

# Paradigm of Unity - a New Holistic Paradigm in Management Sciences. Ergonomic and Spiritual Aspect in Theory and Practice

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## ABSTRACT

A paradigm of unity and its application in the management sciences is presented in the paper. This innovative approach has anthropological, economic, cultural, ergonomic, and spiritual aspect and concerns each human activity. These aspects are discussed in the paper. The novel character of the paper lies in the consideration of ergonomics and spirituality as constitutive elements of the management process. The paradigm of unity in economics and management sciences is expressed by the idea of the economy of communion which has been implemented for more than twenty years in 800 enterprises worldwide. The analysis of management processes in these businesses (also from the ergonomic and spiritual point of view) is presented in this paper. The results of research carried out in 110 businesses worldwide are presented. For six content dimensions of paradigm of unity the weight coefficients are evaluated on the basis of experts' opinion and then the degree of implementation of these dimensions in practice is determined, based on questionnaires filled in by entrepreneurs. The conformity of the idea with practice is quantitatively calculated and is used as a numerical metric of the quality of management. This approach in management sciences is a new one. It is a modern, holistic and integrated vision of management.

**Keywords:** Paradigm of Unity, Spirituality in Management, Economy of Communion, Ergonomics, Holistic paradigm.

## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary problems in the social sciences are often described in a negative way, revealing the image of the modern world through pathology, disintegration, improper interpersonal relationships. It makes an impression of prevalence of evil and of scarcity of good in society today. However, the search for the truth regarding man and his reciprocal social relations requires also positive perspective, because neither man nor the society has only negative features.

Such a positive perspective on reality is characteristic for a paradigm of unity developed for the social sciences by Biela (1996), inspired by the spirituality of unity adopted and developed in the Focolare Movement. The Focolare Movement is one of many contemporary ecclesial movements, but the only one with such a strong involvement in religious as well as social, political, economic and cultural matters, promoting an integral vision of man. The universality of the paradigm of unity and its importance in many scientific disciplines, such as politics, economics, psychology, sociology, pedagogy or social communication, have contributed to the creation of a new scientific doctrine. It shows the application of the paradigm of unity in several areas of science and social life, to which this paradigm brings a new perspective of man and his relationships with others, with the surrounding material reality, and on the transcendent dimension of the human being.

Contemporary social engineering and mass media promote today's man as *homo consumens* according to the model:

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to watch TV advertisements → to buy → to have. Such a promotion of culture of having makes man a passive and uncreative being, deprives him of the ambitions of acquisition of higher values, it limits him to the use of material wealth and consumer goods. Such a vision of humanity leads clearly to the society increasingly divided according to the criteria of material prosperity and ultimately to a serious social disease – egoism in the individual and collective sense.

The need to get out of this track of egoism and to reveal and to develop a new vision of man and society, a new *culture of giving* opposing a *culture of having*, is becoming exceedingly evident. According to this new vision, man is a type of *homo donator* who knows to free himself from his egoism, to open to the needs of others both in private life and his public, in particular economic, activity, and share tangible and intangible assets with others as a gratuitous gift. Such a gift is an expression of human solidarity and empathy toward others and of willingness to help those who need it.

In 1991 the need to help people living in extreme poverty inspired Chiara Lubich, the Foundress and the President of the Focolare Movement at that time, to call the members of the Movement to create businesses and transfer a part of the earned profits for the needs of people living in poverty. However, it is not only this fact that makes the vision of a new style of management innovative. New management style is first of all characterized by the placing of the human being in the center of all business matters. In this project, called the economy of communion, Lubich encourages business owners to introduce changes in management. It is in such a change that she sees an opportunity to reduce poverty and achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth on the global level. The economy of communion does not reveal a new organizational model of the business, more ethical and socially responsible, but it is a proposal for the renewal of interpersonal relationships and the creation of a more just and fraternal society.

The contemporary crisis of culture and civilization is characterized by, among others, secularization accompanied by moral crisis. The effects of exclusion of ethics and morality from the modern human behaviors are visible in every domain of social, political, cultural, spiritual, and economic life. In the economic dimension this crisis is manifested primarily in the negation of the basic laws of economics and in the denial of the essence and meaning of human work. Companies are often evaluated only in the financial aspect. Money, rather than a measure of the value of work and property, has become a commodity and an element of speculations, bringing huge profits. Work and entrepreneurship have lost their meaning because the greatest fortunes are the result of speculative transactions in the field of virtual operations with virtual money (Grochmal 2012). This situation causes enormous economic and moral destabilization that affects many entrepreneurs and business owners as well as the ordinary citizen. The paradigm of unity reveals anew the sense of human work and its importance to the integral human development in accordance with ergonomics in the perspective of Jastrzębowski (1857).

