

# Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions. The perspectives of the XXI century.

This paper is prepared in the framework of RFP – Regio Futures Programme. However the opinion and value judgments expressed in the paper are related only to the personal responsibility of the author.

Ministry of Regional Development –  
Regio Futures Programme

Warsaw August 2008

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**The Regio Futures Programme, Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions. The perspectives of the XXI century.  
A vision of the IV Warsaw Conference October 2008**

**Introduction**

The consistent and effective activity of the Polish Ministry of Regional Development in 2007 and 2008 has created the intellectual and pragmatic reality of the Regio Futures Programme documented inter alia in a growing list of publications in English and in Polish<sup>1</sup>. A new stage in the development of RFP will be started by The IV Warsaw Conference organized by the Polish Ministry of Regional Development in cooperation with, The Club of Rome and the Polish Economic Society. This conference will have three dimensions .

The global dimension related to the dramatic transformations of the global scene in the experiences and prospects of the XX and XXI century.

The European dimension tested in a brainstorming dimension related to the experiences of the Triple European Mezzogiorno – Southern Italy, Eastern Germany and Eastern Poland.

The Polish dimension is formulating the bold and crucial question – Polonia Quo Vadis?

The intellectual and pragmatic climate will be dominated by the spirit of innovative controversy crossing the limits of conventional wisdom and political correctness.

In methodological perspective the conference will test the assumption that the concept of Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions is an effective vehicle improving the cognitive and pragmatic dimension of RFP. In this cognitive and pragmatic framework and motivation we will outline six short chapter of this paper:

- I. The human mind and imagination facing the enigma of the future
- II. The dilemmas and the Gordian Knots of the XX century
- III. The enigma and the Gordian Knots of the XXI century
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- V. Quo Vadis Polonia? The polish Gordian Knots in the years 1990-2050
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<sup>1</sup> P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber (eds), *The Future European Regions*, The Ministry of Regional Development, Warsaw 2007,  
K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Hołda, *Gordian Knots of the XXI century*, Warsaw 2008  
P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber (eds), *Problematyka Przyszłości Regionów*, Warszawa 2008

## **I. The human mind and imagination facing the enigma of the future**

The enigma of the future is creating a set of challenges, which may be outside the boundaries of our wisdom and imagination. We know that the prevision of the future is impossible but necessary. We know that we should master the art to expect the unexpected, we know that, we are living in an age of unprecedented global risk and universal uncertainty. This knowledge however should be a source of our intellectual modesty, but not a source of surrender facing the enigma of the future. This enigma is creating an unprecedented historical demand to promote a New Futurology integrating our wisdom, imagination and moral courage to see the emerging blessings and disasters of the Future.

The enigma of the future is a challenge for our wisdom and imagination and not an excuse for surrender and nihilistic motivations and approaches. An intellectually charming and brilliant nihilistic approach we find in the magnificent book of N.N. Taleb<sup>2</sup> including the following formulation:

*"I find it scandalous that In spite of the empirical record we continue to project into the future as if we were good at it, using tools and methods that exclude rare events. Prediction is firmly institutionalized in our world. We are suckers for those who help us navigate uncertainty, whether the fortune-teller or the well-published (dull) academics or civil servants using phony mathematics"*

This great book is an excellent contribution presenting an rich and imaginative documentation of a wrong thesis.

Our October 2008 Conference should use fully the charming intellectual capital of the book of N.N. Taleb. In this context we should revive our attention to the volume published by UNESCO in 1992 where we find the following formulation<sup>3</sup>

*"Prospective is neither forecasting nor futurology but a mode of thinking for action and against fatalism. Prospective recognizes that the future is the 'raison d'être of the present', that it is multiple and uncertain, and that it is a way for everyone to take control of their own futures"*

I am convinced that a very high spirit of intellectual and pragmatic controversy can be achieved in the discussion of the two models facing the future presented in the books of M. Godet and N.N. Taleb. If it is not too late we should invite both authors to join the panel of our October Conference.

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<sup>2</sup> N.N. Taleb, *The Black Swain*, Penguin Books, London 2007

<sup>3</sup> M. Godet, *From Anticipation to Action*, UNESCO, Paris 1992

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On the Polish scene the Taleb controversy will be animated by the excellent papers of R. Galar and W. Lametowicz.

## **II. The dilemma and the Gordian Knots of the XX century.**

The XX century is a complicated dramatic and tragic chapter in the human history open to multiple interpretations and value judgments. The XX century was an age of great wisdom and heroic courage and an age of historical blunders, and moral and material destruction of unprecedented intensity and scale. We propose to apply two concepts in the interpretation of the experiences of the XX century – the concept of dilemmas and concept of Gordian Knots.

Just to open our discussion in this field let me mention four dilemmas of the XX century:

- 1) the tragic dilemma of war and peace
- 2) the dramatic dilemma liberal democracy versus totalitarian systems
- 3) the contrasting experiences of global capitalism, the great depression of the early thirties and the golden time of the years 1950-75
- 4) the dilemma of two ideologies as trajectories of the development of the global order  
Keynesism versus neoliberalism

The concept of dilemmas is well established in the framework of our thinking. The idea to interpret the experiences of the XX century in the framework of Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions is a new idea<sup>4</sup> to be tested in the discussions of our conference.

The most important question in this field is the success or failure of the process of the transformation of the Gordian Knots into Alexandrian Solutions.

In the vast and tragic experiences of the XX century we can find three historical situations which to my mind could be analyzed as innovative case studies.

### Case one

The Gordian Knot of deteriorating global ecology of the XX century. The Gordian Knot was well defined, some mild Alexandrian Solution were proposed. No Alexandrian Solutions were applied. The Gordian Knot of global ecology of the XX century was in an aggravated state shifted to the scene of the XXI century.

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<sup>4</sup> Compare K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Hołda, op. cit.

### Case two

The Gordian Knot of world War Two was cut by the Alexandrian Solutions of the great victorious coalition. The Alexandrian Solutions have created a new global order which was well functioning for about 50 years.

### Case three

The Gordian Knot of Cold War was not resolved by a successful Alexandrian Solution introducing a new era of peace and prosperity. The Cold War was suspended in the last decade of the XX century and has reemerged in a new shape in the first decade of the XXI century – a redefined Cold War<sup>5</sup>. Naturally this pessimistic judgment is open to critical evaluations. We should however try to face the hard facts of the global situation of the beginning of the XXI century being a legacy of the historical blunders of the last decade of the XX century.

