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Diagnosis of Modernity

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The articles presented in the volume relate to the topic of health and mental crises depicted in the broader context of cultural phenomena. The issue of mental health and its disorders – and unusual experiences, which may cause an inexplicable behavioural pattern – seems to be on the one hand intriguing and fascinating, on the other hand refers to the delicate and difficult matter. “Diagnosis of modernity” intends to recognize the philosophical, social and cultural determinants of mental health, examining the nature of “symptoms” manifested in the culture by psychological crises, depression, neurosis or personality disorders.

Jolanta Kociuba diagnoses the situation of the individual within the circle of Euro-American postmodern culture. Development of a culture of individualism, concentration on the social dimension of self-contributed to the crisis and disintegration of the social structure and the depersonalization the modern self. Jaroslaw Barański defines health and mental well as the ability to compensate deficits. The author presents two types of compensatory strategies, which may take the “pathological” form. The first type is a biographical compensation (multilife) by the formation of many alternative projects of life (changes in the family, workplace, place of residence, *etc.*), that take the form of existential decisions easily escaping the control of the individual. Medical compensation is a widely recognized process of medicalization, which interprets all difficulties of life, failures and human suffering as a problem of finding a technical solution and easily undergoing human technical control. Halina Rarot is looking for positive dimensions of sublimation as an opportunity to develop and perform mature social and professional roles. The author makes the

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diagnosis of modernity by criticism of some cultural trends manifested in the form of consumerism and cultural infantilism. Katarzyna Klimkowska raises the problem of maturation to adulthood of contemporary university students. The author refers to the current psychological and pedagogical knowledge on this topic and suggests the need to organize various forms of professional support. Tadeusz Kobierzycki presents problems of mental health both in personal and moral context. The author describes his own experience of working in the Student's School of Mental Hygiene (1984–1996) and the way Kazimierz Dabrowski's work inspired him.

