

Protesting parents as a significant social and educational phenomenon. Andragogical inspirations

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The aim of this paper is to give the initial analysis of the phenomenon of protesting parents within a wider study on the learning potential of rebellion. This thread appeared due course the induction of the category “socialization to rebellion” from the empirical material. In this research project, the author uses a biographical perspective proposed by Danuta Urbaniak-Zajac. The empirical material is analysed in a “transverse” way. First, individual biographies are analysed. Then all empirical material is compared with respect to differences and similarities. In the narrations of the “rebellious” people several threads about their childhood and participation in protests along with their parents were discovered. The analysed narrations show that protesting parents could potentially have played an important role in shaping the involvement of respondents in social and political affairs. It can be seen as an important citizen education issue.

Keywords: protesting parents, biography, socialization, learning, identity.

Introduction

In the spring of 2018, the lower chamber of the Polish Parliament (Sejm) faced yet another occupation protest of parents and carers of grownups with disabilities (Kubisa and Rakowska, 2018; Pałęcka, 2018). The protesters demanded establishing the legal norms for minimum living standards and increasing social benefits for people with disabilities in general. The protesting occupants were sleeping on mattresses placed on the marble floors of the parliament hall. They had no place to prepare meals, very difficult hygienic conditions, etc. As Julia Kubisa and Katarzyna Rakowska pointed out “the protesters suffered both economic and health costs of the strike” (Kubisa and Rakowska, 2018, p. 20). Additionally, the Parliamentary Guard often used violence against the protesters: it blocked the elevator thus preventing access to bathrooms with showers. Protesters who left the Sejm building for various reasons were not allowed to go back to the building area in order to continue the occupational strike. During the protest a large number of people supporting the postulates of the protesters mobilized outside the Sejm

building¹. During these events “dignity, freedom from discrimination, social solidarity and the need to restore progressive tax” were discussed (Pałęcka, 2018, p. 43). Bonds and solidarity between protesters and their supporters were established.

At the time of writing this text, another protest of parents and carers of people with disabilities is taking place in Warsaw (23/05/2019). This example shows the continuity and the importance of this type of mobilization for its participants nowadays. Besides, I think that not only for them. Certainly also for me as an involved social researcher.

I will start with my personal reasons for choosing the topic of protesting parents. Mobilization of parents, carers, or other social groups in the form of a protest and its social and educational significance is extremely important to me. First, because I am also a person who participates in protests. What is more, I am an ally of many groups struggling for freedom and dignity, issues that belong to every human being. What makes me different from the people mentioned in this text is my parents’ failure to protest. I regret that I did not have similar socialization experiences.

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¹ Support for protesters was declared by Polish Women’s Strike and Warsaw Women’s Strike.

I think that it is important to study the issue of protests and its social and educational potential – it is a kind of polemic with theories that seem to block the subjective agency of social entities. I mean here reproduction theories like Pierre Bourdieu's capital theory. Within his concept, Bourdieu is talking about unfavourable capital of subordinate individuals and groups at the start which has consequences for maintaining the status quo in society (Bourdieu, 1977). Inequality inscribed in the *habitus* of a given individual or social groups is then reproduced in the course of everyday life. Reproduction of the social order is made through the specified institutions, including schools. Thus, all kinds of insubordination and struggles for freedom of entities prove to be ineffective (significantly reduced) in contact with the forces prevailing in the social field. This is a "negative" but not the only one side of social capital theory. I will expand on this later in the text.

The phenomenon of protesting parents today seems to be an important research subject. The experience of protesting parents is one the aspects of a child's socialization. Socialization is significant from the point of view of the emancipation of children and who later become adults. Learning to protest, especially in a family environment, can be seen as the starting point for learning democracy (Biesta, 2011). The analysis presented below shows such a process of learning democracy, as well as its contribution to democratisation and possible changes in public space.

The joint "rebellious" action of parents and children in the public space proved to be important, also in the contexts of growing social discontent, the crisis of liberal democracy (Touraine, 2014; Migalski, 2016; Castells, 2017), unfavourable climate changes (Latour, 2018; "The Guardian", 2019) and many other factors. As Maria Mendel points out, the parental environment can play a primary role in building strong and constructive opposition to the ongoing destruction and crisis. It can be an example of building an "ethos in a crisis" (Mendel, 2017).

