

Michał Plucinski, Polish seaports in the varying external environment (Polskie porty morskie w zmieniającym się otoczeniu zewnętrznym), CeDeWu, Warsaw, Poland, 2013, pp. 308.

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Abstract: Michał Pluciński is a Polish researcher in the field of operations and development of seaports. In his postdoctoral monograph published in Warsaw in 2013 his main objective was to develop a comprehensive idea of adjusting the Polish seaports to the changes taking place in their external environment. The book has five chapters which present theoretical aspects of the seaports regarded as economic research subjects (Chapter 1), the impact of the varying external environment on the Polish seaports attributes (Chapter 2), their main economic functions (Chapter 3) and microstructures, mesostructures and macroeconomic structures within the framework of which they can be examined (Chapter 4). In the last and the most important part of the monograph Michał Pluciński presents courses of changes in the attributes, functions and structures of the Polish seaports, prioritises the impact of external determinants on the three planes on which the ports have been examined and identifies relationships existing among the attributes, structures and functions of the Polish seaports. Although the author's conclusions pertain to the most important Polish seaports, they are, for the most part, of universal nature.

Keywords: Polish seaports, Economic and non-economic attributes, Functions, Structures, Model approach.

Up to the present moment the Polish academic record related to the seaports has been deprived of comprehensive studies of solutions which provide long-term, sustainable development of the Polish seaports including the attributional, functional and structural approach. The research which has been conducted to date addresses only the issue of changes taking place within the framework of the selected attributes of the seaports, their economic functions or structures within the framework of which the seaports can be examined.

The subjective scope of research presented in the book "Polish seaports in the varying external environment" pertains to the four ports of primary importance to the Polish economy, i.e. the ports of Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin and Świnoujście. The main period of time the research relates to includes the years of 1989 up to 2012. According to Michał Pluciński, those years were the time when not only did the Polish seaports undergo economic transformation, but they were under influence of the external, international

determinants including, in particular, globalisation of the world economy as well as international economic integration.

In order to conduct research into the impact of the most important external determinants on the operations and development of the Polish seaports Michał Pluciński, who identified them, adopted an integrated approach. This approach relies on examining the influence of the economic transformation of Poland, globalisation and international, regional economic integration on the attributes, functions and structures of the Polish seaports.

The main objective for Michał Pluciński was to develop a comprehensive idea of adjusting the Polish seaports to the changes taking place in their external environment. This objective is complemented with four auxiliary objectives relating to (1) revision of the theoretical record with regard to the position of the seaports in transport economics, external determinants influencing the development of the seaports as well as the planes within the framework of which this influence can be examined and (2,3,4) identification of the changes in the attributes, functions and structures of the Polish seaports under influence of the varying external environment.

The accomplishment of the formulated research objectives required conducting empirical research on which verification of the assumed research hypothesis is based. This hypothesis goes as follows: Exogenous factors resulting from the economic transformation, globalisation of the world economy and international economic integration determine the attributional, functional and structural planes of the development of the seaports in Poland.

In the first chapter of the book the author presents theoretical aspects related to the seaports regarded as economic research subjects. By demonstrating the port issues in economy, especially in transport economics, he pointed out to the multi-featured definition of a seaport, position of research into the seaports in transport economics and relationships existing between these ports and their external environment. Apart from globalisation and international, regional economic integration Michał Pluciński presents the Polish economy transformation as the most important determinants of the development of the modern seaports. On the basis of the theoretical and research record to date he identifies the most important attributes of the seaports, their functions and structures within the framework of which they can be examined.

The second chapter of the author's monograph, which is of research nature, the author dedicated to the issues of impact that the varying external environment has on the attributes of the Polish seaports. In his analysis of the economic and non-economic attributes of the modern seaports Michał Pluciński took into account their competitive position, innovative solutions, tendency to cooperation, investment attractiveness as well as social and environmental aspects of social liability.

In the third chapter of the author's monograph, which is also of research nature, the author presents the impact of the varying external environment on the accomplishment of the most important economic functions of the Polish seaports, i.e. their transport, commercial and industrial functions.

In chapter four Michał Pluciński presents the impact of the varying external environment on the structures of the Polish seaports. On the microeconomic level he presents the impact of the identified external determinants on shaping the public and private areas of the seaports and the relationships existing between them. On the mesoeconomic level he illustrates the influence of the external determinants on the significance the vicinity of the seaports has as their undeniable supply base, participation of the local self-governments on management of the seaports as well as the importance the ports have in the port town areas, their economy and life of their inhabitants. He also gives his assessment of the policy operated towards the seaports. On the largest, macroeconomic level the author presents the impact of the identified external determinants on sea transport in Polish foreign trade handling. He demonstrates the changes that took place in the domestic and transit supply base for the Polish seaports. The analysis of the Polish state policy towards the seaports is also an important matter in this chapter.

The most important part of the book "Polish seaports in the varying external environment" is its chapter five. The chapter contains two author's perspectives. The first perspective, which is separate for each of the analysed planes, presents evolution of the attributes of the seaports (including identification of the primary attribute), development of the current functions of the ports, changes in the structures within the framework of which they can be examined (including the development of the municipality-port partnership, a new role of the state in the operations of the ports). The second perspective applied by the author in chapter five is of comprehensive nature, which allows to prioritise the impact of the external determinants on the analysed planes as well as identification of the relationships existing between the attributes, structures and functions of the Polish seaports. By creating a map of the relationships the applied deliberations translated into model solutions.

Not only is the book "Polish seaports in the varying external environment" academically valuable, but it is also a new, comprehensive perspective to the transformations which took place and will be taking place in the following years in the Polish seaports which are under influence of the changes occurring in their environment. Additionally, the conclusions drawn from Michał Pluciński's research can be used by the port entities and Polish state and self-government administration. In December 2014 in the competition held by the Minister of Infrastructure and Development the book was given an award for the best postdoctoral book on the subject of transport. [Recibida el 1 de febrero de 2015].