In the management process the whole man participates, not just his physical and psychological dimension. Therefore, it is not permissible to ignore the spiritual dimension. The issue of spirituality in management has recently been the subject of numerous research and scientific articles, as well as a subject of study in many universities. As a cause of contemporary great interest in the spirituality in management one can indicate - in addition to the basic reason which is the pursuit of ethical attitudes and behaviors in the management process - a high volatility of work environment due to a decrease in the demand for labor. This usually negatively affects the self-esteem of employees, causes disappointment in material objects and focuses on transcendent values. This significant influence of spirituality on management processes locates the paradigm of unity, derived from the spirituality of unity, among the important and new conceptions of modern management. The spiritual development of an entrepreneur, employee, customer or supplier, and the recognition of the transcendent values not only in personal life but also in professional, economic and social activities, gives hope of overcoming the crisis of contemporary culture and civilization, also in the economic aspect, and making this world a better one.

The phenomenon of the social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual activities of the Focolare Movement and more than 20 years of the economy of communion implemented on the global scale inspired Biela to formulate the concept of a paradigm of unity and to show its importance in the social sciences (Biela 1996, 2005). It provided the justification to motivate his application to award Chiara Lubich with an honorary doctorate in social sciences from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in 1996.

The author of this paper developed the concept of Biela based on a theoretical analysis of the paradigm of unity as a new paradigm in the social sciences, particularly in management, and has conducted empirical research in 110 enterprises, Technology, Higher Education and Society (2020)

prises of the economy of communion in 22 countries in Europe, Asia, and both Americas (Grochmal 2013).

## **PARADIGMS IN MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

The social sciences are yet to develop - like the model given by Kuhn for natural sciences - a paradigm that could be a scientific breakthrough, similar to the Copernican revolution. These sciences do not observe the generally accepted laws and theories such as those in the natural sciences; it is also not possible to apply in them objectivism in research characteristic for life sciences.

It seems right to say that the social sciences are waiting for a new paradigm of systemic (holistic) and interdisciplinary character which should be the methodological keystone of the different sciences regarding man and spiritual and material reality. Such a paradigm should overcome the behaviors leading to social pathologies (Biela 2011) and allow the formation of the mentality of people and societies towards mutual kindness, friendship and brotherhood, looking for and revealing in human behaviors (including economic) primarily what unites them rather than what divides them. Man is a social being and all divisions are contrary to his nature.

### **The paradigm of unity in the social sciences**

The paradigm proposed by Biela, derived from the spirituality of unity, fulfills precisely such expectations. It is formulated and described with reference to the social sciences (Biela 2005, 2006), and to psychology in particular (Biela 2009, 2013).

The formulation of the paradigm of unity on the basis of spirituality which has been put into practice for more than 70 years in the Focolare Movement constituted and constitutes a significant response to the needs of a divided world and of a "split" man. The modern division of the world manifests itself in the diversified quality of life and status of material wealth of people and societies. The demarcation line runs both between countries, ethnic or social groups, as well as between individual people and their families. The most painful is the division where on one side of the divided world there remains a vast crowd of people living in extreme poverty, barely affording human existence, who are the socially excluded.

A "split" man is most often an entrepreneur, scientist, inventor, doctor, journalist and also an ordinary service provider who has a dilemma and an inner conflict between a life in truth, providing testimony about it and proclaiming it, performing his work in accordance with ethics, morality and accepted values on the one hand and the temptation to surrender to the pressure of political correctness, imposed ideology or the temptation of material benefits or career on the other. It is also a situation of enforced separation between private life (home, family, circle of friends), in which a person is guided by values such as love, friendship, gratuitous gift, sharing of goods, and professional or public life (environment of work or public activity), where he must conceal his attachment to these values for fear of ridicule, criticism, or even more dangerous consequences.

The remedy for these problems is the paradigm of unity. On the one hand, this paradigm allows recognize the truth about man and society in order to reveal on the basis of this truth optimal solutions of human and social problems. On the other hand, the teleological motive of the paradigm of unity is to stimulate the social and civilisational development towards building the principles of communication, sharing the material and spiritual goods, and social integration (Biela 2005).

Over the several years since the introduction of the concept of the paradigm of unity, its significant impact on the perception of reality in various fields of social sciences and human life has been noticed. The scientific institutions of the Focolare Movement (School of Abbà in Rocca di Papa, vicinity of Rome, and Sophia University in Loppiano near Florence, Italy) have developed new doctrines based on the paradigm of unity for economics, politics, psychology, social communication and media, law and justice, medical science, pedagogy, art, architecture, sociology, ecology and sport. These doctrines examine the sense of identity of man and his relationships with the other, the need for social ties built on reciprocity and the pursuit of the common good; they show in a new light of the spirituality of unity the truth about man and his social relationships.

