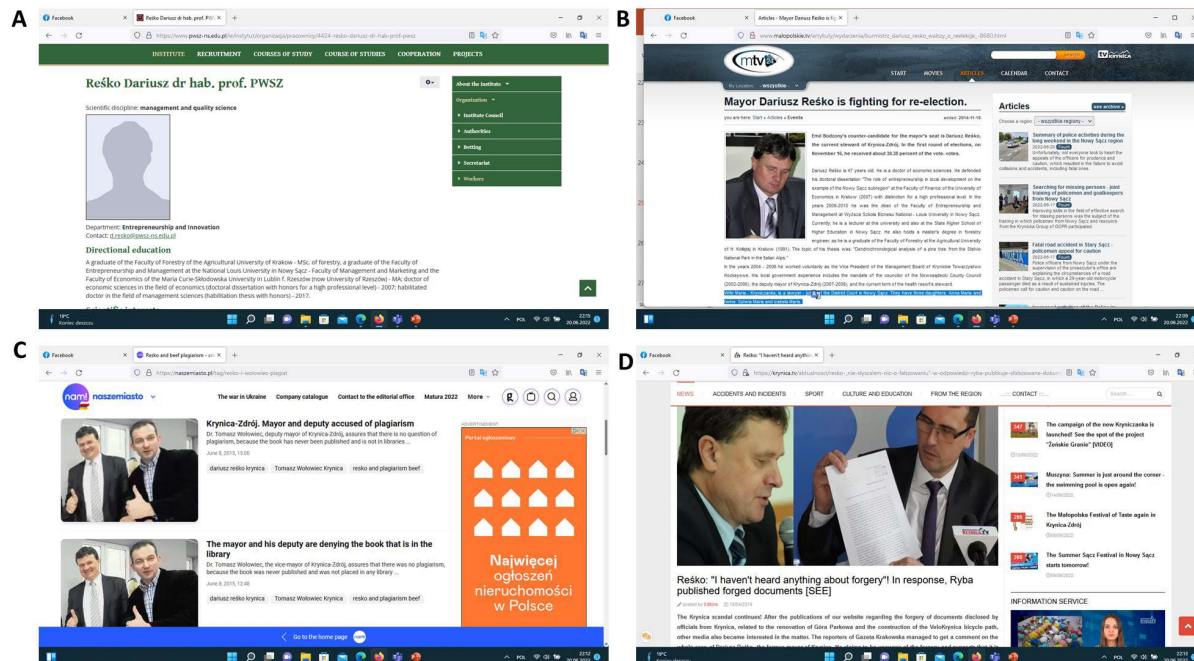


Figure 3. Rector plagiarist provides a permissive working environment for a lecturer who was accused of plagiarism and forgery of financial documents

In the previous sections, a social network established around rector plagiarists was reconstructed and described. Having affluent friends may not translate into undeserved privileges automatically. Moreover, a plethora of evidence suggests social networks around rector plagiarists actively protect rector Cygnar from legal consequences of plagiarism.

In addition to the support provided to rector Cygnar by Aneta Hladko, a prosecutor (table 2, document C), Sebastian Jagoda, a judge, has also protected rector plagiarist from legal consequences of plagiarism (table 2, document D). Interesting, Judge Monika Świerad, a judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz, issued a court injunction banning the author from writing and informing the general public about allegations against rector Cygnar of plagiarism and poor control over financial aspects of the University (figure 4A and 4B). That ban was issued on 18th May 2020 for a year. At the same time, rector Cygnar tried to secure a second term as a rector (figure 4C). That suggests the "law on the phone" might be applied to ensure rector Cygnar's second term as a leader of the University.