The phenomenon of protesting parents analysed here is an element of a broader study on the learning potential of rebellion, which I conducted between 2014 and 2019. The purpose of this larger project is, inter alia, to describe and understand mechanisms of learning of adults who participate in various forms of rebellion in many contexts. I would like to point out that this

project has an international character which is also important from the point of view of multicontextual character of rebellions, rebellious actions and learning. I have interviewed people from many social, cultural and political contexts (Poland, Mexico, Belarus, Spain)². In this text I focus on analysis of the interviews with women (interviews 2, 14, 16, 18³) and men (interviews 19, 22) engaged in protests and another socio-political actions. It turns out that, despite the diverse cultural and gender contexts, respondents talk about similar experiences of protest. These people have experienced or mentioned a protest with their own parents. The described experiences turned out to be significant for the respondents from the point of view of their own interpretations of their current private-public activities.

It is worth mentioning that the study of rebellion in Polish pedagogy (and andragogy) is not a new research topic (Rudnicki, 2009; Szwabowski, 2015; Szczygieł, 2017; Kowzan and others, 2018). In this study I make an attempt to describe and interpret the phenomenon of protesting parents, which emerged from narratives of the rebels whom I interviewed. Let us start with a brief presentation of the theoretical framework that grounds this analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Protesting is an important civic and learning experience. I interpret it in categories of active citizenship and learning democracy, both issues strongly emphasized within the theory of adult

² I have used convenience sampling of respondents. However, when selecting the participants I used certain criteria: identity criterion (respondents' identification as a rebel and/or activist); 2) practical criterion (respondents are currently participating in or were participating in protests and/or other forms of rebellion in their lives); "importance" criterion (they consider participation in protests as important life experience). The respondents come from Poland (15), Spain (5), Belarus (1) and Mexico (1). They have university education or are still studying. Some of these people I have known before (among others from my own protest experiences). I got in touch with others using the "snowball" method. The total sample in my project consists of 22 people. With each of them I have conducted an interview lasting approximately 40-50 minutes.

³ The numbers provided correspond to the order of interviews conducted during my research project. I did not want to change the numbering of statements for the purposes of this article. I treat this text as part of a larger whole.

learning (Field, 1995, 2001, 2005; Bron, Kurantowicz, Olesen, West, 2005; Kurantowicz, 2007; Nordvall, 2017).

In his works John Field (2001; 2005) refers to the close connection between citizenship and learning. Field writes that many European historians have been interested in the role of social movements in both providing and demanding adult education (the positive role of social movements for adult education was evident in 19th and 20th centuries). He points to temperance movements in Britain and Ireland, European labour movements and first feminists movements, all of which had a very different profiles of activities. On the educational plane, these movements was empowering their followers. These movements were even called 'schools for democracy' (Field, 2005). A similar educational role can be seen in the joint protest of children and their parents. Hence, a natural point of reference to this phenomenon are the works of John Field (2001; 2005), especially his analysis of the problem of social capital.

At the core of the concept of social capital lies the conviction about the role of social relationships (such as family, neighbourhood and forms of voluntary association of people) in the co-creation of the world. Field writes that "the metaphor of 'capital' draws attention to the way in which such relationships may be said to constitute, at least potentially, a resource that is available to actors in pursuing their own ends" (Field, 2001, p. 26). Social capital, however, does not only serve individual purposes. It can be treated more broadly as building interpersonal networks based on specific norms (of cooperation) and trust. In such a case, it can be used also by disadvantaged groups for emancipative purposes.

As mentioned above, one of the most important concepts of social capital was proposed by Pierre Bourdieu (1977), who made a claim about the interchangeability of various forms of capital (social, cultural, economic and symbolic). According to Bourdieu, social capital is one of the factors supporting the *status quo*, the domination of some social groups over others, maintaining power etc. Thus, we are dealing here with the negative "side" of social capital, at least from the point of view of the emancipation of the oppressed groups. In this theory, it is assumed that the initial capital of oppressed groups is so unfavorable that it prevents the process of their emancipation.

While collecting the data for this project I saw the opposite of what Bourdieu describes. The social capital created through learning and mutual cooperation of social groups (parents, children and others) can be a source of agency and positive social change⁴. In this context the social capital is understood as collectively owned resource of individuals and groups. According to Claus Offe and Susanne Fuchs (2002) the social capital consists of three components: associability, trust and attention. Attention refers to a set of opinions and thoughts concerning political and social life. Trust is "represented by the belief that joining with others is either intrinsically attractive (...) or leads to desirable outcomes" (Offe, Fuchs, 2002, s. 191). Associability connotes one's engagement in formal associations (e.g. NGOs) or informal networks. One of the significant examples of the associability is the civic engagement in the activities of social movements that contest the existing social order. Hence, the presence of social capital can be used to overcome the *status quo* and "helps to make democracy work" (Offe, Fuchs, 2002, s. 190).