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The role and influence of the paradigm of unity in so many disciplines of science and in different aspects of human activities should not be surprising since by its nature this paradigm has both integrating and holistic character, integrates different points of view in a scientific discipline, and researches the reality from the perspective of different disciplines. This paradigm is of a scientific nature and is compatible with various concepts of science (Grochmal 2013).

It is worth turning attention to the cognitive and application goals of the paradigm of unity in the social sciences. One of its basic possibilities is the integral cognitive perspective of human behaviors both in everyday situations as well as in certain exceptional critical or extreme situations. An important feature of this paradigm is the appreciation of the positive human behaviors and social phenomena, a feature appearing relatively rarely in contemporary social sciences. In addition, the paradigm of unity forms the basis of a new methodology to systematize business processes as well as the phenomena and processes in other social sciences, enabling more effective methods of scientific analysis.

## Paradigms in management sciences

In the history of the development of management sciences one can distinguish many directions applying different paradigms and methods to research the economic reality. An important element of demarcation distinguishing different areas of these sciences is the fact whether the conception of man, from treating him only as a "resource" or "object" of management, all the way to him being the principal subject and entity of the economic process, is included (or not) in the processes of management. Man and accepted by him system of values are a priority research problem in management sciences and it is unjust to separate from the management issues the epistemological and methodological aspects, relating to the perception of reality and the impact of a man on it, and first of all the axiological aspect, defining an accepted and recognized system of values. Man treated integrally in every aspect of the activity should be the key element of all cross-references in the management process. Is it the case?

Incorrect identification of happiness with material welfare and years – long promotion of the *homo economicus* model as a man of success has led to the practical application of mono-criterion paradigm of profit maximization in management and taking into account in the concepts of management mainly material and financial capital. Marginalization and often total lack of ethics, morality and social justice in management has led to, inter alia, social divisions, social exclusion of huge numbers of people and escalation of poverty on a global scale. There is, therefore, a need to reevaluate the criteria of management in the direction that would take into account the widely understood human needs in all aspects of life: physical, mental and spiritual.

The anthropological vision of man accepts the unity of body, mind and spirit; integrates the biological functionality, in relation to reality through the senses; mental, which corresponds to the personality along with the feelings, impressions, mind, intelligence and will; and spiritual, arising from accepted spiritual and moral values, philosophical, human and religious beliefs.

## The search for a new paradigm in management sciences

The typology of paradigms in management sciences is very inconsistent and incomplete. On the one hand, one can differentiate the paradigms due to the historical development of their concept according to various management schools based on philosophical premises. Another criterion of the typology may be the division of management sciences into the sub-disciplines: there are over a dozen of different fields differing by preferred methodology, object of research or approach and attitude of the researcher. Creating a paradigm shift for each of the disciplines leads to excessive detail (even with the common ontological or axiological base) and contradicts the very concept of a paradigm.

Paradigms considered to be the dominant in the social science, elaborated by Burrell and Morgan (1979) seem to be useful also for management sciences; however, dichotomous divisions of the character of science (objective - subjective) and the nature of society (radical change or regulation) do not exhaust the complex nature of these two realities. Hatch (2002) combines the approach of Burrell and Morgan with historically developed concepts beginning from the neopositivism all the way to postmodernism; while an attempt to complete this set of paradigms represent Johnson and Duberley (2005), by combining an objective ontology and subjective epistemology. In the extensive lit-

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erature on paradigms in management sciences one can find numerous ideas and attempts of the complex approach to this subject matter, usually in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology of the research processes (Sułkowski, 2005, 2012). Polish researchers have brought a significant contribution to the problem of the paradigms in management sciences: Grudzewski, Hejduk (2008), Grudzewski et al. (2010), Gwiazda (2010), Kostera (2008), Kowalczewski (2008), Penc (2010), Sułkowski (2013).

One of the substantial defects of the dominant paradigms in management is too weak a consideration of the practical aspects. This view is expressed for example by Hühn (2008) who criticizes the Burrell and Morgan typology and presents his own concept of paradigm. In this paradigm he takes into account the division into theory and practice of management and the division due to the nature of the organization (open or closed system in terms of systems theory). Despite some reservations regarding the division in terms of systems theory (contraposition of the open and closed systems in terms of thermodynamic, and at the same time their compatibility due to the concept of autoreference), the proposal of Hühn is interesting because of the practical aspect of the typology of paradigms.

Drucker (1999) presents a remarkable ability to criticize both the theory and the practices of the management used in the late twentieth century and the vision of the necessary paradigm shift in management. His previsions proved true already in the first years of the twenty-first century. Ten years later, Gonciarski (2009) presents an approach similar to Drucker's vision. Gonciarski distinguishes the assumptions of management in the field of scientific activity and in practical actions, treating the management process as an integrated and multifaceted system of relations.