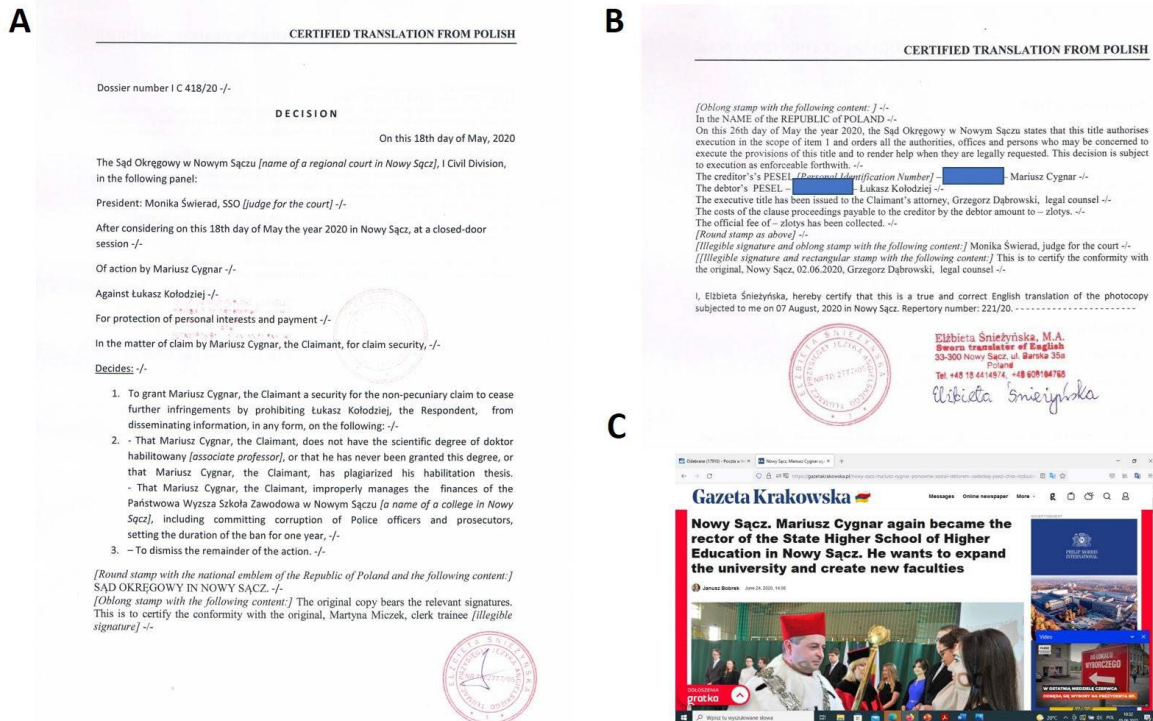


Figure 4. "Law on the phone" helped Mariusz Cygnar, a rector plagiarist, to secure a second term as a rector

The author has submitted a legal complaint against the court decision in response to the court injunction. Moreover, the Judge in the Appellate Court in Cracow issued a court decision that there was no reason to proceed with hearings in the court outside of the Nowy Sacz court district (table 1, document III).

Consequently, judges associated with rector Cygnar could issue court decisions and verdicts in line with rector Cygnar's interests. The claim against the author was introduced to the court in May 2020. However, the court has not issued a binding decision yet. Moreover, Monika Świerad has submitted to the court a request to resign from hearing the case on her demand. That was uplifted by her colleague Malgorzata Czajka, a judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz (table 1, document IV)

In line with a hypothesis about the active protection of rector Cygnar by the judges in Nowy Sacz, Marek Borkowski, a judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sacz, issued a court decision stating that the complaint against the court's decision issued by the Judge Monika Swierad on the 18th May 2020 was not valid. The case against the author should have proceeded in Nowy Sacz and by Malgorzata Czajka, the Judge (table 1, document V). As a result of the initial decision of Monika Świerad banning the author from informing the general public about the rector's Cygnar act of plagiarism, the author was ordered by another judge, Katarzyna Romanczyk, to pay the penalty or should have been detained for ten subsequent days (table 2, document E and direct link to the sworn translation to the English language: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362062473_Katarzyna_Romanczyk_the_Judge_wants_detention_of_the_author; [accessed: 18.07.2022]). The author decided not to comply and was ready

to be imprisoned. However, rector Cygnar submitted to the court a document asking the court to lift the order to detain the author (table 2, document F).