Social capital plays an important role in education. For example, James Coleman's research shows that:

"strong bonds between school, family, church and neighbourhood can be a far more powerful factor in generating high achievement than social class or the quantity or quality of inputs" (Field, 2001, p. 27).

In Robert Putnam's (1995) work, one can find how not only individual achievements, but also public good is developed through social capital. Putnam's social capital is connected with the possibility of self-organization, trust and people's networks that enable coordinated democratic actions (e.g. solving problems in the local community). It turns out that high social capital can be important from the point of view of civic engagement and emancipation of disadvantaged (oppressed) groups. Civic engagement, in turn, can bring further benefits - learning of social actors.

The educational process (also in the context of socio-political activity) may depend on the initial assumption present in the minds of active social actors about the possibility of action and agency.

⁴ I am aware that social capital can also have negative consequences, as in the case of many anti-democratic social movements that we can now observe in modern democratic societies.

The assumption of inequality can be a blockade for emancipation processes, as many researchers have pointed out in educational context (Biesta, 2011, 2017; Rancière, 1991; Zamojski, 2014).

Therefore, positive references to activism, an assumption about equality and opportunities for joint action can be a source of learning and construction of a "positive" social capital. It seems to me that the experiences of protesting parents in the minds of the respondents become the source of this propitious aspect of social capital. Despite this, the respondents seem to be critical of their primary socialization. The criticality turns out to be crucial for learning.

Methodological Points

The main research question I would like to answer in this text is:

How did the protesting respondents conceive of the significance of their protesting parents for their own protests?

What is the learning potential of phenomenon of protesting parents in the lives of respondents?

The research goal is therefore to describe and understand the significance of the phenomenon of protesting parents for the current involvement of respondents in their rebellion practices. I decided that a biographical perspective would be an adequate method to achieve this goal.

Within the biographical approach in educational research biography is captured in a processual way. Therefore, it is possible to grasp the construction of identity of social actors. The usefulness of biographical approaches in educational research "stems from the fact that they enable us to understand the orientation of the individual and his experiences related to learning throughout life" (Merrill, 2011, p. 15).

Within the variety of ways one can design and conduct a biographical inquiry the approach proposed by Danuta Urbaniak-Zajac (2011; 2017) is especially inspiring for me, since she emphasizes the importance of researcher's self-awareness (theoretical and methodological justifications of researchers) and stresses the need to problematize the studied phenomenon. One of such phenomena is, of course, a biography that can be understood in many ways, thus determining the way of conducting research. In the biographical approach this is very important because both the subjective statements of the respondents and the broader

context of narrative are analysed (Alheit, 2009; Merrill, 2001). In my research, first and foremost, I understand the biography as a record of the educational process of shaping a human being. Biography is a history of human life, at the same time being a history of his/her learning and constructing identity. Hence I treat biography as a kind of a "tool" to describe a specific socio-educational phenomenon (here: protesting parents).

I analysed the research material in following steps. First, I was studying individual biographies (narratives) in order to capture the topics related to learning in the context of participation in rebellion(s). Next to this I have distinguished categories that referred to fragments of statements in various places of the interviews (I did not analyse answers to individual questions but took into account the entire text of the transcription). Finally, I have compiled together all gathered transcriptions with the intention of distinguishing what is common and what is differentiating regarding learning in the studied biographies ("transverse" analysis).

The material was very rich and provided insights in diverse phenomena. However, in this article I will focus only on the threads regarding protesting parents present in the narratives of adult rebels.

Results of the analysis

As an empirical example of the phenomenon of protesting parents I will now turn to fragments of narratives that are part of a wider analytical category called by me "socialization to rebellion" (Szczygieł, 2018). In the narratives of my respondents I found the threads about their childhood and participation in protests together with their parents. The analysed narratives show that the protesting parents could have played a significant role in shaping lifestyles of the rebel adults, including their involvement in the recent social and political matters.

Rebelling men and women stressed the fact of their childhood participation in protests together with their parents. One of the interviewees points out that her parents are teachers, suggesting that protesting is something "natural" for them. This is how a respondent (coming from Mexico) describes it:

"(...) I have been participating in protests since I was a small child. My parents also

always protested because they are teachers. So, for example, they took me at some point, when it was, when there was an earthquake in Mexico in 1986. The building of the kindergarten, where I was attending, suffered a lot of damage, so all children were taken from this small school to the president's house. Sitting on the street, we were protesting to renovate it, and at that time I was two years old" (interview 2).