Also Grudzewski and Hejduk (2008a) report the assumptions of new management paradigms regarding the creation of a knowledge based economy and knowledge management, including the use of new information technologies. They emphasize the importance of charismatic leaders on the basis of the development of management culture and value systems; emphasize also the importance of trust based on ethical behavior and the use of social and intellectual capital together with the formation of social responsibility. Trust management according to these authors stems from the natural need of human security and is based on the mutual relations of the parties of the economic process.

Penc (2010) also indicates the need for a paradigm shift in management science. Its purpose cannot be only the maximization of the benefits of shareholders but the creation of social progress and better quality of life. According to him, the company must be based on human capital, has to head for wider participation and creativity, and become a learning organization, intelligent, based on knowledge and ethics, open to the enriching intellectual values.

An important premise for the formation of a new pattern of management is a holistic approach to the management process. A holistic view allows to see both the management process and its interaction with a constantly changing environment. Science provides evidence that the economic system cannot function in isolation from a socio-ecological system, and thus the management of the elements of the economic system should be based on a new holistic paradigm. The need for such an approach arises from the need to take into account social and environmental issues on the one hand, and on the other hand - creating complex management objects, such as integrated quality management, environmental protection and work safety systems. In addition, management of cultural diversity is an increasingly important element of modern management and has its share in the shaping the new holistic paradigm (Kowalczewski 2008a).

## **PARADIGM OF UNITY IN MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

The anthropological concept of man is a basic assumption of spirituality of unity and fits in the contemporary trends of recognition of the primacy of the person over capital and intangible assets over the material ones. The paradigm of unity gives a response to the contemporary needs of the society because it shows a new way of looking at the phenomenon of social and cultural as well as economic processes, placing a man and his multifaceted needs in the center of interpersonal relationships within the enterprise and outside of it. This attitude requires a cultural change both on the part of entrepreneurs as well as employees. It is expressed by the appreciation of human capital in the business, by the demand of decent living conditions for workers from the employer, but also the requirement of responsibility from the employees towards the company (Grochmal 2011).

It is important to say that the paradigm of unity is a teleological one, therefore, refers to the purpose and not to the object or research methodology. The paradigms described above are the objective or methodological paradigms and Technology, Higher Education and Society (2020)

try to classify different concepts, often mutually exclusive. However, because of its teleological nature, the paradigm of unity is difficult to classify according to the typology discussed above, yet it is possible to study and describe its characteristics. An extensive critical analysis of contemporary paradigms in management sciences and the reference to them from the point of view of the paradigm of unity is included in the work of the author (Grochmal 2013).

The paradigm of unity derives from the long-term practice in the management of the economy of communion businesses in different countries with great cultural differentiation. It was not invented in the offices of scientists on the basis of the theory in order to verify it later through the implementation of the practical management, but contrariwise, the scientific elaboration of this paradigm results from the reflections which are based on the implementation in practice.

Many scholars of management sciences accord that the primary duty of the business is to create added value (understood not only in the economic aspect). However, the differences of opinion arise when one should specify the beneficiaries of this added value: it has to be used only for shareholders, whether and to what extent also for staff, customers and the local community. The paradigm of unity treats as equally important the generation of added value, as well as the principles and methods of distribution of these values between all stakeholders, bearing in mind the preference striving to eradicate, or at least substantially reduce, poverty and social exclusion (recognizing also as stakeholders the people living in poverty, in need of help and material and spiritual support from businesses). It gives grounds for the formulation of the so-called extended theory of stakeholders (Grochmal 2011). It concerns the addition to the external stakeholders the persons who can receive from the company the chance to live in dignity, with fulfillment of the basic welfare needs (food, education, health treatment, and even a start of their own business).

The paradigm of unity requires the taking into account in the economic process also other, equally important goals. This concerns the growth of human, social, relational or spiritual capital. These goals are achievable by practicing a new style of management, based on personalistic vision of man and his role in company, on building a relationships of mutual references which through the intrinsic values enrich people contributing to their development in each dimension.

The paradigm of unity requires from the entrepreneurs (owners, shareholders, managers) the building of open and professional relationships with all stakeholders, thus creating relational capital, based on mutual respect and trust. The difference between the classical approach to the creation of relational capital and building relationships based on the spirituality of unity is primarily a teleological. In the first case, it is mainly about building relational capital in order to achieve specific economic effects, marketing recognition, or competitive advantage, and in the second case about creating relationships based on the paradigm of unity is primarily used to build unity, fraternal relations, friendships, thanks to which the company is converted into a community.

## **Aspects of paradigm of unity - ergonomics and spirituality**

The paradigm of unity in the management constitutes the basis for the determination of the elements of organizational culture implemented in managed enterprises. These elements include every aspect of human activity:

- anthropological: appreciating each person in the company, regardless of his/her function and role;
- economic: not restricting only to own growth and profits but focusing on the creation of goods, services and work places for the common good;
- cultural: not identifying with the culture of capitalism; the creation and development of a new culture of giving;
- ergonomic: the vision of work in all its dignity regardless of the technological or organizational level, striving for professionalism, shaping the culture of working "for" and working "with";
- spiritual: through participation in the economy of communion, the discovery of the transcendent values and the effects of Divine Providence in business.

