Cuius regio?
Ideological and Territorial Cohesion of Silesia

eds Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościsław Żerelik

vol. 4

Region Divided.
Times of Nation-States (1918-1945)

eds Marek Czapliński, Przemysław Wiszewski

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vol. 4

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Region Divided.
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In the shadow of nation-states. Silesia divided (1918-1945)

Abstract:

The book is the 4th volume from of the Cuius Regio series. It comprises articles devoted to the cohesion of Silesia as a region in the years 1918-1945. During this period Silesia was partitioned among three nation-states (Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland). As in all volumes of the series, chapters in the book present research on administrative structures (Kruszewski), economy (Urbaniak), social groups (Przerwa), ethnic and national issues (Strauchold), and regional identity (Linek) as factors and forces both strengthening and weakening regional cohesion. A general outline of the relevant part of the region's history shows conditions under which deep changes occurred in a relatively short period of time affecting every field of Silesians' lives.

Keywords:

Cuius Regio project, Silesia, region, nation-states

This book is a collection of articles devoted to the cohesion of Silesia as a region in the years 1918-1945. Their role is to conclude the studies conducted as part of another stage of the European Science Foundation's programme entitled *Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and the cohesion within regions*[1]. The studies of the Polish research team concerning Silesia were funded by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education[2]. Earlier volumes of the team's studies presented changes that affected the cohesion of the region of Silesia in the period from the Middle Ages to the year 1918[3]. As the historiography of the period under

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1 For more information on the project, see www.cuius-regio.eu and Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościsław Żerelik, *Czyj to region, czyli słów kilka o pewnym projekcie badawczym*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka' (Silesian Historical Quarterly Sobótka), 67 (2012), issue 4, pp. 3-5.

2 *Cuius Regio. Analiza sił spajających i destrukcyjnych w obrębie regionu określających przynależność osób (grup społecznych) oraz spójność społeczną jako zjawisko historyczne*, decision of the Minister of Science and Higher Education No. 832/N-ESF-CORECODE/2010/0.

3 See *The Long Formation of the Region (c. 1000-1526)*, ed. Przemysław Wiszewski, Wrocław 2013 (=Cuius Regio? Ideological and territorial cohesion of Silesia, eds. Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościsław Żerelik, vol. 1); *The Strenghtening of the Silesian regionalism* (1526-1740), eds. Lucyna Harc, Gabriela Wąs,, Wrocław 2014 (=Cuius Regio? Ideological and territorial cohesion of Silesia, eds. Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościsław Żerelik, vol. 2); a volume devoted to the 19th century and edited by Lucyna Harc and Teresa Kulak is currently being prepared. The papers are available (in line with the Open Access policy) in printed form (libraries are prioritized) and in

study here was dominated by a national perspective, minor changes in the typesetting of the text in comparison with earlier volumes were introduced. The names of towns are presented here in their present day form; however, on their first appearance in the book their other national forms are also cited (Czech German, Polish). Additionally, a special concordance of names is added at the end of the book. Abridged and updated Polish versions of most of the articles contained in the volumes have been published in the leading Polish academic journal devoted to the history of Silesia entitled 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka'[4].

The authors of the studies presented below, all of whom are representatives of Wrocław or Opole academic centres for historical studies, have attempted to analyse the functioning of five basic factors which determined the region's coherence. In line with the themes of the project as a whole, these are: the administrative framework (Tomasz Kruszewski), the economy (Miron Urbaniak), social groups (Tomasz Przerwa), ethnic issues (Grzegorz Strauchold) and the cultural identity of the region's inhabitants (Bernard Linek). The researchers' work was complicated by the necessity of approaching each of these factors separately. In the examined period these factors were particularly closely interwoven with one another: for example, the administrative framework was closely connected with the political life of social groups within the contemporary countries, while particular forms of identity which were closely related to the issue of ethnic affiliation were imposed on the region's inhabitants by the administrative apparatus. The researchers decided to take the risk connected with such a research procedure in order to have the opportunity to compare the effects of the determined factors – which were crucial for the functioning of society – throughout the entire history of Silesia, independently of the period examined at each stage of the project.

An additional difficulty for the historians was posed by the necessity to trace the issues of their interest in the realities of three countries (Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland), whose functioning was at that time founded on national ideologies which strongly opposed regionalisms (see below). Such an approach made it possible to identify phenomena on a scale much larger than those which were determined by the political activity of elites of a single country only. Above all, however, it made it possible for them to answer the question of whether the sense of being part of regional and local communities was transformed under the influence of political and ideological changes spreading through the whole of Central Eu-

electronic form on the website of the project (www.cuiusregio.uni.wroc.pl) and in the Digital Library of Wrocław University (collection of the Faculty of Historical and Pedagogical Sciences).

[4] See 'Silesian Historical Quarterly Sobótka', 67 (2012), issue 4; 68 (2013), issue 2 and 68 (2013), issue 4.

rope, as well as the extent to which they resulted in Silesia surviving as a region or disintegrating into three provinces of three nation-states.

The outline of the history of Silesia (1918-1945)

Three events marked the beginning of a new chapter of European history in 1918: the conclusion of military activities on the western front of the First World War, the capitulation (on 4th of November) of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the truce (11th of November) between Germany and the countries of the Triple Entente. These events had a crucial impact on shaping the future of the Odra region. Until then Silesia had been divided into two parts – the Prussian part, which included over 90 per cent of the region's historical lands, and the southern territories, whose capital city was Cieszyn, which were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The conclusion of the war and disintegration of the political structures of Central and Central-Eastern Europe created favourable conditions for the formation of new countries. Most important for Silesia was the proclamation of independence of Poland and Czechoslovakia. These two countries, together with Germany, became competitors in the battle for the division of the territory of Silesia.