Also, the respondent from Belarus (a female) underlines the family roots of her rebellion. It is interesting from the point of view of the post-Soviet context and dictatorship of Alexander Lukashenko. Here is a fragment of the narrative:

"(...) [Protesting] comes out of the history of my family, because my mother... well, I was born in the year 1990 and so it was a dissolution of the Soviet Union yyy and my mother actively participated in the demonstrations in Belarus (...) before Lukashenko came to power, yes. And after that, when it came at all... my mother actively protested. She took me on the protests very often. Yyyy mmm so it was natural for me, that if something bad happens, then the protest is a normal reaction of society. My mother always said that and she just kept it. Although this is not necessarily the case now" (interview 16).

The dictator's coming to power meant that the mother of my interlocutor was even more actively participating in protests, which was, according to the respondent, something natural. Naturalization of rebellion is interesting from the point of view of socialization and learning. It shows strongly rooted dispositions for rebellious actions of the respondents.

In the last sentence of this narrative, the narrator claims that her mother is not necessarily clinging to the maxim that protesting is a necessary and normal reaction of society to evil anymore. All because at some point in Belarus's contemporary history there had been many acts of violence by the state apparatus against protesters (the respondent mentioned many people imprisoned for opposing the Lukashenko regime in public). The woman, after analysing the violent conditions in the state, concluded that she should not take risks and stop or reduce protesting. This decision shows the phenomenon of biographical learning, which takes place somewhere "between" the institutional and political context and the reflection on one's own

experiences (Alheit, 2018). This reflection may result in the verification of individual beliefs and result in changes in biographical patterns. In this case the respondent has learned that protesting may be dangerous, and hence one of the alternative actions is to give up rebellion.

Other respondent (of Polish origin) also talked about the experiences of their parents' protests, especially in the context of the Carnival of Solidarity⁵. Referring to her own mother one of the respondents said:

"(...) in the times of Solidarity (...) if she was there, she fled, brought some bread, or left something to someone, [made] grocery shopping for people in the shipyard, because they [interlocutor's parents] lived close to the shipyard. But she was scared to death of those people, these militiamen, of that gas, especially that there, every now and then, the gas was falling into the apartment" (interview 14).

Despite the strong fear, the mother mentioned in narrative had a strong need to support the strike. She was strongly involved in helping the protesters (strikers). This can be understood in terms of her personal protest, especially against the regime of the communist Poland. This mother's story etched in my interlocutor's memory as a reference point to her own rebellion.

Another interlocutor, a young male student, also claims that his own rebellion largely comes from his parents' tradition of rebellion. He admits that under the influence of his parents' stories of Solidarity strikes, he felt motivated for his own rebellious activity:

"I also have a little bit in my family, because my parents, Solidarity, there, they were connected with Solidarity. As they told me, how they protested, *I was a little drawn to it*, right. That this climate of protest and so on" (interview 19, emphasis added).

The analysed material shows that family stories heard can be a factor that triggers rebels' own socio-political activity. Parents' stories evoke positive emotions in the subject (pride, excitement) and motivate him/her to act. This reveals the emotional layer of the phenomenon of rebellion or social discontent. Emotions then,

⁵ "Carnival of Solidarity" - colloquially named the period of 15-16 months between August 1980 or the signing of the August Agreements in Gdańsk and December 13, 1981 (the imposition of martial law) in Poland.

especially those that relate to our immediate environment and its actions, become one of the components of learning (Illeris, 2009).

Another language in relation to rebellion and protesting parents is used by the male interviewee from Catalonia, who mentions the transmission of a specific worldview in his family home. According to the interviewee this is closely related to his own rebellion. It is about "inculcating" or rising up in a protesting family with leftist traditions:

"Another factor [of my participation in revolts] is that my family is left-wing, so it educated me in a series of values that are a bit different from what society believes in, no? I mean in the sense of complaining, claims and so on, yes?" (interview 22)

The interlocutor develops this issue in an interesting way. In the course of the interview he claims that the transmission of left-wing values is probably not unique and reserved only for his family, but is typical for the entire Catalan society (and especially of Barcelona). This society is described as progressive, democratic, anti-authoritarian and "rebellious". The respondent explains this phenomenon *inter alia* in such a way that the Catalans do not occupy the position of state power. According to the interlocutor Catalan people are critical of the existing social order, and they find the relations between Spain and Catalonia unequal. The Catalan rebel believes that in this specific place there is a cultural heritage of anti-fascism and anti-authoritarianism, which is present in all spheres of life.