In the anthropological aspect, the appreciation of every person in the company results from a moral attitude to building sincere and respectful relationships between employees, customers, suppliers, representatives of public administration, as well as competitors. The attitude of openness, kindness and friendship towards others is transferred from the corporate environment to its neighborhood and changes social relations. In anthropological terms, one should emphasize the dignity of the worker and other stakeholders, their talents and abilities, concern about the health and conditions of work, creation of a climate conducive to risk-taking, providing an atmosphere of satisfaction, friend-

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ship, mutual respect and building interpersonal relationships.

An expression of the spirituality of unity in economic aspect is the creation of goods and services, including new work places in the wider interest of the common good. Identifying a happy man with man of economic success (*homo economicus*) turned out to be false, and the testimonies of many people and scientific research show that gratuitous giving of tangible and intangible assets can be a source of happiness (Bruni 2008, Bruni and Porta 2004, Grochmal 2011a). Giving by the entrepreneurs a part of the profit for the people living in poverty, and for the development of a culture of giving, makes happy those who give and the donees. Help for the poor implemented in continuous and systemic manner gives the beneficiaries a chance to permanently improve their situation and get out of poverty.

Enterprises of the economy of communion operate within a market economy; however, they do not identify themselves with the culture of capitalism. They create, promote and disseminate the culture of giving opposing the culture of having and a new culture of work resulting from interpersonal relations based on the spirituality of unity.

Particularly important in management based on the paradigm of unity are ergonomic and spiritual aspects. The ergonomic aspect refers to the original understanding of ergonomics as the science of work as described by the creator of this science, Jastrzębowski (1857, 2001). This Polish inventor, scientist and naturalist defined ergonomics as the science of using forces and capabilities given to a man by the Creator. He identified two main categories of work: useful work, which brings improvement for the common good and harmful work that brings deterioration (Karrowowski 2006). The understanding of work based on the paradigm of unity is convergent with the useful concept of work as defined by Jastrzębowski.

In analogy to the classical approach of ergonomics, the paradigm of unity is characterized by human-centrism, i.e. preferential treatment of man in relation to any technical or economic criteria in the work process. Such an understanding of work is also fully compatible with the Catholic Social Teaching expressed, inter alia, by John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem exercens: through work man not only transforms nature, but (...) becomes "more a human being"* (John Paul II, 1981). Unfortunately, human labor in the modern world has been enslaved and even destroyed by profit which is no longer seen as a necessary and fair element of added value of businesses but becomes a speculative source of immense income of the world of finance.

The paradigm of unity restores the original meaning of human work and entrepreneurship. It brings a new relationship to the work process and the relations between its subjects (employees, recipients of the work outcome). Work is considered an opportunity for professional and spiritual development of every human being. Work is evaluated not only by the production of good quality, safe and economically available goods, but also by the way of production, forming a community of persons involved in the work process, care for environment and respect for nature. Such an understanding of the work process also includes its intellectual, aesthetic and moral dimension. Work is seen in all its dignity, regardless of the technological or organizational level, together with striving for professionalism.

Employees feeling co-responsible for the development of the company try to create and implement corporate culture that maximizes strategy directed "towards the other", working "for the other" and "with the other." Work "for the other" requires the treatment of the recipient of produced goods as a close person, with full consequence of relations with him/her. Such a strategy contributes to greater profitability, because attention to the goods' recipient generates higher products' quality. Work "for" allows also to transfer the added value to those who are not directly involved in the production cycle, i.e. for the poor. Lastly, the work "with the other" teaches solidarity, teamwork and cooperation for the common good.

Both managers and employees show a high concern for harmony in the work environment and the appearance of work places, affecting in this way the proper organizational climate in the enterprise. They promote teamwork as well as initiative and the individual development of each employee.

The paradigm of unity shows a new way of implementing teamwork. Work in this sense means not only performing a variety of tasks in order to achieve one purpose, and therefore the implementation of a project by many people, each of whom performs a variety of tasks. Teamwork by the spirituality of unity is something more, it is the common implementation of a common goal based on mutual help, common vision of not only own work results but also the work of the other, with whom we are achieving a common goal.

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Similarly, the participation of employees in the decision-making process consists of the presentation of his or her vision by every participant of this process, which the others listen to attentively, not looking at once for the reasons for its rejection. Only after the presentation of all concepts of solving a given problem each proposal is analyzed from the angle of common interest, combined with other ideas, resulting in effect in a common vision of the whole issue. Acceptance of the final solution should take into account the essential arguments of all participants, and if they are mutually exclusive, the discussion focused on the common good should permit to reach a consensus. The condition for effectiveness of such a decision-making process is the ability to unite all participants with readiness to lose his/her idea for a common concept.