The situation was particularly unclear in the formerly Austrian-Hungarian part of the region where three ethnic groups resided: Czechs, Germans and Poles. The Germans, who were the least numerous group in this territory, had no support from the German state and no prospect of their homeland being included in its territory. After all, they considered themselves citizens of the Empire of Austria-Hungary, not of the German Reich. It was quite different in the case of the two remaining ethnic groups, however. Pro-nationalist political organizations operating within these communities made efforts to include the greatest possible area of the disputed territory into 'their' state. Their activity was supported by regular but voluntary armed forces. At the same time, relevant efforts in the international arena, at the peace conference, were undertaken by politicians of the new states.

It was on 5th November 1918 that the first division of Cieszyn Silesia took place according to the criterion of the ethnic affiliation of its inhabitants. The course of the dividing line was established by Polish activists who belonged to the National Council of Cieszyn Silesia and their Czech counterparts from the National Council of the Land of Silesia (*Zemský národní výbor pro Slezsko*). The Prague government did not accept the new boundaries because the only strategic railway line which linked the lands of Bohemia and Slovakia with the industrial areas of Cieszyn Silesia was left outside the Czechoslovakian territory. While the Polish

government was focusing its full attention on the eastern border, the Czechs were making an effort to extend their influence in the north. In order to prevent the election of Polish representatives from the territory of Cieszyn Silesia to the Sejm (Polish parliament), on 23rd January 1919, on the order of the prime minister and president, regular Czechoslovakian army forces invaded territories considered Polish by force of the 1918 agreement.

The Polish government, engaged in battles with Soviet Russia in the east and with the Germans in Greater Poland, granted very modest support to the Polish volunteers who were unexpectedly called upon to defend their homeland. Between 23rd January and 3rd February 1919 Czechoslovakian military units annexed most of the disputed territory. The demarcation line that was then established following pressure from the countries of the Triple Entente was not satisfactory to the Prague government. They agreed neither to the plebiscite which was to determine the outline of the border, nor to the outline of the border proposed by the Council of Ambassadors. In the summer of 1920, when Poland was battling with the military units of Soviet Russia that were approaching the country's capital, the Czechs obtained the consent of the Triple Entente countries to the border that would be most beneficial to them. The authorities in Warsaw agreed to accept this on the condition that transports of weaponry by railway to Poland would continue to be allowed. Czechoslovakia annexed around 66 per cent of the disputed territory inhabited by almost 140,000 Poles, 113,000 Czechs and 34,000 Germans. In the lands of Cieszyn Silesia the so-called 'Czechisation' of the local inhabitants was initiated. The Polish government never accepted the fact of losing Cieszyn Silesia, which resulted in its decision to take part in the 1938 partition of Czechoslovakia, the consequences of which were dramatic.

Even more violent was the process of dividing Silesia between Germany and Poland. From October 1918, all over Germany the lower social classes were campaigning for the introduction of socialist and liberal rights. Following the abdication and escape of Emperor Wilhelm II, the government attempted to restore peace to the country; this meant suppressing the pro-revolutionary movements. Social and economic unrest in Upper Silesia also had an ethnic dimension to it. The representatives of the class of great landowners and industrialists, as well as the vast majority of the middle class, were of German origin. This explains why, in many local communities where most labourers were Polish, pro-national slogans were closely related to economic demands. Polish political and trade organisations comprised several hundred thousand members at the time. The government attempted to calm the situation in Upper Silesia with the help of additional military forces. At the same time, German

industrialists were financing the creation of paramilitary corps of volunteers (*Freiwillige Korps*) who were launching attacks on public gatherings of labourers and the headquarters of political organisations, while in the southern part of Silesia divisions of a Polish paramilitary organisation called the Polish Military Organisation of Upper Silesia (Polish: *Polska Organizacja Wojskowa*, POW) were created.

On 13th January 1919 a state of siege was proclaimed in Upper Silesia by the authorities there. This resulted in the suspension of most civil rights and the simultaneous strengthening of repressions towards the government's opponents. These repressions intensified following the announcement, as part of the Treaty of Versailles (signed on 28th June 1919), of the obligation to conduct a plebiscite in Upper Silesia. The inhabitants were to choose the country to which the territories they inhabited were to be incorporated. Prior to the Treaty's ratification (January 1920), the German administration attempted to suppress the activity of Polish political organisations. In response, the POW decided to take up arms on 18th August against the German administration. The actual battle started a day earlier and lasted until 24th August. The conflict ended with the defeat of the insurgents, most of whom were forced to escape to Poland. When the fighting was over, the efforts of the military forces to put down the Polish national movement intensified. The security police forces (SiPo) which replaced the German army expelled from the plebiscite territories continued their activities against the labour movement and Polish political activists. German activists attacked the seats of Polish Plebiscite Committees and broke up Polish gatherings. Taking advantage of the mass demonstrations of inhabitants outraged by the brutality of police interventions, POW called for another uprising. The Second Silesian Uprising was launched on 19th August 1920 and lasted until the 24th August. Its purpose was to force the German authorities to dissolve SiPo and to include representatives of Polish political organisations into the administrative structures of the plebiscite territories. Due to pressure from the Ally Governing and Plebiscite Commission (*Commission Interalliée de Gouvernement et de Plébiscite de Haute Silésie*), demands of the insurgents were met.

Meanwhile, in Upper Silesia a brutal propaganda campaign was carried out. Both sides did not hesitate to resort to violence which was inflicted by their own paramilitary organisations. Eventually, on 20th March 1921 a referendum took place. Over 700,000 voters supported the inclusion of Upper Silesia into Germany and ca. 480,000 chose Poland. The Ally Committee put forward two possible border proposals. The English and Italians, who supported the Germans, favoured the idea of awarding Poles with small farming territories only. In turn, the French, who wanted to weaken the Germans, proposed that Poland should receive the entire east-

ern part of Upper Silesia together with the industrial regions. Fearing that the English-Italian proposal would be executed, the representatives of the Polish national movement, under the leadership of Wojciech Korfanty, proclaimed the outbreak of the Third Silesian Uprising. Its purpose was to annex and include into Poland territories located to the east of the so-called Korfanty line. Its outline generally mirrored the French proposal regarding the division of Upper Silesia.