Two important issues arise from the statements of the Catalan respondent. One of them is the transmission of values at the family level. The narrative shows that this transmission was one-sided in the family environment – from the generation of parents to the generation of children. The second issue is the role of the place in constructing the identity of the rebel, to which I will return later in the text.

Regarding the first issue, the subject in his narrative portrays something that Margaret Mead (2000) would call a post-figurative culture. In other words, it refers to a pattern of socialisation in which children learn from their parents. This type of culture is characteristic for traditional societies in which the older generation is the source of knowledge, values and patterns of behaviour for the younger generation. Such one-sidedness of the transmission may be a potential

cause of unchanging group identity of members of a given society. Other parts of the interview, however, show that the learning of left-wing values took place not only in his family environment, but also among the later comrades of rebellion, that is in the social environment of Barcelona that fosters rebellions.

In my research, there is a kind of differentiation in learning in the context of rebellions in family environments. One of the interlocutors (interview 14) talked about how she took her mother, who usually tries to avoid the crowds, to protest. However, in the particular case of Black Protest (concerning disagreement on the tightening of the abortion law) in Poland) the mother felt the need to go out onto the street. The participant of my research, who is a committed activist for years, supported her mother in her protest. I see this as an example of Mead's pre-figurative culture (the type of culture in which the new generation transmit knowledge and values to the older generation). The interviewee states that participation in the Black Protest was a transgressive experience for her mother. I understand this in terms of an intergenerational learning potential.

Intergenerational experience of protest is also seen in this fragment:

"(...) these demonstrations show me that it is so ... that there is a need and potential in people to meet and create something, even, even such a single yyy action. And show me that somewhere out they are important, and, are important, and can have the effect of yyy and that and that people look for it, need it. And that people are looking for it, they need it. I also think that there are people who bring their children [on protests] and also want to show them that you can be civic, you can get involved in some way and try to change something too, (...) and this is fantastic" (interview 18).

Education for values of protest, taking mother to a protest, bringing children to a protest to show that they can be committed citizens are examples of rebellious learning experiences in various stages of life. One can say that in the course of the interlocutor's experiences, reflections and interactions with others, specific dispositions for action were developed. It also shows the specific process of building the rebels' identity (the sense of being a rebel).

Discussion

My analysis shows that the protesting parents and the closest social environment are significant point of reference for action and learning of my respondents. Parents and social environment become a source of social bonds and knowledge for rebels, as well as take part in establishing a disposition for specific rebel activities. This process of establishing dispositions of action (learning) is important from the point of view of social actors' individual interests but also public good (Putnam, 1995).

In the analysed empirical material the issue of public good – which I see as a democratic concern – was rendered by the respondents in terms of common activism and struggle for rights, dignity and other such values interrelated with democracy. What is interesting, while talking about activism and struggle, respondents spoke about their learning which is strongly associated with democracy. Learning appeared in analysed narratives as a specific essence of learning in the context of common rebellious action. The interviewed rebels pointed to many diverse outcomes of this kind of learning.

The respondent from Mexico talked about learning ability to listen to others, interact with others, doing something good, resisting social order, discussing, recognizing and categorizing people and ideologies. She also learned that people are equal and uneducated people can also display a certain vision of the world. One of the Polish respondent mentioned her change in thinking about demonstrations, understanding the importance of showing up in public space, of animating people, improving her interpersonal communication and anxiety management, as well as organizational skills and time management. The respondent from Belarus while protesting learned respect for others and became aware that stereotypes are not real and can be dangerous in society. Another Polish respondent (interview 18) told me about acquiring knowledge about social problems, and recognising the fact that people can be creative, and that activists instead of complaining should look for hotspots that will commove people. And also that people have a potential and need to meet with each other, and different people can understand things differently than we, as well as that participants can have a causative power. The Polish respondent learned that it is worth persuading people "from outside" to our views without

forcing them ("one must discuss"). The Catalan respondent said that during his activism he learned about urban space, occupancy of buildings, anarchism, feminism and environmentalism which is important for him from the point of view of rebellion.

It seems to be reasonable to claim that many of these learning outcomes correspond to building a "positive" social capital. They go beyond individuals and concern social issues such as bonds, social relations, tolerance, dialogue etc. These issues are important from the point of view of democracy and joint action in democratic society.