The entrepreneur feels responsible for the professional development of a dependant employee, applies the corresponding continuous forms of education and also stimulates the integral (intellectual, spiritual) personal development of all associates. Entrepreneurs and workers are trying to create among themselves an atmosphere of mutual assistance, in which in a natural and free way everybody gives at the disposal of others his knowledge, skills, professional experience, and competences. Employees feel co-responsible for enterprise and economic process, take pride in creating a good image of the company and good relationships with other stakeholders.

Businesses produce goods and provide services of high quality, human-friendly, safe, environmentally friendly and at fair prices. Acceptance and respect of common values in the economic process generates a high level of trust in the mutual relationships. Management of companies focused on the common good of society and not on the private interest of an entrepreneur also implies maximum environmental concerns, expressed by saving energy and natural resources and investments in renewable energy sources.

Through work man grows in his humanity, through sharing with the other the result and experience of his work participates in the communion of tangible and intangible assets, contributing to social and civic life of the community (Araújo 1996). For many entrepreneurs and employees work understood and implemented in accordance with the ergonomic aspect of the paradigm of unity is an opportunity to grow in their humanity, to enrich in spiritual development, to deepen their spirituality and to detect the transcendent dimension in their life, to build unity with God and with other people.

The spiritual aspect of the paradigm of unity is in some sense the keystone of other aspects. An entrepreneur who decides to conduct his business in the spirit of economy of communion and manage it in accordance with the assumptions of the paradigm of unity directs his activities in each of the aspects to the transcendence, to something much more than just a profit.

The modern entrepreneur (owner, manager) and also employee tend to seek support in the communities of people sharing similar values. Spirituality enables to get to know oneself, the basis of behaviors and interpersonal relationships, enables to make reasonable decisions in difficult situations, sometimes extreme. Spiritual development of man and the atmosphere in the work place focused on spirituality bring significant benefits both in terms of intangible relations (cooperation instead of competition, creation of the common good, respect for others), as well as in the particular economic dimension - people consciously referring to their spirituality generally perform their duties better, are more open to inspiration and thus more creative. In addition, they generate an "added value", fulfilling themselves by doing "something more" than what is contained in the employment contract.

The paradigm of unity in relation to the spiritual development of persons involved in the management process manifests, inter alia, the weakening of their egocentrism, and at the same time appreciation of the fate of other people, of the problems of the community and the society. In addition, there decreases the need for success, power or having material goods, and grows the concern for the common good, independence in evaluations and judgments.

Very strong emphasis of the role of spirituality in management based on the paradigm of unity also shows a strong interaction between the different aspects of this paradigm, particularly in relation to ergonomics. Organizational culture incorporating spirituality in the workplace is sensitive to open and honest communication, teamwork and cooperation rather than competition. The companies create relationships with competitors in a loyal and honest way, showing the real value of their products and refrain from negative evaluations of competing products. With the spiritual development, the worker increases his sense of responsibility, striving to increase productivity and creativity, to deliver better products and services, not only because he feels responsible for the results of his work but also because he considers himself to be one of the members of the community, united by something more than just a com-

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mon work place.

Businesses which take into account the spirituality in management have an ease in obtaining the opinion from employees who do not fear the consequences and share honest comments about the work, often in an open form, sincerely, and not "behind their back". Spirituality in the business directs the manager to shift from managing people to lead people.

The paradigm of unity in the spiritual aspect gives the opportunity to create a workplace as a community, integrating its individual members on the basis of relevant and lasting values. Such a community enables to assess the causes and consequences of interpersonal conflicts, as well as to promote appropriate communication styles and find solutions through dialogue in order to avert any conflict situations.

Based on the above-mentioned conditions one can say that the spiritual dimension of man in the workplace (manager, employee, customer, supplier, each stakeholder) plays a very important role in the relationships and personal growth and contributes to a significant increase of the value of the company, both when it comes to economic and intangible assets. In addition, spirituality makes each participant of the management process looks at each other in a holistic manner, integrating physical and psychological aspect with spiritual, not separating his personality between private and professional life.

## Content dimensions of the paradigm of unity

The paradigm of unity built on the above-mentioned assumptions of the spirituality of unity can be expressed through various content dimensions. Analysis of the literature and good knowledge of the idea of the economy of communion, numerous discussions with experts and scientists, as well as own experience as an entrepreneur of the economy of communion business<sup>1</sup>, entitle the author to an arbitrary choice of the following content dimensions (Grochmal 2012), as the most relevant for the evaluation of management based on the paradigm of unity:

- human capital expressed by the placement of the human being at the center of all activities;
- relational capital created by the mutual relationships within the company and beyond;
- spiritual capital taking into account spiritual values in management;
- new organizational culture of the company formed by the promotion a culture of giving, gratuitous gift, business ethics, respect for human rights and environment;
- investing in the sustainable development of the business in order to increase its integrated value;
- help for the persons in need, living in poverty, by sharing with them the generated profit and the material and spiritual goods.