Battles were waged from 2nd May until 5th July 1921. Forces of both sides were composed of volunteers, but also of a considerable number of Polish and German regular army soldiers, whose formal participation in these battles were as demobilized soldiers or volunteers. Initially, Polish insurgents annexed territories they considered to be due to Poland. In the course of further battles, including that of Annaberg between 21th and 26th May, the bloodiest of all, some of the villages were re-conquered by the Germans. Their military advantage was constantly growing. This was also because the Polish government officially refused to support the uprising. Eventually, following pressure from the Ally Committee, conditions of truce were agreed. The official announcement on 20th October 1921 on the nature of the division of Silesia by the Council of Ambassadors was favourable to Poland. In spite of the fact that it only gained 1/3 of the disputed territories, they nonetheless included the most important industrial areas. Poland received 50 per cent of the coal mines and as much as 78 per cent of the metallurgical industry of Upper Silesia.

For Germany, the division of Silesia meant a number of economic and social difficulties. But Poland also had to face the difficult task of including an industrial region with a clearly defined regional identity and large German ethnic minority into its new nation-state. In the territory of German Silesia, from 1919 two separate provinces existed – Lower and Upper Silesia. The joining of both provinces into one, that of Silesia, took place as late as in 1938, but by 1941 both territories were again separated. The division of the province of Upper Silesia made the situation of its inhabitants worse, and Berlin tried to take advantage of this. The economic hardship and general ordeal of the Upper Silesians were used as a frequently repeated argument justifying the necessity to re-include Polish part of the province into Germany. In Lower Silesia the general situation was slightly better, yet even there the economy worsened following the announcement of the plebiscite results. The difficulties experienced by both provinces became more serious following the outbreak of a commercial war between Germany and Poland. Nonetheless, the Silesian economy adapted itself to the new conditions. Markets were to be found deep in Germany, and natural resources were obtained from the deposits of coalmines in

Wałbrzych (Waldenburg, Valdenburk, Valbřich), although they were much less rich than those in Upper Silesia.

The assumption of power by the National Socialist German Workers' Party under the leadership of Adolf Hitler only strengthened efforts to Germanize the whole of German Silesia. This was manifested not only in forcing its inhabitants to declare their affiliation to the German nation but also in the replacement of Slavonic geographical names with artificially created German ones. The historical coat of arms of Wrocław (Breslau, Vratislav) was transformed into one that was more in line with the 'German' spirit. As was the case throughout Germany, in the territories of Silesia mass persecutions of citizens of Jewish origin took place. Jews were deprived of both the right to work and their possessions, and their religious practices were hindered. During the Crystal Night (9th-10th November 1938) all over Silesia numerous acts of looting and destruction of Jewish property there took place as many Jewish homes and temples were burned down, including the largest 'New Synagogue' in Wrocław. Ethnic cleansing, which led to the slaughter of the majority of Jews residing in Silesia, continued until 1942.

The territories of Upper Silesia granted to Poland in 1921 were joined to form a separate voivodeship. It enjoyed a considerable autonomy within the country's administrative structure. The Silesian Voivodeship had its own parliament (Silesian Sejm) and treasury. In this territory Polish and German were to enjoy equal status as administrative languages. A fine illustration of the voivodeship's autonomy is the fact that in 1931 it was granted a loan from the U.S.A. without the agency of the central state authorities in Warsaw. Following the takeover of power in Poland by Marshal Józef Piłsudski in May 1926, the situation in the voivodeship started to change. The newly appointed voivode, Michał Grażyński, began a Polonisation programme and attempted to extend the influence of the central authorities. This was to lead to the development of the voivodeship being subservient to the interests of the entire country. The policy also focused on raising the status of migrants from central and eastern Poland at the expense of Upper Silesians, who were treated as a 'worse category' of Polish citizens, and their dialect was labelled an inferior variety of the Polish language. This resulted in a sense of disappointment and reluctance towards the Warsaw authorities on the part of the residents of Upper Silesia.

Taking advantage of the difficult situation of Czechoslovakia, on 1st October the Polish government annexed the Zaolzie, that is, the part of Cieszyn Silesia incorporated into the Czech state. This was motivated by the intention to secure the position of Poles; nonetheless, this does not change the fact that at that moment Czechoslovakia was divided by Poland and Germany. The outbreak of the Second

World War on 1st September 1939 had an especially major impact on the situation of Upper Silesians. 90 per cent of the population of the former Silesian Voivodeship was considered by Germans to be German and included in the so-called *Volkslist*. The remaining part of the population was forced to leave the territory of the Reich. Those who remained were subject to thorough verification with special attention to their political views. Those who favoured Poland, and, most of all, had taken part in the Silesian Uprisings, were in danger of serious reprisals, including capital punishment. Over 40,000 Upper Silesians were forced to join the German army. The former autonomy was revoked and the lands were included in the Upper Silesian province with the capital in Katowice (Kattowitz).

The military consequences of the war were fully felt by Silesians only at the turn of 1944 and 1945, when the province found itself under threat from the approaching Soviet army. The German authorities delayed issuing an order of evacuation for fear of the outbreak of panic. Eventually, the evacuation was launched in December 1944, right before the Soviets entered the territory of the Odra region. In the tragic conditions of a severely cold winter, the population of Silesia was evacuated to Czech, Austrian and Saxon territories. Due to the lack of railway carriages, columns of refugees, several dozen kilometres long, were forced to walk deep into Germany, devoid of support and provisions. During this dramatic migration tens of thousands Silesians died from exhaustion. As many as 90,000 Wrocław refugees were not to live through this ordeal.

For Silesia the Second World War ended on 6th May 1945 when, following the exhausting battles between the German and Soviet armies, the fortress of Wrocław finally surrendered. The formerly proud capital city of the province was utterly destroyed by both its defenders, whose tactics were to burn and pull down entire quarters, and by its invaders. The citizens gradually began to return to their homes, yet their future was uncertain, for the political affiliation of the territory was to be established by the Potsdam Peace Conference. Meanwhile, in the annexed lands a double administration was in operation: both Russian (military) and Polish (civil) governments. The German authorities east of the river Odra were dismissed. And, just as before the First World War, a heated dispute broke out over the southern border. However, this time no one intended to ask the inhabitants in what country they wanted to live. Their future was decided for them.