Additionally, the interviewees treated the joint action as an opportunity to build a specific community (consisting of grandparents, parents and their children) which clearly shows other "positive" aspects of building a social capital. Rebels mentioned the creation of a specific community of rebellion, which can be treated as a learning community (Kurantowicz, 2007) through engagement in a specific issue.

In the area of social pedagogy⁶ – which is a great inspiration for andragogy – the phenomenon of parents' public engagement was described by Mendel (2017). Her research focused mainly on the strength of parents' engagement within school institutions and public education in the context of "commonality":

"As shown by numerous examples, parents struggling for universal, equal-access and socially just education and school, are in fact struggling for commonality and – what is significant – as a force mentioned they play a key role in it. This struggle consists of initiatives and the practice of equal participation in creating and using the social good of public education" (Mendel, 2017, p. 242).

In my study, the engagement spreads to many aspects of social life starting from private matters, through problems of local communities up to more regional problems (also including the context of school environment that is present in

⁶ On Polish ground I mean an interdisciplinary subdiscipline of pedagogy, in which the subject of research is the theory, methodology and practice of human education in all periods of life and processes of change in its social environment. Social pedagogues focus on the interdependence of the changing and community members - school children, adolescents and adult continuing their education.

the interview with the respondent from Mexico who have recalled the assembly of parents and their children in order to rebuild the kindergarten destroyed by the earthquake). Certainly in the case of parents who protested in a particular case, a specific place of commonality was created, "identical with a place common to democracy, sharing it and making it stronger (...)" (Mendel, 2017).

One of the common places mentioned by one of the interlocutors was the city of Barcelona with its entire social, cultural and political background. It brings to mind the significance of the category of place for educational research as conceptualised by Mendel (2006; 2017).

Mendel wrote that pedagogical place paradoxically is and is not deterministic in educational phenomena. The place determines the processes of learning and forming people rooted in it. Learning processes happen somewhat between the subject and the place where this subject lives, acts and learns. Mendel writes that:

"The place is always significant. 'Everything' has its own place. The events are taking place somewhere, the senses – through which we understand reality – are formed somewhere; and in this reality we understand ourselves with a more or less clear but always present sense of connection with the place" (Mendel 2006, p. 21).

The respondents mentioned many significant places: family home, the city, the district, and other spaces. These were places where the interlocutors acted (rebelled) and learned. The significance of these places was also related to the process of shaping specific (democratic) values. The values of rebellion negotiated in the family home (parents, carers and other family members) facilitated rebels' actions in the public sphere, encouraged them to get engaged in various issues, not only for themselves, but also for other people and social groups. Referring to Mendel (2006) the places of action and rebellion remember our presence, bear its traces, mean what we say and think about these places making specific narratives, plans and / or wishes regarding the reality in which we live. Mendel claims that "the world is «real» to us, in the places it consists of. The fragments of reality which is closest to us are constructing us the most" (Mendel, 2006, p. 22). The protesting parents are also such a fragment of social and educational reality in the context of rebellion.

Protest, learning and identity

During the course of the analysis of the gathered empirical material the relationship between protesting as a specific social action and learning and constructing the identity of social actors became evident.

Protests, which for each interlocutor may mean something completely different, at their core include the disagreement with the existing social order and the will to change that order. The contexts of the protests of parents and carers of people with disabilities – mentioned at the beginning of this text – as well as the subsequent threads in the analysed empirical material, are linked with the struggle for rights, dignity, justice and democracy. While acting my interlocutors try to challenge the existing order and / or build a new quality of social life. All of these biographical experiences became an opportunity for reflection, learning and making of a specific rebel identity.

This identity is made via attempts to solve social problems. It makes a mark on biographies of rebels and people who are meaningful to them (parents). We can say that we are dealing here with a specific educational identity. The respondents act and make reflections that are typical especially for non-formal education in the context of everyday actions. Interlocutors' reflection on the origins of their rebellion is particularly important. These origins are often located in family traditions.

The identities of rebelling people, are in constant process of change, which is typical for Western democratic societies in late modernity. In this context, it is no longer about stabilizing the rebels' identity, but rather escaping from its final form (Merrill, 2011). The changing context of the lifeworld, the crises faced by the social actors (both "small", individual, as well as "big", systemic ones) are forcing continuous reflection and redefinition of the meanings of the situations we are facing today. Protest, as one of such changing contexts, seems to be one of the answers to the (negative) changes in contemporary world. It is an intergenerational, intercultural, learning (educational) and identity experience. It seems to me that the statements of my interlocutors analysed in this text have shown this phenomenon clearly.

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