It can be concluded that provided documents and analysis of information available in the public domain on the members of the rector Cygnar's social network show that rector plagiarist benefits from the systemic support from prosecutors and judges. Hence, it was interesting to explain the reasons behind such unconditional promotion of Cygnar's interests by senior members of the public bodies.

First, in 2019, before allegations of plagiarism against rector Cygnar were made public and the author was at the beginning of investigating issues related to the University (figure 5A), he was puzzled to see charges against him of disseminating pornography to the general public (figure 5B). Hence, for the first time in the case of rector Cygnar, *kompromat* was used against the author. Moreover, during the police investigation, the author was approached by a few police whistleblowers who provided him with a short film showing a gay scene (figure 5C). The author was told the recording in question was taken at the headquarter of police in Nowy Sacz during a sex party. According to police whistleblowers, alcohol & sex parties were arranged regularly and attended by local policepersons, prosecutors, judges, rector Cygnar, and politicians. A list of participants was not provided, however.

Information about alcohol & sex parties might have been malicious. Hence, it was reasonable to ask the police authorities if the film was original and genuine. The author personally visited the headquarter of the police in Nowy Sacz to show the recording in question. The police have denied commenting on the evidence provided by the author. On the second occasion, the author emailed the police with the recording in question attached (figure 5D). Police officials have also denied commenting (table 2, document G).

In response to the author's enquiries, at least two separate criminal charges against the author were drafted. Lukasz Brytan - a prosecutor, dismissed criminal charges of spreading pornography by email to the police, however (figure 5D). Interestingly, the decision of Lukasz Brytan to dismiss criminal charges against the author coincided with the departure of Jaroslaw Tokarczyk as a chief Police commander in Nowy Sacz (figure 5E). Hence, it can be speculated that the police have tried to discourage the author from investigating issues related to alcohol & sexparties; when they failed to silence the author, the chief commander was moved from Nowy Sacz to perform his duty outside the Malopolska region.