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Silesian administrative authorities and territorial transformations of Silesia (1918-1945)

Abstract:

The publication concerns conditions in the 19th and 20th centuries leading to the dissolution of Silesian unity as well as the viewpoints of German, Polish and Czechoslovakian political authorities regarding Silesian unity following World War I, while also taking into account the viewpoints of Church institutions. The text is an analysis and a summary of existing works on the subject matter, with the main area of interest being the analysis of legal, organizational and administrative institutions concerning their policies towards the dissolution of Silesian unity.
The latter half of the 19th century was chiefly responsible for the breakup of Silesian unity, due to the rise of the idea of nationalism leading to the idea of nation-states. The materialization of this idea in respect of Silesia, a region inhabited by three nations, two of which were then building their own states, could only mean the dissolution of the monolithic administrative structure erected within the Second German Reich. The realisation of these ideas was brought on by World War I, in whose wake the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Czechoslovakian were born, while the Second German Reich collapsed.

Keywords:

Silesia, administration, Church history, political life, interwar period

Introduction: political and legal factors behind the disintegration of the uniform province of Silesia

The defeat of the Wilhelmine Reich in the First World War brought about the final collapse of the territorial unity of Silesia; it has never been restored. After the war, German and Polish nationalisms clashed, which led to mutual hostilities and final decisions of the League of Nations in the Treaty of Versailles, which in consequence led to the division of Silesia into German and Polish parts. Initially, Germany consistently defended the idea of retaining its pre-war part of Silesia, putting forward various arguments, especially raising the issue of war reparations, which they allegedly could not repay without Upper Silesian industry[1]. The opportunity to establish a new border was supposed to be opened up by a plebiscite proclaimed by Article 88 of the Treaty

[1] Adam Galos, *Literatura historyczna o dziejach Górnego Śląska w latach 1918-1922 (próba ogólnego przeglądu),* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku. Okoliczności i następstwa,*eds Andrzej Brożek, Teresa Kulak, Wrocław 1996, p. 7 et seq., which refers to the work of Maxime Mourin, *Histoire des européens,* vol. 1, Paris 1962, pp. 54-55. Similar arguments were had already been used in

of Versailles[2]. Propaganda activities of the Polish side, which announced the granting of autonomy to the Polish part of Silesia through the Organic Statute of 15th July 1920, forced the German side to respond in kind by announcing their own law on the autonomy of Upper Silesia, which in turn led to the dissolution of the uniform Province of Silesia and the formation of two new units[3]. The defeat of Germany in the First World War thus intensified disintegrating factors in Upper Silesia that were closely related to the problems of Polish and Czech national minorities, although the situation in Europe at that time also encouraged many other national minorities to take action[4].

At the beginning of the Weimar Republic issues concerning Silesia were handled by temporary authorities that took over power during the German revolution, in particular the Central Council for the Province of Silesia, which was active in 1918-1919. The council had to solve the problem of how to retain power in Lower Silesia, but it also tried to seize power in Upper Silesia[5]. At that time a clear objective was to maintain the unity of the province, which was associated with attempts to create strongholds in Upper Silesia, especially in the Upper Silesian industrial district. Guidelines were created aimed specifically at campaigning against the agitation actions of the Polish side, and in this respect the German left-wing parties did not intend to differ substantially from the major right-wing parties. None of the major political forces abandoned the programme of maintaining the unity of Silesia[6]. The activities were organized by a central propaganda office created on 6th December 1918, whose aim was to focus on the eradication of Polish influence in Upper Silesia[7]. The elections to the Weimar National Assembly represented another opportunity to increase the activity of all Weimar political parties[8]. Most of the German political groups adopted

contemporary opinion journalism, see A. Galos, *op. cit.,* pp. 15-16, which mentions a number of works by Anglo-Saxon, French and Italian authors who succumbed to German economic pressure.

2 Dz. U. (Journal of Laws) of 1920, no. 35, item 200. A. Galos, *op. cit.,* p. 16 et seq. cites a vast number of post-war publications relating to the period of the Versailles Conference which allow us to trace how the concept of the unity of Silesia began to disappear due to political relations, when it turned out that as an outcome of the war some part of Silesia would be granted to Poland. What naturally emerged was the additional idea of also dividing German Silesia in order to minimize the risk of losing Upper Silesia to Poland.

3 The Constitutional Act of 15th July 1920 containing the Organic Statute for the Silesian Voivoidship, Dz. U. R.P. (Journal of Laws), no. 73, item 497. The literature on the autonomy of the Silesian Voivoidship in the Second Republic of Poland is enormous, see. Józef Ciągwa, *Autonomia Śląska (1922-1939),* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 157 et seq.

4 Manfred Alexander, *Ursachen der Integrations- und Desintegrationsprozesse nationaler Minderheiten in Grenzgebieten Europa,* [in:] *Podział Śląska,* p. 75 et seq.

5 Edmund Klein, *Rada ludowa we Wrocławiu. Centralna Rada dla Prowincji Śląskiej*, Warszawa-Opole 1976, p. 201 et seq.

6 *Ibidem,* p. 202.

7 *Ibidem,* p. 203.

8 *Ibidem,* p. 203, see also E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty niemieckiej w styczniu 1919 roku na Górnym Śląsku,* 'Studia Śląskie. Seria Nowa', 14 (1969), pp. 37-158.

a fairly common approach to counteracting the idea of incorporating Upper Silesia into Poland[9]. German clergy of the Catholic Church, whose position in Silesia was strong, advocated maintaining the unity of the Silesian Church by keeping one bishopric See for the whole province, in Wrocław (Breslau, Vratislav), on the German side[10]. Jewish group also opted for Silesia belonging to the German Reich, and engaged in anti-Polish activities to help achieve this goal[11]. Only the Lutheran Church was torn, as the political views of individual parishes were determined by the national affiliation of pastors[12].