These content dimensions are convergent with the above-mentioned aspects of the paradigm of unity, so now each dimension will be characterized only by the additional features.

Human capital is expressed, inter alia, by treating man as the subject of work and organizational structures and the creation of an organizational climate based on mutual trust and social integration. Other important elements of human capital include: stimulating among employees the need of continuous education and professional training, the pursuit of the convergence of business goals with the objectives of individual employees, contact with former employees and pensioners as well as concern about working conditions, ergonomics of workplace and safety of the workers.

Relational capital represents interpersonal relationships within the company (management, staff) and beyond - relationships with external stakeholders, it involves collaboration with other enterprises and social institutions in a spirit of solidarity for building the common good. Important elements of the relational capital also include the participation in social and cultural initiatives, the integration of internationalization of enterprises and the need for inculturation expressed by the recognition and appreciation of the culture of the other. This dimension also includes the ability to deal with crisis and conflict situations in management through close and good relations with all stakeholders.

Spiritual capital is significantly associated with the spirituality of unity and is expressed by all its rules, in particular by taking into account in management the intangible, transcendent assets. The employee's understanding of his role in the work process as a vocation can also be considered a part of spiritual capital, regardless of his position in the

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<sup>1</sup> Between 1995 and 2002, the author managed the first business in Poland based on the economy of communion (Software house "Softres" in Rzeszów).

company and social or professional status. Spiritual capital is closely related to other content dimensions because it often gives the motivation for actions taken in every aspect, builds unity with others and for others, and also teaches humility towards nature and events over which humans have little or no influence. An important element of spiritual capital is faith in Divine Providence, its impact on business operations and help not only to survive difficult and crises situations, but also in the daily struggles, in making important decisions and in the continuous building of unity among people.

Organizational culture is a large content dimension of the paradigm of unity in which the most important issue is the promotion and implementation of the culture of giving and understanding of the importance of gratuitous gift and gratuitousness. The culture of giving determines the other content dimensions because it concerns the tangible goods as well as intangible assets, human, relational and spiritual capitals. One of the elements of this kind of organizational culture is strengthening in the work environment a sense of belonging to a community, defining the values applied by an entrepreneur and striving to the broad implementation of these values in practice. The essence of the culture of giving is expressed by the thought: *"The good, which was not shared with the other in need and which I have taken only for myself, or which was bought without exigency, ceases to be good."*

For some people it is too demanding a challenge, but in the light of the culture of giving it has a deep meaning and is a determinant of the behavior of many people. To paraphrase a famous saying: *"Do not give a man a fish, teach him how to fish instead,"* one can say that the paradigm of unity not only teaches fishing (and gives a rod) instead of giving fish but encourages to fish in a community and teaches to share with others the fruits of the catch.

Assumptions of the paradigm of unity require from the entrepreneurs "to put both feet on the ground", and evaluate in a reasonable way the reality and the economic performance of the business in a free market economy with all its conditionings (economic situation of the country, state economic policy, tax and insurance system, human potential, competition). It is necessary for the proper functioning of the company to invest continuously in its sustainable development, primarily a part of the profit, in order to increase the company's integral value, also in terms of the above-mentioned capitals.

An important content dimension is the economic aspect, first of all in terms of the way the profit is generated and allocated. Maximization of profit is not the main objective in the management based on the paradigm of unity, but what is important is how profit is generated and distributed. Apart from the necessary allocation of a part of profit to invest in the sustainable development of business, the remaining profit is divided between the training of people wanting to pursue ideas of the economy of communion and help for the poor and socially excluded people living in poverty.

For the paradigm of unity is fundamental to train entrepreneurs (owners, shareholders, managers) in the culture of giving, gratuitous sharing of material and spiritual goods with others, in attitudes open to the needs of others.

One of the goals of the paradigm of unity is the pursuit of such a change of mentality of participants in the economic process, so as to make it possible to replace the pattern of behaviors typical for the competitive n-person zero sum game (the gains of one player are equal to the losses of the other one) with the behaviors characterized by a cooperative game (win-win).

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Analysis of the properties of the paradigm of unity and empirical studies of its use in management practice have been carried out by the author (Grochmal 2013) on a group of 110 economy of communion enterprises worldwide (total number around the globe is ca. 800). After the pilot studies in about 30 enterprises, research was carried out using a questionnaire method with the aid of a specially prepared computer program via the Internet. The results were subjected to extensive statistical analysis (descriptive statistics, ANOVA, MANOVA), but the presentation and analysis of all the results is beyond the scope of this article.