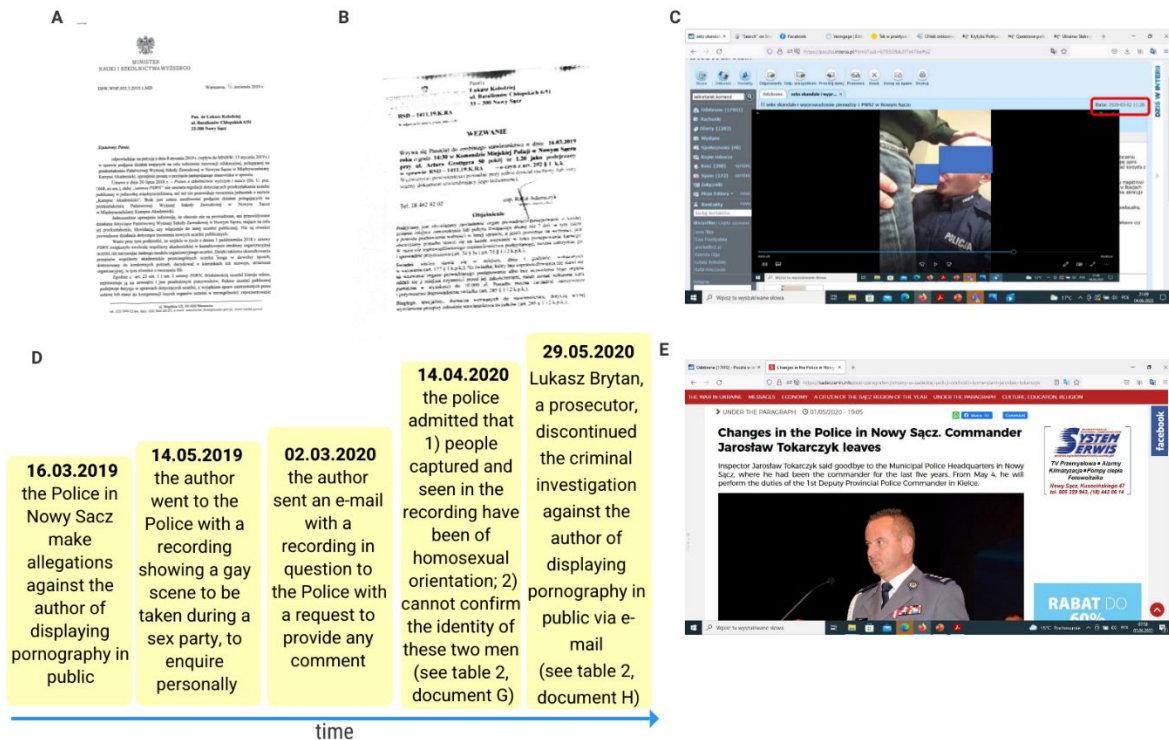


Figure 5. Unsuccessful preventive measures using *kompromat* against the author to stop him from investigating information about alcohol & sex parties

Although a public prosecutor initially dismissed criminal charges against the author, local authorities did not stop making criminal allegations against the author. Moreover, the timeline with events associated with retaliation against the author and decisions of the police, prosecutors, and judges strongly suggest gross negligence to verify reports on organising alcohol & sex parties at the police headquarters in Nowy Sacz (figure 6).