It was hoped that the aspirations of a number social groups in Upper Silesia to incorporate the area into Poland would be mollified by the Silesian autonomous movement, but its political programme was poorly defined. The demands of this movement concentrated mostly on the right to use the Polish language[13]. The emergence of this demand was, however, of paramount importance, because autonomy meant tacit agreement on abandoning the idea of a united Silesia. The German side understood the potential consequences of losing Upper Silesia to Poland and to minimize this threat they were forced to abandon the most preferential solution, that is the unity of the province of Silesia. To retain German rule the authorities even turned to the hated Catholic clergy, which gave Catholic Upper Silesian politicians access to the positions of state administration for the first time since the *Kulturkampf*[14]. The fight with the Polish national movement was followed by conflict with the Czech movement, which aimed at the secession of southern Upper Silesia from Germany[15]. Thus, the development of Polish and Czechoslovak nationalisms made it impossible for the German state authorities to retain the whole region of Silesia.

In the final weeks of the First World War the activity of the Polish national movement in Upper Silesia began to grow. It was influenced by various groups, especially from the Kingdom of Poland[16]. The internationalist SDKPiL (the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania) called for the end of nationalist oppression

9 E. Klein, *Rada ludowa,* p. 210.

10 Jan Kopiec, Jerzy Myszor, *Główne problemy działalności Kościoła katolickiego na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1918-1925,* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 107 et seq.

11 E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* p. 216 et seq.

12 Rudolf Pastucha, *Kościół ewangelicko-augsburski (luterański) wobec powstań oraz plebiscytu na Górnym Śląsku 1919-1921*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 125 et seq.

13 *Ibidem,* p. 218.

14 *Ibidem,* p. 221 and 222; Günther Doose, *Die separatistische Bewegung in Oberschlesien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg (1918-1922),* Wiesbaden 1987, pp. 8-9.

15 E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* p. 223.

16 Kingdom of Poland was created during the Congress of Vienna of territories posessed by Russia. Therefore since 1815 Kingdom was in personal union with and since 1867 was administrative part of Russian Empire.

from Germany[17]. An opportunity to activate the Polish national movement was the June 1918 by-elections to the Reichstag in the district of Gliwice – Lubliniec (Gleiwitz, Hlivice – Lublinitz) where Wojciech Korfanty, the leader of the Poles in Upper Silesia, fought for a seat in the diet. Korfanty's victory came as a shock to the German right wing[18]. A lot of political forces claimed credit for the victory, especially the Catholic movement which Wojciech Korfanty was connected with. Moreover, a fierce battle for permission to use the Polish language in public places continued. The use of Polish was especially opposed by the German army[19].

In the final days of the war, when Maximilian of Baden, the last Chancellor, came to power, it became obvious that the Poles in Upper Silesia came under the famous Thirteenth Point of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's statement[20]. Both sides began to put forward claims to the largest part of Upper Silesia, which eventually made it impossible to maintain Silesia as a single territorial unit. The German side did not yet foresee the possibility of losing any part of Silesia, nor did they see the necessity of dividing it into two provinces in order to prevent losing territory to Poland[21]. After all, the Berlin authorities had a bad reputation in Upper Silesia, given their somewhat hostile attitude towards political Catholic parties[22]. However, the political changes in Germany under the rule of the last Wilhelminian Chancellor led to a liberalization of the domestic situation, which allowed the Poles to implement their own demands[23]. On the other hand, however, it gave rise to the resistance of the German side that was composed of various formations for the 'defence of the fatherland'[24].

At the time of the elections to the German National Assembly, most political forces within Germany did not agree to concessions for Poles living in Silesia. Anti-Polish attitudes were also present in the activities of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), including those related to the printing of public notices in Upper Silesia[25]. Paul Löbe, the chairman of the SPD in Silesia, was also careful in making statements[26]. Opposing opinions came from the breakaway Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD), which held more left-wing views and thus

[17] E. Klein, *Górny Śląsk w ostatnich tygodniach I wojny światowej,* 'Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis' (further referred to as: AUWr.) no. 908, series: Prawo CXLIX, Wrocław 1989, p. 77.

[18] *Ibidem,* p. 80 et seq. It was not the first victory of Korfanty in parliamentary elections: see Guido Hitze, *Carl Ulitzka (1873-1953) oder Oberschlesien zwischen den Weltkriegen/Carl Ulitzka (1873-1953) albo Górny Śląsk pomiędzy dwoma Wojnami Światowymi,* Düsseldorf 2002, p. 139 et seq.

[19] E. Klein, *Górny Śląsk,* p. 84 et seq.

[20] *Ibidem,* p. 89 et seq. G. Hitze, *op.cit.,* p. 173.

[21] E. Klein, *Górny Śląsk,* p. 100 et seq.

[22] G. Hitze, *op.cit.,* pp. 174-175.

[23] E. Klein, *Górny Śląsk,* p. 107 et seq.

[24] G. Hitze, *op.cit.,* p. 173.

[25] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty,* p. 72 et seq.

[26] G. Doose, *op. cit.,* p. 13.

demanded concessions for national minorities. This resulted from its strictly leftist and internationalist programme. But even USPD would not support territorial concessions to Poland, which may be exemplified by activity of some USPD members in the government authorities[27]. On the other hand, the Communist Party of Germany, which had only recently been formed, did not say much with regard to Upper Silesia; the party limited its statements to general issues concerning a proletarian revolution and the collapse of the system of national oppression, mainly because of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht[28].

