

# To have or not to have

## Or just to have in a smaller amount

*Hurrah !!! Christmas time is coming. According to the everlasting tradition, it should be the time of developing familiar relationships and spending a great time together with family while having a Christmas supper, or sharing with presents to assure someone who received them, we've remembered about him (her). However let's take under account the time that we spend by looking for and buying presents and another gadgets and compare it with the time of our mental preparations. Shouldn't Christmas be rather called as Gadgets Buying Day ???*

### What's happening with us

Doing shopping has become the integral part of humanity. Certainly, soon after people appeared on Earth, some of them changed a stone which tended to be a knife into a pile of grains or fruits with another human. This kind of trade is extremely usual and necessary for us to survive. But what's happening now? The modern capitalism has inclined us into harmful culture of consumptionism. We're not going to the cinema, to the theatre, on a romantic walk to the park, but to the supermarket. We're taking care of wasting every second on talking and working. What for? To go to the nearest shop and stare into the latest inventions for hours? We're working harder and harder, longer and longer. What for? To go to the nearest shop and buy some gadgets?

### What's important – quality or quantity

We're buying more and more objects, however their quality is, let's say, varied. We'd rather buy ten useless things than one which is truly useful. Quantity has definitely knocked out quality. When a prehistoric worker took a big stone, he was able to produce a very good axe from it and even after tens thousands years we'd be able to use it as well. Modern worker would rather make a hundred of axes from that stone, but none of them would cut a sheet of paper properly. There's a good example with Chinese joys – they are much cheaper, however they may include sustains that can badly influence our mind and body – will we boycott them? No! We'll buy more and more of them hoping everything will gonna be all right and we won't suffer serious illnesses at all. A good Polish shoemaker need to earn \$500 a month and will produce good shoes for, let's say, \$50, however you may wear them for

months and months and they will still look and 'work' properly. An enslaved Chinese kid will earn \$10 a month and his shoes will cost \$5, but who would guarantee that they won't break up within a week of use? So what would you do? Unfortunately we'd rather buy those cheaper ones complaining their bad quality and raising unemployment among Polish shoemakers enjoy saving \$45 we'd surely spend on another pairs of shoes soon.



*Is it truly the most precious thing for us*

### Average prizes of products we're buying are growing

Happily, this tradition to just have things, which can't be used so often as they may brake down meanwhile, has gone. As the Polish society has become richer than it was before, we are also buying things of higher quality. I know I complain

perhaps too much, however Poles has already gone from one exaggeration to another. The average prize of a coffeemaker bought in our country has raised to \$500. Is coffee made in this machine so widely different? Is it a kind of snobism? Who knows.

### Don't follow technological chase

Even a few years ago the best eg. communion present was a brand watch to stay working for at least 20 years. Now it's unfortunately the latest electronic equipment which in a year may be replaced by a much better one and after about 5 years is almost worthless. Yes, you may talk to your friend 'Hey, I've bought a new digital camera that can take a photo in 10 miliseconds' and he (she) would answer you 'I've bought a better one that can take a photo in 7 miliseconds. I may save 3 miliseconds of my precious time while photographing.' And what would you do if you save some time using modern gadgets? Go to the shop again and have a look into a camera that can take a photo in 5 miliseconds?

### Don't let them influence our thoughts

Let's think you've already entered the supermarket and you've just feel delighted by a beguiling smell of fresh, crunky bread and you've thought about a medieval bakery with a stove and hot bakery goods. As I suppose although your imagination has already worked over this view, the reality is completely different – who knows – whether it's the same bread you haven't bought a week ago, but a bit

refreshed. Ok, let's skip this topic. To make your breakfast nourishing, you need some ham. When entering the butcher's area, you imagine the ham, you're going to buy, having four legs, a tail and running through the field. Don't enjoy so much – that ham has got probably only a bit less chemical sustains than the laundry powder next row. In the supermarket there are no clocks while the jukeboxes emit a pleasant music just to make us feeling relaxed and more likely to buy. Experts are working over our minds to encourage us to buy lots of goods. Let's assertively say them ... no.

### Consumptionism which develop the technology by Michael Novak

"Yes, world truly inclines to the culture of materialism and consumptionism, but it's not because of capitalism. When I was young, a fridge could only make the things cold, however now it may produce cold water, ice and freeze something. That's fascinating. Supermarkets has received the function of medieval market squares. Eg. a knight came there and he has observed a beautiful sword that he wanted to get. This feeling of desire actuated his ambition to buy it and inclined to work much harder to afford it. In this way another merchants tended to produe at least as good sword which introduced a progress of the technology. All in all, I'd prefer when people are worried about trade and consumption rather than about wars." said Michael Novak an American theologian and philosopher, author of many books about capitalism and consumptionism.



*Mass consumption – what to choose*

**assertively** - zdecydowanie

**axe** – siekiera

**bakery** – piekarnia

**delight** – rozkosz

**desire** – pragnienie

**enslaved** – zniewolony

**everlasting** – odwieczny

**freeze** – zamrażać

**influence** – wpływać

**quantity** – ilość

**shoemaker** – szewc

**stare** – gapić się

**take under account** – przemysleć

**theologian** – teolog

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