Introduction

In the study concerning the contemporary world certain issues have come to be known as those that need immediate attention. The question of clashes of tradition and challenges unifying cultural life, the ongoing process of changes in political life, the alternations of state and its structures, political culture, migration, religion, attitudes, behavior, especially in the context of democratic order, social pathologies seem to be of primary importance. The issues mentioned above is the subject matter of science undertakings, both analytical and synthetic, of many scientists of political studies' department of University of Gdańsk.

In the fifth part of „Civilization and Politics" certain scientific methods are addressed, and most of all the issue of descriptive and explanatory approaches with reference to questions of overlapping relations of the civilization development and politics, decision processes and political culture.

In the first part of the work the achievements of the Doc. Dr. Bohdan Piasecki /1924––2000/ in the area of the development of Political Science in University of Gdańsk, He had been the vice-director of the institute for scientific affairs for 20 years.

Two inauguration lectures given by Prof. Andrzej Chodubski are then pres ented; the first conducted in the Olsztyn's Higher School named after Józef Rusiecki concerning dilemmas of scientific exploration, the second in the Baltic Higher Humanistic School in Koszalin, referring to values of the new civilization order.

In the second part of the work, 21 dissertations dealing with past, present as well as challenges of the future in the relations between civilization development and political reality, having extreme influence on attitudes, behavior, aspirations of people and on decision processes with reference to cultural and civilization phenomena. Prof. Grzegorz Piwnicki stresses the role of political culture being subject to constant alternation in the ever changing cultural and civilization order, Prof. Ewa Polak has expressed the nature of social inequalities and their implications for democratic development, Dr. Sylwia Mrozowska has coped with the role of groups of interest in the functioning if political systems. Rafał Raczyński, MA has dealt with the contemporary dispute over sovereignty of the state. Grzegorz Ignaczewski, MA devotes himself to discussion revolving around the political system of the Republic of Poland; he discusses normative and political issues. Dr. Piotr Niwiński has referred to the past giving characteristics of state under supervision. He exemplifies the reality with the object retrospection „Podróżni", Dr. Beata

Słobodzian has undertaken the problem the division of administrative bodies, showing the concept of three step approach in Poland of the nineties. Dr. Witold Turniowiecki has addressed the issue of elderly people in the European Union. Dr. Jadwiga Bohdanowicz has presented the nature of human rights in the cultural and civilization in Islamic countries. Prof. Adam Gwiazda has stressed the necessity of migration processes in the era of globalization. Similar case from the perspective of cognitive analysis has been presented by Dr. Jarosław Och, specifying that migration is cultural and civilization phenomena of political and social life, Dr. Hanna Dubrzyńska has presented the issue of direction of polish migration for financial reasons to countries of European Union, Dr. Joanna Leska-Ślęzak has revealed the question of migration policy of the Netherlands since the Second World War. Rev. Dr. Adam Romejko has shown the Austrian policy with reference to national and religious minorities, Dr. Tadeusz Dmochowski has exposed the Russian aspect in the changes of ethnical structure of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania since the fifties. Prof. Andrzej Chodubski has pointed out the nature and characteristics of the concept of repatriation, Dr. Jarosław Ślęzak has presented the migration reality in the realm of Gdańsk in medieval times, Dr. Marek Dziecielski, then, also referring to the past, has exposed the situation of so called agrarian elites of Lębork administrative district and Western Pomerania with reference to Weimarsk Republic and the Third Reich, Dr. Arkadiusz Modrzejewski has tackled the problem attitudes, behavior, aspirations of Kashubians with reference to civilization changes, Dr. Jakub Potulski has discussed the role of Orthodox church in the reality of democratic changes in Russia, wide scope of democratic changes and pathologies in those changes has been presented by Prof. Urszula Świętochowska.

The issues presented are only fractions of the work carried out by scientists mentioned. The processes are presented in the light of political factors; state, local and global order. From this standpoint theories of institution, rational choice, normative reference as well as behaviorism seem to play the key role. Among methods used to recognize the realities the tendency to match quantity approach and quality approach, comparison studies, random studies, synthesis, system analysis. In the cognitive analysis the importance has been attached to matching theory and political practice, though the starting point is the analysis of cultural practice, which is then referred to practice. The power of politics is emphasized, the power of political decisions is stressed in the habitual behavior of generating certain attitudes, behavior, the development of processes. The fundamental cognitive approach in recognizing political and cultural objects relies on placing them in the process of civilization development, pointing to objectives of social and political development. In the whole analysis the problem of scientific and technical afermaths is dealt with as well as the issue of education, the functioning of the normative and lawful order are stressed; it is emphasized, that in the formation of the new information order discrepancies have occurred between ideological standpoints and the cultural practice, which more often than not have surfaced as pathologies of civilization development.

In the third part of the work there are 18 summaries of the newest book publications concerning civilization changes and the world of politics. The fact that people have become dependant on technology to the great degree is tackled. The concept of community of

pictures has been created to illustrate the fact that human environment changes. It has been causing people to break up with traditional concepts of humanistic education in favor of picture like world of social and political practices, the projection of world in the technical sense. The reality mentioned has moved the point of importance from the eternal truth to the political correctness, the former authority as a measure of attitudes, behavior, aspiration, achievement has been replaced with the concept of idol, which is soon subject to perception flaws or ever rejection and traditional reasonable account of attitudes is replaced with pools. The reality mentioned gathers sufflciency of surface values, flawing, where the signs of confabulation, pretending, insincerity, disloyalty.

The new civilization has come to be known as the one which has displayed numerous dangers which are perceived in the reality of the human environment, dehumanization, degradation of intellectual level of humanity leading to self-destruction. Projecting the image of information civilization very often calls for creativity, new appliances of the newest technologies, little room is left to the preoccupation with the harmful effects of those technologies and techniques on social and ethical aspects of humanity. There has been an increase in peace appeals all over the world accompanied with ever more wars breaking in corners of the planet, the term „Civilization of love" has come into fashion, but what has been observed is „Civilization of death", the necessity of building political structures favoring richness and wealth had been postulated, but poverty is strengthening, the ideas of „social fairness" has been addressed and „overwhelming injustice" has been observed. Posing questions with reference to the information society the post modernity term had been pointed out, the term compromising; consumerism, extreme individualism, cultural embedded with technology, further followed by infantilism, the sense of loss in the world of technology, causing pain to surrounding objects of cultural interest, churlishness, primitivism of attitudes and human behavior.