The elections also activated other political groups, especially the Catholic Centre Party, which was extremely influential in Upper Silesian politics. After rejecting proposals of autonomy, the Centre Party spoke cautiously about the status of Silesia, choosing to argue in favour of retaining the status quo, that is leaving Silesia on the German side. The main 'face' of the Upper Silesian Centre Party was its leader, Carl Ulitzka, a prelate of Racibórz (Ratibor, Ratiboř) and also a Centre deputy to the National Assembly[29]. The son of a Silesian landowner and Korfanty's coeval chose, unlike the latter, the German option. They both remained in their respective positions as the leaders of the German and Polish Silesian people. The election campaign of the Centre Party focused on the protection of the Catholic Church, which it hoped would encourage the majority of the inhabitants of Upper Silesia to choose its programme[30]. The position of the German Democratic Party (DDP), which had supported the foundation of the Weimar Republic, is worth noting. With regard to the issue of whether Silesia should be divided, the DDP explicitly advocated against a split and for leaving the entire province of Silesia within Germany[31]. The agitation was also led by the far-right German National People's Party (DNVP), which was established on the ruins of the Conservative Party. In the matter of the German political system and the future of Silesia, DNVP leaders took a cautious stance[32]. Soon, however, the party applied the rhetoric of 'defence of the endangered Silesian German language'. By contrast, Polish groups were increasingly in favour of incorporating Upper Silesia into Poland, hence they demanded a boycott of the elections[33]. The German parties were definitely unfriendly or even hostile towards the actions of the Polish groups, as they were concerned that strong Polish actions would encourage decision-makers at Versailles

[27] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty,* pp. 77-79, G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 174 et seq.
[28] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty,* pp. 80-81; G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 191 et seq.
[29] G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 165 et seq. For information on his activities in the National Constituent Assembly see p. 197 et seq.
[30] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty,* pp. 81-94, especially from p. 87. G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 188 et seq.
[31] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty,* especially p. 101.
[32] *Ibidem,* p. 95 et seq.
[33] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty,* p. 113 et seq., G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 26 et seq.

to give Upper Silesia to Poland[34]. The way the situation developed was analogous to that of the elections to the Prussian National Assembly, which also took place in January 1919[35].

A clear propagandist manoeuvre was the advocation of the above-mentioned commissioner of the Prussian government to enter the *Regierungsbezirk* (governmental district) of Opole (Oppeln) in the spring of 1919. The candidate for this position had to be Catholic, have a deep understanding of Upper Silesian relations and the ability to speak Polish[36]. The goal was clearly to encourage the people of Upper Silesia to support the German side. The idea of establishing a commissioner was, for obvious reasons, supported by the Central People's Council, which urged the government in Berlin to quickly appoint a commissioner[37]. The appointment of Otto Hörsing was particularly supported by left-wing forces which hoped that, by not evoking such negative feelings as right-wing politicians among the Polish population, he would play an important role in the people of Upper Silesia warming to the idea of the whole region staying within the Reich. Fairly soon those desires of the German left wing were denounced by Polish nationalists, especially those of left-wing provenance[38]. It is difficult to determine conclusively whether the appointment of the commissioner had a significant impact on the subsequent events connected with the plebiscite and the disintegration of Silesia, yet his decisions arising from his social-democratic worldview often led to protests by Christian Democratic politicians and the religiously committed.

The German authorities were also more active during the peace conference at Versailles, hoping for a favourable course of events. What is more, at the conference the German side presented Upper Silesian experts who submitted opinions favourable to the Weimar Republic[39]. The key battleground was in propaganda and the fight lasted right up to the plebiscite. German authorities brought to Upper Silesia Western journalists, whose articles presented German point of view[40].

As the content of the Treaty of Versailles was formulating and becoming more evident for German authorities, the German side noticed that by the arbitrary decision of the Entente some areas in Lower Silesia would be granted to Poland and

[34] E. Klein, *Wybory do Konstytuanty…,* p. 123 et seq. G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 22 et seq.
[35] E. Klein, *Wybory do konstytucyjnego pruskiego zgromadzenia krajowego w styczniu 1919 r. na Górnym Śląsku,* 'AUWr. No 982, Prawo CLXI', 1988, p. 123 et seq.
[36] E. Klein, *Ustanowienie komisarza,* p. 91. Por also G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 47 et seq.
[37] E. Klein, *Ustanowienie komisarza,* p. 93.
[38] *Ibidem,* p. 109. The profile of the commissioner is presented by G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 223 et seq.
[39] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa, op. cit.,* p. 226. One of them was a leading politician, Matthias Erzberger, see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 209 et seq. On his murder see p. 567.
[40] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* pp. 228-229.

Czechoslovakia[41]. Thus Silesia was beginning to be torn apart by three countries[42]. The most important part, however, was Upper Silesia, where the British delegates managed to force through a plebiscite, despite the proposals of the Cambon commission which were more favourable to Poland. Increasingly gaining in strength was the autonomist movement, which at that time was already divided into two groups: pro-German and pro-Polish, both of which viewed the plebiscite as a chance to attract undecided people[43]. At the same time, under the influence of the SPD, which opposed the expansion of autonomy, a project to establish Upper Silesia as a separate province took its final form, which was strongly supported by the Centre Party in particular[44].

The initial period of the Weimar Republic was particularly important for the development of separatist ideas. On the one hand, it was buoyed by the resistance to changes taking place in Berlin, where revolution was taking place, and the idea of detachment from 'red Germany' was positively received by financial and economic circles in Silesia. On the other hand, in many German *Länder* (states) a separatist movement was spreading, which, to some extent, have remained strong in Saxony and Bavaria until today. In November 1918 Silesian separatist agents proposed the creation of a southern new state for the local *Länder* in order to sever ties with 'red Prussia'[45]. There were also utopian plans to create a new state of Silesia with its own government, army and police, which would be able to fight the Poles and the Czechs[46]. Some believed that Berlin should agree to secession because it would be easier to defend the integrity of German Silesia against the demands of Poland and Czechoslovakia[47]. The contemporary view that the Poles and Czechs would be satisfied with cultural, linguistic and religious autonomy, which was particularly propagated by the Centre Party, seems quite naive[48]. Nevertheless, the idea was effectively sold at the end of December 1918 by Silesian local state authorities to the authorities in Berlin, under the premise that they would renounce separatism when the Reich government

[41] *Ibidem,* p. 236. Cf Tomasz Kruszewski, *Zmiany podziału terytorialnego na Śląsku w XIX i XX w.* Wrocław 1999 (=AUWr., no 2144, series: Prawo CCLXIV, *Studia historycznoprawne*), pp. 171-194. See also Dan Gawrecki, *Československo a Horní Slezsko 1918-1921,* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 85 et seq.