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The global scene of the XX century could be seen as a grand dynamic mosaic of 1000 regions – strong and weak regions, dynamic and stagnating regions, innovative and imitative regions, regions of prosperity and regions of misery. In the analysis of the regional experiences of the XX century we can use the framework of the dilemmas of Gordian Knots seen in macro historical and macro geographical perspective. This perspective is an innovative feature of the Regio Futures Programme to be expanded by our October Conference.

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<sup>5</sup> compare A. Cowell, *Churchil's definition of Russia still rings true*  
*"That rankles with Moscow. Imperial memory is powerful force, instilling a yearning for lost glories and an urge for new modes of influence, acknowledgment and respect.*  
*It should surprise no one that, once the Kremlin made a strategic decision under Putin reassert control over its own energy resources, outsiders would have a hard time navigating the oil and gas business that gives the Moscow elite control over such massive wealth and power.*

*There is a sense, too, that by projecting itself as a pole of opposition to Western plans, Moscow is offering itself as an alternate, a counterweight and an equal player, defining itself quite deliberately as the West's muscular opposite, as much to the "other" as in 1939. Sometimes that divide takes on the trappings of a redefined Cold War."*

International Herald Tribune, August 2-3 2008

### III. The enigma of the XXI century

It is both impossible and necessary to face the enigma of the XXI century. This enigma is created not only by the non predictable processes which will emerge in the conditions of universal uncertainty of the future.

This enigma was created also by the historical experiences of the XX century, which was not able to design and implement a new global order at the end of the XX century changing the suspension of the Cold War into an era of permanent peace and prosperity. In this context we would like to quote six theses outlining the processes of the creation and destruction of the global order in the years 1815-2050<sup>6</sup>.

- 1) **The creation and destruction of the global order as the dialectic of the processes of long duration and turning points**
- 2) **The creation and development of the global order in the years 1815 – 1914**
- 3) **The destruction of the global order in the years 1914 – 1945**
- 4) **The great renaissance of the global order in the years 1945 – 1985**
- 5) ***Á la recherché du temps perdu* . Why – in the temporal framework of the 25 years 1985 – 2010 it was impossible to create a new global order for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?**
- 6) **The perspective of the creation of a new global order in the years 2010 – 2050 versus the perspective of global chaos and catastrophe**

The next step in our analysis are seven theses as a pluralistic set of visions related to the prospective experiences of the XXI century<sup>7</sup>

*Thesis one* – the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be an age of global risk and universal uncertainty

*Thesis two* – We are witnessing the deep transformation of the global scene

*Thesis three* – In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we face a very deep crisis of the global elite of power, money, science and culture

*Thesis four* – The experiences of the 21<sup>st</sup> century may reverse the omnipotent trend of globalization<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A. Kukliński, The creation and destruction of the global order [in:] A. Gašior-Niemiec, A. Kukliński, W. Lamentowicz (eds) *The faces of the 21st century*, Warsaw 2008

<sup>7</sup> A. Kukliński, The 21<sup>st</sup> century. Brainstorming Reflection [In:] *Faces of the 21<sup>st</sup> century* op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> compare T.L. Friedmann, *The World is Flat Ferrar Strans and Giroux*, New York 2005

The thesis that the World is flat is losing its validity; see L. Rother, J. Rising cost of shipping drives new strategies. Oil prices help push relocation of factories closer to consumers. *International Herald Tribune*, August 4 2008

*Thesis five* – The experiences of the 21<sup>st</sup> century poses a great challenge for the system of liberal democracy

*Thesis six* – The experiences of the 21<sup>st</sup> century may lead to the collapse of the system of global ecology

*Thesis seven* – The experiences of the 21<sup>st</sup> century may be seen as a challenge of Gordian Knots and a scene of Alexandrian Solutions related to those Knots

These two papers of A. Kukliński could be seen as an introduction to the path breaking study of K. Rybiński, P. Opala and M. Hołda “*Gordian Knots of the XXI century*”<sup>9</sup>

The scope of the volume is very broad and comprehensive. It is not however a holistic volume. The whole domain of culture is beyond the scope of the attention of the volume. The scope of the volume is dominated by six global fields important as scenes of the emergence of the Gordian Knots:

The global finances

The global economy

The global governance and geopolitical transformations

The global demography

The global environment

The global science and technology

From the pragmatic point of view the most important chapter of the study is chapter five. policy implications – Alexandrian Solutions.

There are five Alexandrian Solutions discussed in the study:

- 1) Alexandrian Solution to the “*political cannibalism*” Gordian Knot
- 2) Alexandrian Solution to the limit to growth
- 3) Alexandrian Solution to aging and migration
- 4) Alexandrian Solution to the rise of China and the failure of Western democracy
- 5) Alexandrian Solution to financial markets hegemony and the emergence of new global players.

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The set of five Alexandrian Solutions is an innovative and bold formulation. We have however a long way to go, until we formulate a holistic list of Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions of the XXI century. The study of three Authors is only a first and

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<sup>9</sup> K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Hołda op.cit.

preliminary step opening this trajectory of thought and actions. I am convinced that the next step along this trajectory will be created by the contribution of the October Conference

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In the conclusion of the III Chapter of this paper let me present the following general reflexion. The crucial Gordian Knot is the strategic blindness of the global elites responsible for the fate of the XXI century. Let us assume for a moment that the grand, informal team of the global elite is a community of one thousand personalities representing government, corporations, international organizations, banks, religions, science and culture ect., ect.

It is difficult to believe, but it is true that this community is strategically blind not able to think in the framework of an effective global order. This community is not willing to face the enigma of the XXI century.