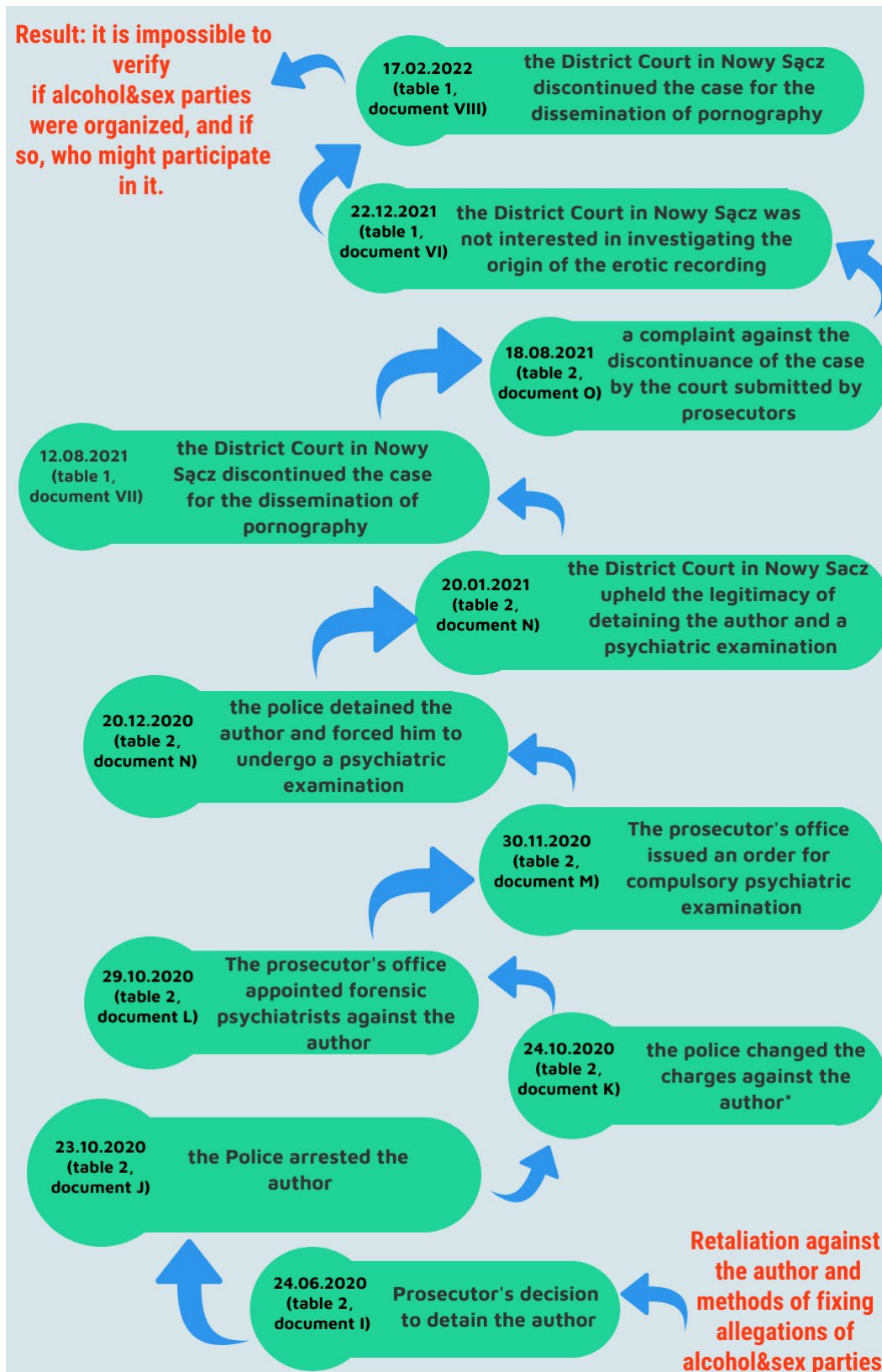


Figure 6. Timeline showing gross negligence by the police, public prosecutors and judges of ordinary courts in Nowy Sacz to verify reports on organising alcohol & sex parties at the police headquarter

To the allegation of arranging alcohol & sex parties, the author was arrested on two occasions (first arrest on 23.10.2020, table 2, document J; the second arrest on 20.12. 2020, table 2, document N) and subjected to the compulsory examination by the forensic psychiatrist (table 2, document L). The District Court upheld these actions against the author in Nowy Sacz (table 2, document N). Interestingly, these retaliation measures against the author have been in striking contrast with the fact that neither judges nor prosecutors were interested in gaining expertise from forensic IT forensic experts about the origin of sexual recording with a police person captured (figure 5C).

Information provided by police whistleblowers about alcohol & sex parties in the police headquarters in Nowy Sacz was further supported by Google search analysis. The author has found alcohol & sex parties have been hardly unique in the Polish Police (figure 7). For example, information on the Polish-speaking Internet shows that rape was reported during a police party (figure 7A).

In addition, the chief police commander in Poland has announced that police headquarter in Warsaw should stay free of alcohol since January 2022. That implies members of the police may drink alcohol on duty (figure 7B). Finally, Google Map technology shows the police building in Nowy Sacz is located in an industrial area with a few houses nearby (figure 7C). Thus, participants in the sex parties have a quiet and safe place to meet.