[42] See Wojciech Wrzesiński, *Śląsk między Polską, Niemcami a Czechosłowacją w latach międzywojennych,* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 177 et seq.

[43] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa*,p. 238 et seq.

[44] *Ibidem,* p. 244-245. The views of the Centre Party are discussed in detail by G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 51 et seq.

[45] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* pp. 248-249; G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 10, especially p. 36 and further.

[46] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* p. 251. For more on this issue see G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 90 et seq.

[47] Contradictions of the views on Upper Silesia between the governments of the Reich and Prussia are discussed by G. Doose, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-72.

[48] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* p. 252, G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 184 et seq.

acknowledged the autonomy of Silesia, as indeed was later realized on a verbal level[49]. It should also be remembered that the communist element was strong, especially in Upper Silesia, and although it admittedly did not hold a unanimous view on the future of Silesia, the more internationalist factions supported the idea of self-rule of the people, which meant consent to the loss of part of the territory of Silesia to neighbouring countries[50].

The end of 1918 brought a more significant activation of the movement for Silesian autonomy for which the Catholic confession of the most Upper Silesian residents was a fertile ground. The initiators of this movement were, however, people of Polish origin: Edward Latacz, a lawyer from Wodzisław Śląski (Loslau); Alojzy Pronobis of Bytków (Bittkow), and Jan and Tomasz Reginek, two brothers of which the latter was a priest[51]. Before long they all began to quarrel as their visions of autonomy diverged. Latacz called for the creation of an independent state of Upper Silesia with close ties to Germany, and, despite his Polish origin, his biggest fear was that Upper Silesia would be incorporated into Poland[52]. Pronobis held a different view, believing that the best solution would be to create a Polish-German Autonomous Republic of Upper Silesia, which would evoke memories of the old Piast duchy and yet still be part of the Land of the Reich. The Reginek brothers, on the other hand, looked to the Habsburg legacy and, together with Austrian Silesia, they wanted to create a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic state modelled on Switzerland. The brothers, however, remained under the influence of Polish culture and they eventually opted for incorporating Upper Silesia into Poland on the basis of autonomy[53]. Finally, two groups of autonomists emerged: one had a vision of an autonomous state within Germany and the other within Poland. The first group included Hans Lukaschek, a well-known Christian Democrat politician[54].

The existence and further development of the autonomous movement was associated with the contemporary political situation. The idea of autonomy was very seductive and, in consequence, most of the leading German and Polish politicians in

[49] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* p. 253, G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 172 et seq.

[50] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* chapter X, p. 259 and further.

[51] G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 17 et seq. (for the views of the Reginek brothers: pp. 90-95), E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu autonomicznego w listopadzie i grudniu 1918 roku*, Wrocław 1992 (=AUWr., No. 1044, Prawo CCXV, *Studia historycznoprawne*), Wrocław 1992, p. 143. Latacz and the Reginek brothers, being autonomists, were closely observed by the leader of the Centre Party, C. Ulitzka, see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 177 et seq.

[52] G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 177 et seq.

[53] E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* p. 144. The brothers were also seeking suport in Prague, see G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 28 et seq.; G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 189 et seq.

[54] E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* p. 145; G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 224, for his profile see p. 252 et seq.

Upper Silesia used it to attract people of the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole (Oppeln, Opolí) to one of these options. One such party was the above-mentioned Central Council, which often supported the actions of the autonomists[55]. The Council, which brought together leftist forces, viewing them as the most effective weapon against German nationalists, regarded Pronobis's proposal to be the most practical at the turn of 1918 and 1919. At a conference in Kędzierzyn (Kandrzin, Kandřín) (December 1918) self-government representatives from Upper Silesia considered all three of the above-mentioned solutions to be equivalent, but in the vote that subsequently took place only a few activists supported the ideas of Latacz and Pronobis; the majority were in favour of the plan put forward by the Reginek brothers, that is creating a state modelled on Switzerland[56]. At the same time, the autonomists were forced to take into account a third factor: the Czech nationalist movement. When trying to communicate with the President of Czechoslovakia, Thomas Masaryk, they got a cool reception. The Czechs had their eyes on the southern part of the district (Kreis, *powiat*) of Racibórz and the autonomists' ideas were a threat to that aim[57].

At the turn of 1918 and 1919 the idea of separating Upper Silesia continued to spread rapidly under the patronage of the Central Council but eventually, at the beginning of1920, the Centre Party-the most important political force of the region-abandoned the idea of detachment from Germany, thus marking the dawn of the idea of political autonomy[58]. Moreover, in January 1919 the Union of Upper Silesians emerged, which became the dominant organisation of the autonomists[59]. Its conflict with the Centre party began to escalate[60]. The Centre Party, led by prelate Carl Ulitzka, institgated an active campaign in various European capitals[61].

The chaotic political situation ended on 7th May 1919 in Versailles when the original draft of the peace treaty was released. The treaty provided for the return of the majority of Upper Silesia to Poland, which led major political parties in the region to support the idea of a centralist nation-state with its capital in Berlin. The separatist movement in Silesia began to dwindle and was gradually replaced by agents solely

[55] E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* p. 153 et seq. It is accurately described by G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 73 et seq.

[56] E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* p. 157. On the conference in Kędzierzyn see also G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 41 et seq. G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 167 et seq. On the policy of the Central Council as well as the views of Latacz and the Reginek brothers see p. 73 and further. On the role of Ulitzka see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 183 et seq. On further actions of Pronobis see *ibidem,* p. 288 et seq.

[57] E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* p. 158.

[58] E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* p. 170. Abandoning of the international autonomy by the Centre is described in detail by G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 150 et seq.

[59] Its programme is discussed in detail by G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 110 et seq. On the role of C. Ulitzka see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 233 et seq.

[60] G. Doose, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-131.