In this context we can say that the brilliant book<sup>10</sup> of the N.N. Taleb is not only wrong but also very dangerous. It is eliminating the foundations of our responsibility for the future. The deeply internationalized internalized notion of the responsibility for the future is one of the grand ideas of our October Conference. It has direct implications for all discussions related to the Future of Regions of the XXI century. The responsibility for the future is an idea deeply incorporated into the system of value judgments of the Regio Futures Programme. Let us quote in this context the following formulation of Jean Marie Rousseau<sup>11</sup>:

*"In parallel, instead of fearing the future, it is possible to explore an idealistic world. Preventing from looming any creativity crisis, choosing a "preferred future" in order to understand blockages for achieving it, could offer an iterative exploration of times and contexts. George Bernard Shaw yet advised us a long time ago that "We are made wise not by the recollection of the past but by the responsibility for the future." Instead of just trying foresight exercises and while forecasting aims at exploring and anticipating the future, it is then considered to follow a reverse way to be regarded as an "Iterspective": from the wished future, towards the complex present... in order to make the future help understand and reshaping the present.*

*From one side which represented by the Bench-Learning axis - promoting the local image and re-tuning the societal landscape - and the other one axis for the so-called Iterspective in order to "remember the future", it is possible to generate a creative tension between a current position and the future! Thanks to this behavior and openness in learning from others, but*

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<sup>10</sup> N.N. Taleb op.cit.

<sup>11</sup> J.M. Rousseau, Movinnation as a driving force of the 21<sup>st</sup> smart territories [in:] A. Kukliński, K. Pawłowski (eds) Futurology - the challenges of the XXI century, Nowy Sącz 2008 (in print)

*also thanks to the association of the whole population within the territory, the regional competitiveness can be reinforced and propose a resistance to centrifuge socio-economical forces, such as brain-drain, capital-drain, so-called "délocalisations", industrial disinvestments, students' disaffection, etc."*

#### **IV. The Gordian Knots and the Reality of European Regions.**

##### **The Triple European Mezzogiorno.**

The concept of Gordian Knot can be applied in six spatial scales – global, continental, sub continental, national, regional and local. We can find a *differentia specifica* at each spatial level. The common denominator is however in the treshhold at the minimum size of the institutional ego responsible for the creation of the Gordian Knot and for the possible invention and application of the Alexandrian Solution. There is no doubt that the region as an economic, social, cultural, political and institutional community could be seen as a scene of Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions.

A new hypothesis is introduced into the Programme expressed in the interaction of a set of four concepts:

- long duration
- barriers for development
- Gordian Knots
- Alexandrian Solutions

This interaction is outlined in the following way:

*Primo* - in the process of long duration of a given region, a set of developmental barriers is emerging. The economic, social, political and cultural structures of the region are not able to reverse this process, so the barriers are stronger and stronger in the consecutive chapters of the historical experiences of the given region.

*Secundo* - the conventional decision making reality is not able to outline and implement a set of strategic choices which would create a turning point liquidating the historical barriers.

*Tertio* - This situation of cumulating of unborn, not formulated and not designed and implemented strategic decisions overcoming the developmental barriers is defined as a Gordian Knot.

*Quatro* - Following the failure of the conventional decision making process the Alexandrian Solutions are the only way to cut the Gordian Knots of the given Region.

This model of thinking could be applied in the analysis of the reality of European Regions. This reality is a scene of long duration incorporating the very long secular time horizon. The study of T. Zarycki published in this volume is just opening this sequence of secular studies which should be developed analyzing the regional experiences in different parts of Europe.

The analysis of long duration will discover the process of the emergence in some regions of pronounced barriers for development. The persistent existence of those barriers as a phenomenon of long duration will transform those barriers into Gordian Knots facing the total impotence of the conventional institutional structures of the given region (the lock in situation).

In this condition the bold stroke of Alexandrian Solution is the only way to eliminate the barriers of long duration. The bold stroke, can be seen as a turning point opening a new stage in the developmental of the given region. This sequence long duration – barriers for development – Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions can probably be discovered in the experiences of almost all European regions.

I think however that this sequence is much more pronounced in the European periphery than in the European center.

In this context we can say, that the problem of Gordian Knots in the reality of European Regions, is related to two other important problems of the European regional scene. The center – periphery problem and the problem of the dualities of regional structures in Europe. In the papers of Antoni Kukliński, Bruno Amorosso and Anna Gašior-Niemiec published in this volume we find a well documented proposal to take the case studies of Southern Italy, Eastern Germany and Eastern Poland as a challenging testing field of the sequence, long duration, barriers for development, Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions.

This proposal can be seen as a quartet of innovations:

*Primo* – to open the trajectory of comparative studies related to three regions where the Gordian Knots are a result of different types of long duration emerging from different social, institutional and cultural conditions.

*Secundo* – to open the trajectory of a really holistic studies seeing not only the economic and institutional reality in the spirit of OECD, but also the reality of the system of value judgments and culture which are extremely important in the processes of long duration.

*Tertio* – to open the trajectory of an innovative, controversial and multidimensional discussion related to the comparative and holistic evaluation of the German, Italian and Polish experiences.

In this triple discussion and cooperation we must drop the language of academic round words diplomacy and face the hard facts of the reality of Southern Italy, Eastern Germany and Eastern Poland.

*quarto* - the open the trajectory of four communities involved in the experiences of the Triple European Mezzogiorno:

the academic community

the governance community

the business community

the journalistic community

The dialogue of Four Communities will push out the Triple Mezzogiorno from the domain of the academic ivory tower, into the domain of real problems and processes. Naturally this vision of Triple Mezzogiorno is already outside the limits of the October Conference. This is de facto a suggestion of a next Conference in spring 2009 – A conference of a new type dominated by pragmatic consideration leading to the cooperation of the Three Regions as political, economic, social and cultural entities.

This grand pragmatic Conference could be seen as an contribution to the doctrine and policy of the European Union and OECD. This conference will also open a new chapter of German- Italian - Polish cooperation in the field of broadly defined regional development, regional governance and regional policy.

#### **V. Polonia Quo Vadis? The Polish Gordian Knots of the years 1990-2050.**

In 1993 I have edited a volume<sup>12</sup> proposing a grand set of research programs answering the dramatic question Polonia Quo Vadis? I have proposed a set of studies, related to five transformations at the turn of the XX and XXI century:

the technological transformation

the ecological transformation

the economic transformation

the social transformation

the political transformation

It is useful to quote the first sentence of the preface to this volume.