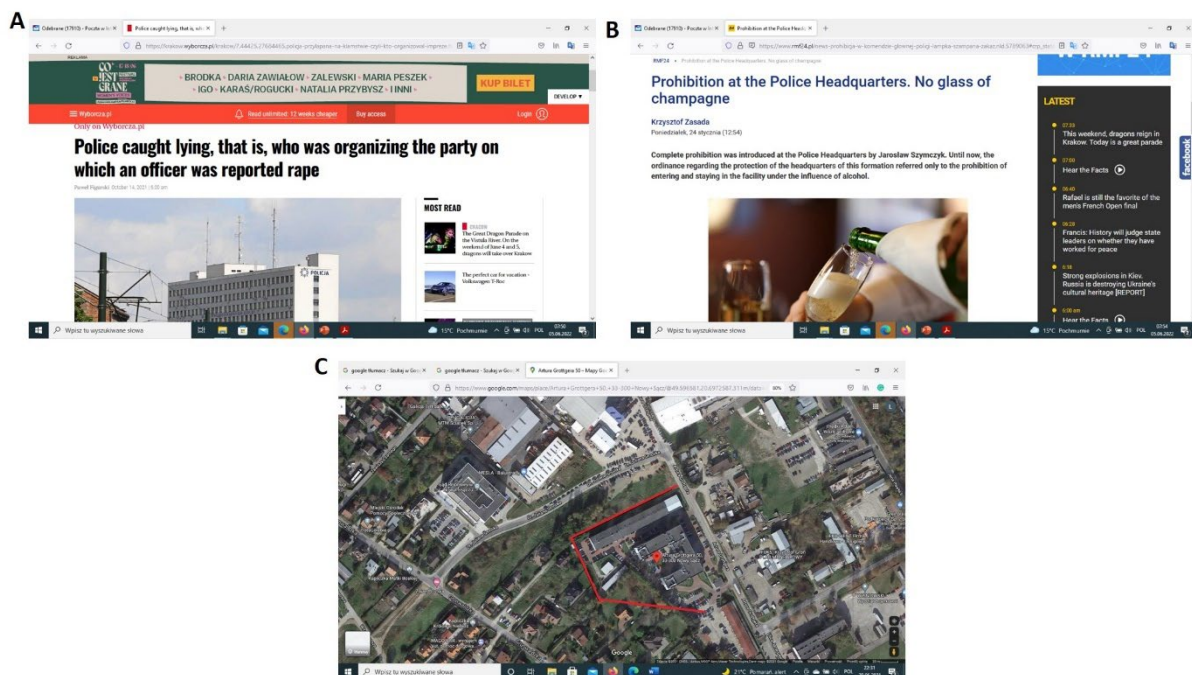


Figure 7. Media reports indicate that alcohol & sex parties are not unique to the Polish Police, and Google map shows the police headquarters in Nowy Sacz might provide a safe place to hold alcohol & sex parties

DISCUSSION

In the previous paper, the author has shown how an informal practice, known as *blat*, might be involved in the act of plagiarism and protection of rector Cygnar from professional consequences

of academic misconduct (Kołodziej 2021). Here, the case of rector Cygnar was further investigated, providing considerable evidence on the role of informality in the propagation of academic misconduct.

Moreover, before theoretical consideration of that work can be done, an important distinction should have been made. The author is not entitled to make a conclusive statement that the police organised alcohol & sex parties and rector Cygnar with the judges, prosecutors, and local politicians who could have participated. That is because the author is neither a private detective nor possesses the authority to conduct an independent investigation. Hence, the author can only speculate on it. Nonetheless, it was for the police and prosecutors to launch a thorough investigation into allegations related to alcohol & sex parties with the rector and other members of local elites as participants.

In striking contrast to what might be expected from the Judge, Anna Serwin – Bajan, a judge in the Regional Court in Nowy Sącz, issued a court decision that there was no need to examine the evidence against the author. Instead, the author was diagnosed with a personality disorder by forensic psychiatrists selected to conduct a medical examination of the author by the judges in Nowy Sącz. The usage of forensic psychiatry to discredit an inconvenient critic was a well-known method in the former Soviet Union (Faraone 1982), with 'sluggish schizophrenia' as a disease observed in political dissidents (Merskey and Shafran 1986). However, it is over the scope of that paper (manuscript under preparation) to discuss that issue in detail. Allegations about alcohol & sex parties with the members of the ruling elite were medicalised and closed unexplained. Thus, taken together, there is a plethora of indirect evidence supporting information provided by the police whistleblowers about alcohol & sex parties being organised by the Police in Nowy Sącz.

As shown, rector Cygnar has been actively supported by the members of the Law and Justice Party (Patrik Wicher, MP, and Przemysław Czarnek, the minister of Education and Science). Thus, not surprisingly, rector Cygnar is protected by the prosecutors and judges who may seek support from the ruling political party. Alternatively, rector Cygnar might blackmail judges and prosecutors using *kompromat* gained during alcohol & sex parties unless provided with protection against the author's role in publicising allegations of plagiarism. Moreover, due to the current political climate in Poland, there are no chance allegations against rector Cygnar and the author could have been thoroughly investigated and resolved in a fair court trial (Wyrzykowski 2019, Krajewski and ZIÓLKOWSKI 2020).

At the heart of Pierre Bourdieu's theorem of reflexive sociology, there is the concept of the field (*la champ* from the French language), an autonomous system of social positions occupied by the agents. Within the field, there is a constant struggle between agents to secure and maintain the highest possible social status. That makes the Bourdieuean social field structured internally due to the power relationship between agents (Maton 2003). In the light of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the scientific field, an extensive social network of rector Cygnar shows his social capital. Various forms of capital (social, monetary, cultural) provide goods for exchanges between agents (Richardson and Bourdieu 1986).