One part of the questions in questionnaire concerned the indication by the entrepreneurs (owners, managers, shareholders) the preferable (the most important) content dimensions implemented in practice of management in their enterprises. The highest priority was obtained by relational capital (18.5 % of all points), followed by spiritual capital Technology, Higher Education and Society (2020)

(17.7 %) and human capital (16.9 %). The variation in responses was not large, but the first three content dimensions received over 53 % of the points. Using the statistical analysis the normality of the distributions was verified, and based on the kurtosis value and resulting from it leptokurtic (slender) character of distribution for human, relational and spiritual capitals, and platokurtic (flattened) character of distribution for other dimensions, it was found that the respondents were more convinced about the high assessment of capitals (human, relational and spiritual) than for the other dimensions.

A similar question was posed to the experts of the paradigm of unity (scholars, specialists) regarding their opinion about the importance of each respective content dimension in the concept of the economy of communion. For approximately 40 questionnaires sent out to the experts, 22 responses from experts from 7 countries were returned. The highest priority in their evaluation was received by spiritual capital (22.9 %), followed by relational capital (18.2 %) and human capital (16.8 %). These responses demonstrate that experts have taken into account the contemporary trends in management sciences (large meaning of spirituality), and the convergence in the evaluation of the three most important content dimensions (with a slight variation of the order) in the expert opinion confirms a convergence of the management practice with the theory of management in the economy of communion businesses.

An original and innovative element of this research was an achievement of quantitative evaluation of the compliance of management practice in the economy of communion businesses with the declared principles of the paradigm of unity. For this evaluation the author has elaborated a mathematical model using weighting factors of each content dimension determined on the basis of experts' answers. This model then was used to determine the integral coefficient (a type of metric), which enables to calculate the conformity of "theory" with "practice" in each enterprise. The resulting average value of this coefficient (0.63 at the range of variability from 0.2 to 1) shows a more than average convergence between the declared assumptions of the paradigm of unity and its application in practice. It should be noted that the studies represent the first attempt to apply quantitative methods to assess the quality of management in the economy of communion businesses.

Based on the answers to additional questions (including work aspect, distribution of profits, organizational culture) one can state that the ergonomic and spiritual aspects have significant implications for entrepreneurs (owners, managers, shareholders) in the management process in the economy of communion businesses. The responses emphasized above all the desire to create a community of people in the company, working together for a common goal, helping one another in difficult situations, concern for the working conditions and the integral development of each employee, taking into account the transcendent values both in making important decisions, as well as in solving ordinary problems of everyday life, the joy of the possibility of transferring the gratuitous gifts of tangible and intangible assets to people living in poverty. In many cases, it was the impact of the spirituality of unity implemented in real life on the decisions and willingness to govern the business in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel that was named as motivation for such a performance.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The study on 110 enterprises of very different size, operating in dozens of industries and sectors, in different cultures and language groups (22 countries), with a different character (production, services, commerce) and different organizational and ownership status allow to conclude that the paradigm of unity in management sciences is universal and can be implemented in companies regardless of the cultural, social or political conditions.

This paradigm, although not derived from scientific theory but from the practice of living the spirituality of unity, gives scientists a tool for creating theoretical models and empirical studies of social phenomena and processes in the perspective of values other than the dominant so far not only in management sciences but in many social sciences. From a methodological point of view, the paradigm of unity may contribute to the development of new scientific methods in the social sciences, through the construction of multi-dimensional models of social, economic, political and cultural processes. Methods resulting from the paradigm of unity allow for the examination of these processes in various aspects, and especially in a holistic approach.

An important feature of this paradigm is a positive appreciation of human behavior and social phenomena, which is encountered relatively rarely in contemporary social sciences.

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The paradigm of unity is of particular importance in the social dimension. It creates and develops interpersonal relationships, strong bonds between people based on deep social needs, on search for mutual support, security, kindness, friendship. It also plays a significant role in raising awareness about the social role of enterprises, thus contributing to the understanding and development of corporate social responsibility.

Equally important is the practical significance of this paradigm. The history of the economy of communion enterprises shows that economic activity is possible under the conditions of a free market economy with all its circumstances, improving competitiveness, improving efficiency and at the same time perceiving the needs of others that can be supported not on the principles of philanthropic alms but in a systematic way, making it possible for thousands of persons and families to live in dignity.

There are some elements that fundamentally differentiate the paradigm of unity from other management approaches: the need to incorporate spirituality and ethics in management and thus the vision of the human person in his/her integral psychophysical-spiritual dimension, appreciation of human and relational capital, and understanding the role of profit in the business. Such an approach requires changes in the management of companies, placing of a human being in the center of business issues, ethical performance of managers as well as employees, and prioritization of such features as responsibility, trust, credibility and honesty by all business stakeholders.

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