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<sup>12</sup> A. Kukliński (eds) *Polonia Quo Vadis?*, Warszawa 1993, University of Warsaw, The European Institute of Regional and Local Development - EUROREG

*"In Central and Eastern Europe we find a dramatic deficiency of long term thinking. This long term thinking is not an irresponsible speculation related to the distant future. If it first of all a stream of light facilitating the present process of decision making"*

After fifteen years these words have a pronounced dramatic actuality. Our political elites of all ideological denominations are almost totally absorbed by short term thinking continuously deformed by the pressure of populism which ex definitione is not incorporating the long term visions of Poland's future in the context of European and global scene of the XXI century. In 2008 we should see the not implemented proposals of 1993, in context of the emerging renaissance of strategic studies in Poland.

There are six fields of this renaissance:

- 1) the activity of the office Prime Minister of Poland promoting studies. The intellectual capital of Poland.
- 2) the activity of the Polish Ministry of Regional Development promoting a grand international research and conference programme – The Regio Future Programme
- 3) the activity of the Polish Economic Society and the Polish Association for the Club of Rome supporting a very dynamic Forum of Strategic Thinking
- 4) the activity of the Commite 2000 Plus of the Polish Academy of Sciences organizing inter alia the discussion – Europe 2050
- 5) the activity of the WSB-NLU in Nowy Sącz sponsoring the Recife Euro futures Publication Series. Five volume of this series were published in the years 2004-2008
- 6) the activity of the newly recreated Institute of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which has published a volume *"The faces of the 21<sup>st</sup> century"*

Naturally this is only a sample of institutions which are involved in the Renaissance of long term strategies studies in Poland. This Renaissance is de facto a broader and more comprehensive phenomenon. Having a full appreciation for the dynamics of the present Renaissance of the Polish strategic studies we would like to return to the idea of a grand holistic system studies *Polonia Quo Vadis*, which should be designed and implemented in the next three years as a mater of great intellectual and pragmatic urgency. In this context the panel *Polonia Quo Vadis?* of the October Conference is especially important.

## VI. Seven fields of the potential contributions of the October Conference.

I am convinced that the October Conference will be a very successful and multidimensional event. The potential contributions of the October Conference can be envisaged in the following way.

*primo* - a contribution to the design a new grand Programme of the Club of Rome and the incorporation of some results of the Regio Future Programme into the Programme of the Club of Rome – A New Path for World Development

*secundo* - a contribution to the emerging new doctrine of regional development and regional policy inside the European Union. It is an open question if the Regio Futures Programme Could be recognized as a parallel Programme in relation to ESPON. The theory, methodology and empirical Knowledge generated by the Regio Future Programme is covering a set of fields which rightly or wrongly our outside the attention of ESPON. Especially important is the difference in Fragestellung between Regio Futures and ESPON

*tertio* - A contribution to the regional doctrine of OECD, maybe OECD would be interested to promote an improved version of the Regio Futures Programme as a global Programme of OECD

*quatro* - a contribution to the renaissance of Strategic Studies in Poland and in inducement to design and implemented a grand holistic Programme – Polonia Quo Vadis<sup>13</sup>? The driving example of this Programme could be a motivation for other countries of the European Union to start parallel Quo Vadis Programmes. The contribution of Slovenia to the Regio Future Programme is the first example of this diffusion process.

*quinto* - A contribution to the Triple Mezzogiorno Programme and to the idea of a new type of international cooperation in the triangle Germany - Italy - Poland.

*sexto* - A contribution to the theory, methodology and empirical Knowledge created in the framework of the Regio Future Programme. The comprehensive quality of the Programme is opening the way for the diffusion of this Programme in the global scale.

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13 compare: The Dilemma Innovation versus imitation in historical and future oriented perspective – the case of Poland. [in:] A. Kukliński, C. Lusiński, K. Pawłowski (eds) Towards a New Creative and innovative Europe REUPUS volume 5, Nowy Sącz 2007

## Conclusion

It is a rare event in the experience of the international conferences that the participations of the given Conference are in advance getting a relative comprehensive preconference vision of the Conference. This paper is presenting a preconference vision of the October Conference. It is naturally not a perfect vision. I hope however that it will be a useful vision to stimulate the intellectual process of the Fragestellung of the Conference. I hope that this vision will help to develop the climate of intellectual and pragmatic controversy which for me is the most important feature of an challenging international conference. *Quod felix faustum fortunatumque sit.*

Warszawa

10 sierpnia 2008

**Polonia Quo Vadis? Knowledge, innovation, responsibility.**

Motto –

*We are made wise not by the recollection of the past,  
but by the responsibility for the future.*

George Bernard Shaw

As a matter of highest scientific, social, political and cultural urgency we should design develop and promote a grand research, publication and conference Programme **Polonia Quo Vadis**. This is an endogenous urgency for the Polish Society to answer the crucial problem Quo Vadis Polonia in the turbulent age of the XXI century. We have to enlarge the future oriented imagination of the Polish Society. We should encounter the challenge to internalize in to our knowledge and imagination the responsibility for the future. This is not an unique Polish problem. There is no doubt, that the driving example of Poland will find a broad dissemination in European and in global scale. I am convinced that the grand international organizations and especially The European Union, OECD, The Club of Rome and The World Bank, will support this processes of dissemination. The Regio Futures Programme<sup>14</sup> sponsored by the Polish Ministry of Regional Development is an very effective starting point in the design the conceptual and pragmatic framework of Polonia Quo Vadis. In fact the Regio Future Programme has already opened the chapter of country studies. The contribution Slovenia Quo Vadis<sup>15</sup> will be presented already in October 2008. In the Polish context we are reviving a stream of publications and conferences which were organized in Poland in the early nineties of the XX century. Especially important is the three volume – Polonia Quo Vadis<sup>16</sup> published in 1993. Unfortunately at that time the idea of a grand Programme Polonia Quo Vadis was not implemented.

After fifteen years the scientific and political urgency to implement this Programme is both stronger and more dramatic. The intellectual and pragmatic environment Anno Domini 2008 is much better than in 1993. In the early nineties of the XX century, the deification of the market by the victorious neoliberal ideology has practically eliminated the social and

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<sup>14</sup> P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber, *The futures of European Regions*, Ministry of Regional Development, Warsaw 2007

<sup>15</sup> compare B. Roncevic, *Strategic discourse: A path creation tool for development latecomers* [in:] P. Jakubowska et alia op.cit

<sup>16</sup> compare A. Kukliński (eds), *Polonia Quo Vadis?*, Warsaw 1993

political demand for long term thinking and strategic planning. Anno Domini 2008 in the scale of Poland, in the scale of Europe and in the global scale we observe a renaissance of long term strategic thinking.