Social fields can be independent or interrelated. Here, to the best author's knowledge, for the first time, reciprocal interactions between the scientific field (Bourdieu 1975) and the bureaucratic field

(Bourdieu and Farage 1994) have been observed in the context of academic plagiarism. In the scientific field, RECTOR is a high-rank person with various forms of capital accumulated and power to distribute power between other agents. The bureaucratic field is occupied by agents who seek to secure multiple forms of capital (Richardson and Bourdieu 1986, Bourdieu and Farage 1994). Rectors can offer jobs as lectures and provide extra paid work in research projects for agents representing the bureaucratic field. Thus, taken together, it is hardly surprising that agents from the scientific and bureaucratic fields collaborated to intimidate the author, securing the status quo in the local community of Nowy Sacz.

An accumulation of social capital in the bureaucratic field may provide ready-to-be-use privileges, and advantages in case disciplinary committees are arranged to investigate allegations of academic misconduct. It would be, therefore, interesting to test if the interchange between the scientific and bureaucratic fields observed in Nowy Sacz is an isolated example of interaction between social fields in the post-communist country. Alternatively, the accumulation of the social capital within the bureaucratic field by a researcher or a scholar might represent the general social phenomenon practised by the academics who conduct academic misconduct. Thus, further studies are needed to examine acts of academic misconduct in the context of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of sociology.

Blat is a term describing informal exchanges of multiple forms of capital between a member of society; it might also be incorporated in Pierre Bourdieu's social field theory. *Blat* may be a method of capital exchange applied to minimise the risk of being exposed to outsiders. Moreover, further academic work is needed to understand the role of *blat* in sociology and criminology.

The term *kompromat* includes using sensitive materials to gain profits, e.g. recordings showing sex scenes against the person's interests, to secure any advantage or privilege. The person who has access to a *kompromat* can impose dominance and express social authority over somebody who has been subjected to a *kompromat*. *Kompromat* may also be a form of positive and negative capital exchanged between agents to secure a high social position for the agent. Thus, *kompromat*, like *blat*, might be understood as a method of capital exchange between agents in social fields.

Similarly, the "law on the phone" phenomenon is an ability to settle verdicts of the courts informally, disobeying the rules of law (Ledeneva 2008). The "law on the phone" may represent a form of social capital defined by Pierre Bourdieu's sociological terminology. Therefore, taken together, the concept of informality with its specific terms like *blat*, *kompromat*, and the "law on the phone" may be a sound theoretical and practical framework for understanding mechanisms of capital exchange between agents from social fields. That might be particularly interesting in the sociology of academic misconduct.

Although the case of rector Cygnar takes place in the Republic of Poland – a member state of the European Union, the results may provide new insight into the sociology of academic misconduct in general. Moreover, it needs to be emphasised that between the 1945-1989 Republic of Poland was a satellite country of the former Soviet Union (Wasilewski and Wnuk-Lipiński 1995). In addition, since the Law and Justice Party took power in the Republic of Poland, the rule of law has been disobeyed, and access to an impartial and fair trial has been impossible (Wyrzykowski 2019). This sociological and historical background of the study needs to be incorporated into the theoretical consideration concerning the sociology of academic misconduct in post-communistic

countries like e.g. Poland. That is because rector Cygnar may benefit from the current political climate in Poland with the rules of law at least partially suspended. Therefore, rector Cygnar's case might be unique and of temporal nature.

Nonetheless, various forms of capital and struggle between agents in the given sociological fields have been a central concept of Pierre Bourdieu's views on sociology, including the sociology of science (Bourdieu 1975). Ledeneva is a scholar who specialised in applying sociological apparatus to understand the role of informality in post-Soviet countries, including Russia. Hence, the novelty of that work is that the author's findings can be analysed using sociological language and theories formulated by Pierre Bourdieu (reflexive sociology) and Elenena Ledeneva (the role of informality in post-communist countries).