In this intellectual strategic climate the proposal *Polonia Quo Vadis*, has a great chance of successful development. This paper is not an comprehensive operational outline of this proposal. It is only a preliminary note which may induce our thinking leading along this trajectory. In this spirit I would like to present the following thematic sequence of this paper:

- I. The temporal framework
- II. The problem oriented framework
- III. The basic concepts of the Programme
- IV. The institutional framework

### **I. The temporal framework of *Polonia Quo Vadis* 1990-2050<sup>17</sup>**

I would like to propose a sequence of three times twenty years as a temporal framework of *Polonia Quo Vadis*. The first link of this sequence are diagnostic studies of the Polish experiences of the years 1990-2010. This must be an honest and comprehensive diagnosis of the glory and misery of the Polish transformation<sup>18</sup>. This diagnosis is not only a problem of knowledge, it is also a problem of imagination and moral courage. The point of view that we can discuss the Future of Poland, without an honest comprehensive diagnosis of the years 1990-2010 is just wrong. We must face the challenge to see the glory and misery of Polish transformation, we have to answer the question how we have used the diamond of *Polonia Restituta* in the years 1990-2010.

The second link in the outlined sequence are visions and scenarios of the perspective Polish experiences of the years 2010-2030. This is a field to test our knowledge, imagination and responsibility for the future, to test our anticipations of the glory and misery of the Polish performance and the global and European scene of the years 2010-2030.

Finally we should try to answer the question if in the years 2010-2030 the diamond of *Polonia Restituta* will be used more efficiency than in the years 1990-2010. The third link in the outlined sequence are visions and scenarios of the invented future of Poland 2030-2050. The expanding stream of global and European futurology of the year 2050, is creating a background for the invented future of Poland 2030-2050.

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<sup>17</sup> compare *The temporal framework of the Regio Futures Programme*, P. Jakubowska et alia, op.cit p. 459

<sup>18</sup> compare *Economic transformation – experiences and prospects in Poland 1990-2010* [in:] H. Bunz and A. Kukliński (eds), *Globalization – experiences and Prospects*, Warsaw 2001

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The reflexion related to the temporal framework of Quo Vadis Polonia is not started in *crudo radice*.

This reflexion can find some inspiration in the methodology of the Regio Futures Programme<sup>19</sup>. Especially important is the discussion diagnosis versus visions and scenarios versus strategies<sup>20</sup>. In this context we can also review the Black Swain<sup>21</sup> controversy as presented in the paper of R. Galar and W. Lamentowicz.

## II. The problem oriented framework of Quo Vadis Polonia

The crucial general question Quo Vadis Polonia should be tested in a set of problem oriented studies trying to analyze the most important fields of the Polish experiences and prospects. To my mind ten fields could be chosen.

**Table 1**  
**The experiences and prospects of Poland 1990-2050. 10 fields.**

Fields as inputs	Fields as outputs									
	Demography	Economy	Society	Political system	Science	Education	Culture	Regions	European Union	Global Scene
Demography	X									
Economy		X								
Society			X							
Political system				X						
Science					X					
Education						X				
Culture							X			
Regions								X		
European Union									X	
Global Scene										X

Our experience of the past to analyze different individual problems in different time horizon is not providing a comprehensive answer to the crucial problem Quo Vadis Polonia.

<sup>19</sup> compare P. Jakubowska et alia, op.cit p. 411-484

<sup>20</sup> compare P. Jakubowska et alia, op.cit p. 458-462

<sup>21</sup> N.N. Taleb, *The Black Swain*, Penguin books, London 2007

We must create a turning point in the ways we answer the question Polonia Quo Vadis. This is a trajectory of concentrated research activity of a grand set of parallel studies, testing at the same time the 10 fields representing different dimensions of Polonia Quo Vadis.

**III. The basic concepts of Polonia Quo Vadis**

There are 3 channels leading to the interpretation of the grand Programme Polonia Quo Vadis:

*Primo* – the integration of time horizon

*Secundo* – the problem oriented integration

*Tertio* – the network of basic concepts

Naturally we have to keep on open minded and flexible interpretation of the three channels of integration. The knowledge and imagination of all persons and institutions participating in Polonia Quo Vadis should have an open space of creativity and intellectual autonomy. We must however remember that the grand Programme Polonia Quo Vadis should also create internal channels of comparability and cumulative effects. In this context we propose to consider a network of basic concepts applied in the Programme – Polonia Quo Vadis. I am thinking about a set of 20-30 concepts which would jointly create the conceptual framework of the Programme. Let me propose a first tentative list of concepts (Table 2)

**Table 2**  
**The conceptual framework of Quo Vadis Polonia?**

Basic Concepts	Basic Concepts						
	<b>Long duration</b>	<b>Turning Points</b>	Gordian Knots	Alexandrian Solutions	<i>Path dependency</i>	<i>Path destruction</i>	<i>Path creation</i>
<b>Long duration</b>	X						
<b>Turning Points</b>		X					
Gordian Knots			X				
Alexandrian Solutions				X			
<i>Path dependency</i>					X		
<i>Path destruction</i>						X	
<i>Path creation</i>							X

In the construction of the conceptual framework of Polonia Quo Vadis, we can use inter alia the conceptual framework of the Regio Futures Programme<sup>22</sup>.

#### IV. The institutional framework of Polonia Quo Vadis

The take off of Polonia Quo Vadis will never take place in the framework of disperse of incremental activities of different persons and institutions. The take off is possible only via an big push of concentrated large scale studies, designed and implemented by a consortium of 10-15 competent and dynamic institutes. The mobilization of imagination, good will talent and financial resources in 2008 should create a set of valid answers to the crucial question Polonia Quo Vadis, already at the end of 2009. **By this time the Polish Society, The Polish political, social and cultural elites, the Polish governance, the Polish business and the Polish and International Mass Media should have a deep insight in to the results of a network of path breaking studies answering the question Polonia Quo Vadis.**

\* \* \*

Polonia Quo Vadis will be a demonstration of rich and comprehensive knowledge, bold imagination and deep internalized responsibility for the Future of Poland in the turbulent XXI century<sup>23</sup>

Warsaw  
August 2008

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<sup>22</sup> P. Jakubowska et alia, op.cit, K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Hołda, *Gordian Knots of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Ministry of Regional Development, Warsaw 2008

<sup>23</sup> compare A. Kukliński, *The dilemma, innovation versus Innovation in historical and Future oriented perspective the case of Poland* [in:] A. Kukliński, C. Lusiński, K. Pawlowski (eds) *Towards a New Creative and Innovative Europe*, Nowy Sącz 2007

**Five inputs of the Regio Future Programme – into the New Programme of the Club of Rome. A New Path for World Development (The Warsaw Programme versus the Rome Programme)**

The General Assembly of the Club of Rome June 2008, has decided that the Club will develop and promote a new Programme “A New Path for World Development”. In a proper document<sup>24</sup> the substance of the Programme is presented in the following way.

*„Substantive Focus*

*32. Many different approaches are possible and the issues can be structured in a variety of ways. The approach adopted here, based on extensive consultation, is that the Programme will focus on the following five "clusters" of related issues within the overall conceptual framework of A New Path for World Development:*

*1. **Environment and Resources.** This cluster relates climate change, peak oil, ecosystems and water. Radical and rapid social and economic transformations will be needed to avert runaway climate change and ecological breakdown;*

*2. **Globalization:** This cluster relates interdependence, distribution of wealth and income, demographic change, employment, trade and finance. Rising inequalities and imbalances associated with the present path of globalization risk the breakdown of the world economic and financial systems:*

*3. **World Development:** This cluster relates sustainable development, demographic growth, poverty, environmental stress, food production, employment and health. The scandal of abiding poverty, deprivation, inequity and exclusion in a wealthy world must be corrected;*

*4. **Social Transformation:** This cluster relates social change, gender equity, values and ethics, religion and spirituality, culture and identity and behavior. The values and behavior on which the present path of world development is based must change if **peace** and progress are to be preserved within the tightening human and environmental limits;*

*5. **Peace and Security:** This cluster relates justice, democracy, governance, solidarity, security and peace. The present path of world development risks alienation, polarization, violence and conflict; the preservation of peace is vital in itself but is also a precondition for progress and for the resolution of the issues which threaten the future.*

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<sup>24</sup> General assembly of The Club of Rome, 2008, Draft Programme A New Path for World Development, GA/OR 21.6., 7 may 2008

33. As explained below, (A Matrix Approach), the work on each of these issue clusters will include the consideration of a number of key themes, such as governance, education etc., which will be integrated into the conclusions and recommendations. The central issue of global governance for example, will not be analysed in broad, general terms but in specific terms in relation to the particular challenges, risks and opportunities in each cluster. Thus, the new patterns of international cooperation and global governance which will be needed to move towards low carbon economies or to manage the challenges of globalization will be specifically evaluated. As the programme proceeds, such critical themes as governance, education and financial resources will be collated across the clusters to define more general conclusions.”

In the years 2007 and 2008 The Polish Ministry of Regional Development has developed and promoted an international comprehensive research, publication and conference Programme – The Regio Futures Programme<sup>25</sup>

In spring 2008 The Club of Rome, The Polish Ministry of Regional Development and the Polish Economic Society, have decided to organize jointly a conference The Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions, The perspective of the XXI century – Warsaw 24-25 October 2008.

The vision of the Conference is presented in a separate paper<sup>26</sup>. The Warsaw Conference could be seen as an parallel input in to the Regio Futures Programme and in to the Programme A New Path for World Development. In this contribution we propose to consider five inputs of the Regio Futures Programme into the Programme of The Club of Rome:

- I. Path dependency and path creation – the global dimension
- II. Gordian Knots, Alexandrian Solutions, New Path for World Development
- III. The legacy of the XX century. A new framework for interpretation
- IV. The enigma of the XXI century
- V. Polonia Quo Vadis?

The Warsaw Conference will answer the question to what extend the Regio Futures Programme is creating inputs as valid driving forces in the development of the Programme of The Club of Rome.

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<sup>25</sup> P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber (eds), *The Future of European Regions*, The Ministry of Regional Development, Waraw 2007

<sup>26</sup> A. Kukliński, *The Regio Futures Programme, Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions. A vision of the Warsaw Conference October 2008*, The Ministry of Regional Development, Warsaw April 20 2008

## I. Path dependency and path creation – the global dimension

The title of the Programme of the Club of Rome is using the concept of A New Path. This means that the Programme must be involved in the grand theoretical and methodological discussion concerning path dependency and path creations.

The Regio Futures Programme (The Warsaw Programme) has already developed and vivid stream of innovative thinking in this field<sup>27</sup> which is directly relevant for the Club of Rome Programme (The Rome Programme). In the Warsaw Programme we have concentration attention on the theory and methodology of path dependency and path created our seeing the problem in a national and regional perspective. In the Rome Programme the Global Perspective is most important. The differentia specifica of path dependency and path creation at the global level is a great challenge for our mind and imagination. Maybe it would be useful to consider the following matrix for our discussion in this field.

Path typology	Spatial scale			
	regional	national	continental	global
Path dependency				
Path destruction				
Path creation				

In this context we can see the global scene as a dynamic, changing mosaic of path dependencies, path destructions and path creations consistently emerging in all spatial scales. This dynamic and multidimensional point of view is opening a new perspective of deep and holistic interpretations of the conceptual framework related to the New Path for World Development.

## II. Gordian Knots, Alexandrian Solutions, New Path for World Development

The brilliant volume prepared by K. Rybiński, P. Opala and M. Hołda<sup>28</sup> is a direct contribution to the Warsaw and to the Rome Programme. The metaphor of Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions can be seen not only as a strong methodological instrument. This metaphor is introducing into the Warsaw and Rome Programme a dramatic language addressed to our minds, imagination and emotion taking out both Programme from the ivory tower of conventional wisdom and political correctness. The Rome Programme must answer

<sup>27</sup> Compare P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber op.cit 169-228

<sup>28</sup> K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Hołda, *Gordian Knots of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Ministry of Regional Development, Warsaw 2008

the dramatic question, is it possible to outline a New Path for World Development inside the framework of conventional wisdom and political correctness.