The weakness of that work is that the author is not a sociologist. He was qualified in the biomedical sciences. The author has also been engaged in several legal disputes with rector Cygnar. Multiple criminal charges have also been made against the author by the Polish authorities. That needs to be highlighted, and the Readers should be made aware of those aspects of the author's work on informality. At the same time, the Polish government struggles to demonstrate the juridical system is based on the rule of law and independent from political influences.

CONCLUSIONS

The author has demonstrated that academic misconduct, here plagiarism, can be supported by members of the police, judges, prosecutors, and politicians. Thus, it can be concluded the state can play an active role in the propagation of academic misconduct. In addition, the author has shown that a set of informal practices known in the post-Soviet countries, e.g. *blat*, the "*law on the phone*", and *kompromat*, may be actively applied to protect rector Cygnar against legal and professional consequences of plagiarism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank all whistleblowers engaged in the case of rector Cygnar.

REFERENCES

1. Biagioli, M. (2012). "Recycling Texts or Stealing Time?: Plagiarism, Authorship, and Credit in Science." *International Journal of Cultural Property* 19(3): 453-476.
2. Bourdieu, P. (1975). "The specificity of the scientific field and the social conditions of the progress of reason." *Social science information* 14(6): 19-47.
3. Bourdieu, P. and S. Farage (1994). "Rethinking the state: Genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field." *Sociological theory* 12(1): 1-18.
4. Dinis-Oliveira, R. J. (2020). "COVID-19 research: pandemic versus "paperdemic", integrity, values and risks of the "speed science"." *Forensic Sci Res* 5(2): 174-187.
5. Faraone, S. (1982). "Psychiatry and political repression in the Soviet Union." *American Psychologist* 37(10).
6. Faunce, T. A. and S. Jefferys (2007). "Whistleblowing and scientific misconduct: Renewing legal and virtue ethics foundations." *Med. & L.* 26: 567.

7. Kołodziej, Ł. (2021). "PLAGIARISM AND BLAT IN THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY: THE CASE STUDY FROM THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND." *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection* 9(3): 45-53.
8. Krajewski, M. and M. ZIÓŁKOWSKI (2020). "A. Court of Justice: EU judicial independence decentralized: AK." *Common market law review* 57: 1107-1138.
9. Kühn, Z. (2004). "Worlds apart: Western and Central European judicial culture at the onset of the European enlargement." *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 52(3): 531-567.
10. Ledeneva, A. (2008). "Telephone justice in Russia." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 24(4): 324-350.
11. Ledeneva, A. (2014). "Economies of favors or corrupt societies? Exploring the boundaries between informality and corruption." *Baltic Worlds* 1(2014): 13-21.
12. Ledeneva, A. V. (2011). *How Russia really works. How Russia Really Works*, Cornell University Press.
13. Maton, K. (2003). "Reflexivity, relationism, & research: Pierre Bourdieu and the epistemic conditions of social scientific knowledge." *Space and Culture* 6(1): 52-65.
14. Merskey, H. and B. Shafran (1986). "Political hazards in the diagnosis of 'sluggish schizophrenia'." *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 148(3): 247-256.
15. Penders, B. (2018). "Beyond Trust: Plagiarism and Truth." *J Bioeth Inq* 15(1): 29-32.
16. Richardson, J. and P. Bourdieu (1986). *The forms of capital*.
17. Solomon, P. H. (2012). *The accountability of judges in post communist states: from bureaucratic to professional accountability. Judicial independence in transition*, Springer: 909-935.
18. Wasilewski, J. and E. Wnuk-Lipiński (1995). "Poland: Winding road from the Communist to the post-Solidarity elite." *Theory and Society* 24(5): 669-696.
19. Wronski, M. (2021). "Rektorska habilitacja." Retrieved 12.07.2021, 2021, from <https://miesiecznik.forumakademickie.pl/czasopisma/fa-03-2020/rektorska-habilitacja%E2%80%A9/>.
20. Wyrzykowski, M. (2019). "Experiencing the Unimaginable: the Collapse of the Rule of Law in Poland." *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 11(2): 417-422.