My answer is firmly negative. A New Path for World Development can be created only via Alexandrian Solutions outside the framework of conventional wisdom and political correctness. The Rome Programme should discover a new suggestive dramaturgy to convince the global public opinion, that we really need a New Path and that the Old Path is leading to a global catastrophe. The Club of Rome in its heroic period<sup>29</sup> has used the dramatic language to present “The limits to growth”. The presentation of the New Path, must invent a new dramatic language. Without this language, the New Programme will be a new *ars gratia arte* exercise.

### III. The legacy of the XX century. A new framework for interpretation

An innovative and comprehensive interpretation<sup>30</sup> of the rich and tragic experiences of the XX century is an important element of both Programmes The Warsaw and the Rome Programme. We must try to find a new conceptual framework for the interpretation of the experiences of the XX century. A matrix of basic concepts for the interpretation of the experiences of the XX century.

Basic Concepts	Basic Concepts						
	Long duration	Turning Points	Gordian Knots	Alexandrian Solutions	Path dependency	Path destruction	Path creation
Long duration	X						
Turning Points		X					
Gordian Knots			X				
Alexandrian Solutions				X			
Path dependency					X		
Path destruction						X	
Path creation							X

<sup>29</sup> D.M. Meadows, D.L.Meadows, J.Randers, W.Behrens, *The limits to growth*, University Books, New York 1972

<sup>30</sup> Compare A. Kukliński op.cit

This set of seven concepts deeply embedded in social sciences, history and geography may lead to 3 monographic interpretations of the experiences of the XX century:

One – the interpretation of long duration and turning points

Two – the interpretation of Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions

Three – the interpretation of path dependency, path destruction and path creation.

These 3 monographies may lead to a holistic study integrating for example the turning points, Alexandrian solutions and path creations. The Rome Programme – A New Path for World Development should take into account the starting question of the Programme, The Old Path of Development, the experience of the XX century.

#### **IV. The enigma of the XXI century<sup>31</sup>**

The Warsaw Programme and the Rome Programme will face the enigma of the XXI century. Facing this enigma we can use the same conceptual framework which was proposal for the interpretation of the XX century. Naturally it is much easier to apply this framework in a historical context than in a context of prospective analysis. This is a challenging task for our knowledge and imagination to outline in the same conceptual framework the historical experiences of the XX century and the futurological experiences of the XXI century.

In this way the Rome Programme and the Warsaw Programme will open a new innovative methodological trajectory to test some basic concepts in historical and futurological perspective.

#### **V. Polonia Quo Vadis<sup>32</sup>?**

We are starting a new Research Conference and Publication Programme – Polonia Quo Vadis? (1990-2050). This Programme is presented in a separate paper. In this context I would like to propose to develop the Programme in the framework of seven concepts outlined above.

If the Programme Polonia Quo Vadis will be a great success, then the Programme will be also a contribution to the Rome Programme. It would be also a driving example for the network of the Club of Rome to prepare a grand set of Quo Vadis studies, creating strong, empirical foundations for the key Rome Programme.

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<sup>31</sup> Compare A. Kukliński op.cit

<sup>32</sup> Compare A. Kukliński op.cit

## **Conclusions**

The Warsaw Conference will answer the question if the Warsaw Programme is a potential input into the Rome Programme. I am convinced that the Conference and the post conference volume will find an affirmative answer. The expanded network of the Regio Futures Programme will be an open system absorbing in a creative way the contributions generated by the Rome Programme. We hope also that the expand network of the Rome Programme will find some contributions of the Warsaw Programme as building stones in the construction of the Programme A New Path For World Development.

### **Towards a New methodology of the Regio Futures Programme.**

The key concept of the Regio Futures Programme<sup>33</sup> is the concept of long duration. Regio history, regio diagnosis and regio futurology create different interpretations of the process of the long duration. The region as an economic, social, political and cultural entity is a phenomenon of long duration integrating the past, the present and the future<sup>34</sup>. The long duration is however not equivalent to eternity. The new stage in the development of the methodology of the Regio Futures Programme should concentrate attention on Three Trajectories of the transformation of the old structures of long duration into a new structures of long duration.

In the first trajectory we have a sequence old structures of long duration, barriers for development, gordian knots, alexandrian solutions, new structures of long duration<sup>35</sup>. We are proposing to test this trajectory in the experiences of the Triple European Mezzogiorno – Southern Italy, Eastern Germany and Eastern Poland. This empirical test will create an important contribution to the New Methodology of the Regio Futures Programme introducing into this Programme the concept of the transformation of old structures of long duration into a new structures of long duration.

This transformation is expressed in dramatic language of barriers, Gordian knots, alexandrian solutions<sup>36</sup> introduced following the assumption that the developmental processes are not only a spontaneous phenomenon but also a guided phenomenon. The concept of alexandrian solutions is directly recognizing the possibility of a strong institutional intervention into the developmental process. We have to test the point of view that alexandrian solutions are outside the main stream of neoliberal ideology. This point of view is opening a new perspective in the interpretation of the study of K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Holda<sup>37</sup>. This point of view is a reminder that the testing field of the Triple European Mezzogiorno is not only an empirical testing field but also a testing field in the domain of the new methodology of RFP.

The second trajectory old structures of long duration turning points new structures of long

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<sup>33</sup> Compare Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber, *The futures of European Regions*, Warsaw 2007

<sup>34</sup> Compare the papers of T. Zarycki and A. Gašior-Niemiec in this volume

<sup>35</sup> Compare the papers of A. Kukliński, *The Regio Futures Programme. Gordian Knots and Alexandrian Solutions*, in this volume

<sup>36</sup> Compare K. Rybiński, P. Opala, M. Holda *Gordian Knots of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Warsaw 2008

<sup>37</sup> K. Rybiński et alia op.cit

duration is a “*simple*” *minder* trajectory not mentioned yet in the Regio Future Programme. The Programme could consider now the question formulated two years ago<sup>38</sup>. Long duration and turning points an integrate system? In the post scriptum to the volume we find the following formulation<sup>39</sup>

*“A special challenge is created by the integration of two schools of theoretical and pragmatic reflection:*

*Primo – the school of long duration*

*Secundo – the school of turning points*

*In the prevailing intellectual tradition these two schools have been recognized as methodologically and empirically separated fields of theoretical and pragmatic reflection. I hope that the content of this volume is leading us to the following tentative conclusions:*

*Primo – Both in historical and prospective studies we have to observe multidimensional processes of constant sometimes dramatic interaction of the phenomena of long duration and the phenomena of turning points.*

*Secundo – A paradoxical thesis might be formulated the processes of long duration are a driving force for the emergence of turning points which in turn open a new stage of long duration.”*

The second trajectory has less pronounced institutional dimensions. Turning points can be recognized preliminarily as rapid transformations of the spontaneous movement of the market forces of social and cultural change seen as objective processes. It is also possible to see the turning points as an element of the decision making processes at the global continental, national and regional levels<sup>40</sup>.

Anyway in the new stage of the development of the methodology of RFP a special attention should be given to the concept of turning points.

The third trajectory of “*old structures of long duration, path development, path destruction, path creation new structures of long duration*” is very well established in the methodological experiences of the Regio Futures Programme<sup>41</sup>

We have published an excellent set of papers analyzing the theory and methodology of path dependency, path destruction and path creation<sup>42</sup>. We have a good perspective how to develop this line of thinking in the framework of empirical monographic studies and in a still

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<sup>38</sup> A.Kukliński, B. Skuza (eds) *The turning points in the transformation of the global scene*, Warsaw 2006

<sup>39</sup> A.Kukliński, B. Skuza op.cit.

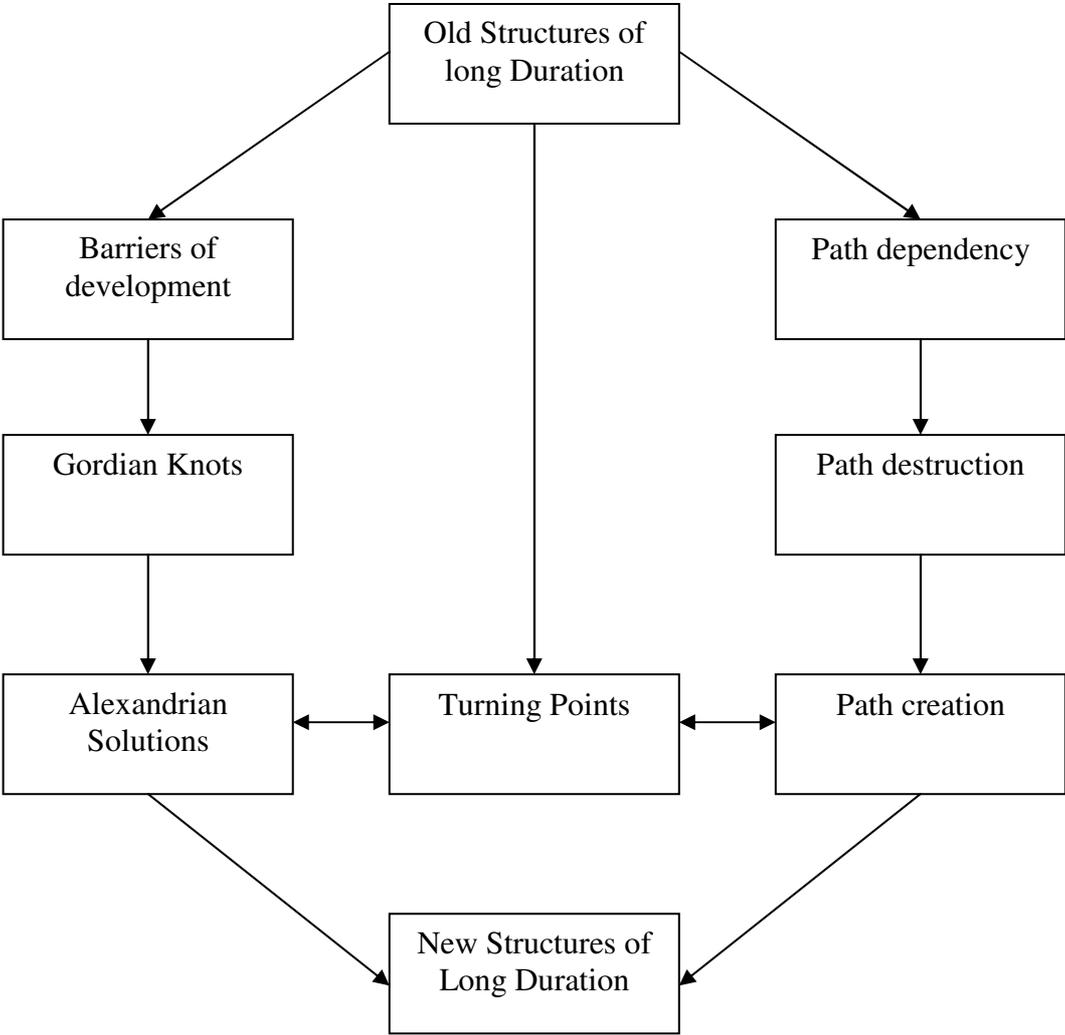
<sup>40</sup> A.Kukliński, B. Skuza op.cit.

<sup>41</sup> Compare P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber (eds) op.cit

<sup>42</sup> P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Żuber (eds) op.cit

more advanced theoretical reflexion. In the New Methodology of the Regio Futures Programme we should try to create a general model integrating the theoretical, methodological and empirical assumptions of the Three Trajectories. In this context we are presenting a map of three trajectories as an incentive for the next cycle of our thinking. We can for example outline new sequences of the following type turning points – alexandrian solutions – new path of development.

**The map  
Three Trajectories**



This new sequence can be seen as a potential nodal space of the three trajectories. Analyzing the map of three trajectories we understand that the concepts presented in these

trajectories are related to different schools and traditions in the broad field of social, sciences, history and futurology.

The regional perspective, the perspective of the regional Futures Programme is creating an excellent methodological and empirical climate leading to the integration of these different schools and traditions. The original conceptual framework of these three different approaches: alexandrian solutions, turning points, path creation will be interpreted and reformulated.

\* \* \*

Let me say in the final conclusion of this note, that to my mind the theory and methodology of the Regio Futures Programme has very sound and original foundations<sup>43</sup>. So in this note we are propose not a new methodology, but a new stage in the development of the methodology of the Regio Futures Programme.

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<sup>43</sup> P. Jakubowska, A. Kukliński, P. Žuber (eds) op.cit