[61] Biography of C. Ulitzka is presented by G. Hitze, *op. cit.* See also G. Doose, *op. cit.*, p. 161 et seq.

conveying the ideas of autonomy[62]. The activities of the Centre Party, led by Carl Ulitzka, also began to evolve in that direction[63]. A resolution adopted in Kędzierzyn on 10th September 1919, which Ulitzka called the 'Magna Carta for the solution of the Upper Silesian issue', held symbolic importance. This autonomous programme, however, was critically received by other political groups[64]. What also grew stronger was the opposition from supporters of national separatism in Upper Silesia, who defended the Polish dialect *(Wasserpolnisch).* After the First Silesian Uprising a majority of these supporters opted for autonomy within the Polish state[65].

It is clear, then, that a series of important political events after the First World War led to the disintegration of a uniform province. It was not possible to maintain the unity of Silesia, which was ultimately confirmed by the course of the three following Silesian Uprisings[66].

Summary of the views of administrative authorities on the division of Silesia after the First World War

The purpose of this discussion is to present the views of the state and local administration in the province of Silesia on the unity and disintegration of Silesia[67]. However, there will be no direct references to the views of particular political parties. This issue is well-established in the literature, both for right-wing, centrist and left-wing parties[68]. What has not been researched as much is the position of those parties as expressed by their representatives in the administrative and self-government bodies in Silesia, which will be presented here and supplemented by references to the shorthand reports of the provincial diets (*sejmy*) of both Silesian provinces.

The division of Silesia after the First World War was not settled at Versailles, but became a logical consequence of the plebiscite provided for in Article 88 of the

[62] E. Klein, *Rada Ludowa,* pp. 256-258. An interesting discussion on the settlements of the Treaty of Versailles for Upper Silesia compared to other similar decisions of the peace conference is presented by Andrzej Brożek, *Sposoby regulowania zmian granicznych w Europie po I wojnie światowej,* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 63 et seq.

[63] The Upper Silesian issue is discussed in great detail in G. Hitze, *op. cit.,* p. 203 et seq. On participation of Ulitzka in the proceedings see p. 227 et seq.

[64] G. Doose, *op. cit.,* pp. 165-173.

[65] *Ibidem,* p. 174 et seq. Accumulation of these opinions is presented by G. Hitze, *op. cit.,* p. 225 et seq.

[66] The literature concerning these events is immense. Part of it is collected by A. Galos, *op. cit.,* p. 23 et seq. The propaganda activities of both sides are discussed by Waldemar Grosch, *Deutsche und polnische Propaganda während der Volksabstimmung in Oberschlesien 1919-1921,* Dortmund 2002.

[67] The overall picture of the events is presented by Marek Czapliński, Elżbieta Kaszuba, Gabriela Wąs, Rościsław Żerelik, *Historia Śląska, W*rocław 2002, p. 352 et seq.

[68] A. Galos, *op. cit.,* p. 22 et seq. remains the most important literature regarding the standpoints of Deutschnationale Volkspartei, Deutsche Volkspartei, the Centre Party and the leftist parties.

Treaty of Versailles. It was organized on 20th March 1921, and after the Third Silesian Uprising it led to the final division of the province of Upper Silesia which had been established in October 1919 by Poland and Germany[69]. By the Act of 14th October 1919, the province of Silesia ceased to exist and was replaced by two new provinces: the *Regierungsbezirke* of Legnica (Liegnitz, Lehnice) and Wrocław created the province of Lower Silesia with its capital in Wrocław, whereas the area of the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole was transformed into the province of Upper Silesia with its capital in Opole (the seat of self-government was Racibórz)[70]. The law was passed by the Prussian National Assembly *(Landesversammlung)* and started a several-year-long process of dividing Silesia. At the same time two processes began: on the one hand – the division of Silesia between Poland and Germany; on the other hand – the creation of the provinces of Lower and Upper Silesia within Germany[71].

The dissolution of the Province of Silesia was triggered by the defeat of the Reich in the First World War. The Germans, who accepted with reservation the proposals to detach the whole area of the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole from Germany propagated at Versailles by the Polish delegation, started counterpropaganda activity through the Act of 14th October 1919 on the establishment of a separate Province of Upper Silesia[72], but as early as autumn 1918 some political agents in Berlin had put forward ideas of granting autonomy to Upper Silesia[73]. The next step was the appointment of Friedrich Otto Hörsing as commissioner of the Reich and Prussia in Upper Silesia, who was associated with the German left wing and believed in halting the aspirations of Poles in Silesia to separate Upper Silesia from Germany. All such activities were aimed at gaining support for the government from the people of the new Province of Upper Silesia[74].

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69 On the plebiscite and the clash of both nations see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 346 et seq.

70 There is a lot of literature on the division of the Province of Silesia. Cf, for instance, Gerhard Webersinn, *Die Provinz Oberschlesien. Ihre Entstehung und der Aufbau der Selbstverwaltung*, 'Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität zu Breslau', 14 (1969), p. 275 et seq. The 70th anniversary of the division was marked by the publication of articles from the conference on this event in the form of the above-mentioned collective work, *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku*.

71 The final demarcation of the territories of the two new provinces was introduced with a bill of 25th July 1923, *Preussische Gesetzsammlung* (further referred to as *PGS*), Jg. 1923, p. 354; Cf G. Webersinn, *op. cit.*, p. 299 et seq.

72 *PGS*, Jg. 1919, p. 169: *Gesetz betreffend Errichtung einer Provinz Oberschlesien.*

73 G. Webersinn, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-278, E. Klein, *Początki górnośląskiego ruchu,* pp. 141-177. On the standpoint of the Central Council on the issue of Upper Silesian self-determination see G. Doose, *op.cit.*, p. 135 et seq.

74 For more information on Hörsing see G. Webersinn, *op.cit.*, p. 278 et seq., and also E. Klein, *Ustanowienie komisarza rządu państwa pruskiego dla rejencji opolskiej na wiosnę 1919 r.*, AUWr., No. 1277, Prawo CXCVII (SHP), 1992,, pp. 89-121. On the conflict between Ulitzka and Hörsing see G. Hitze, *op.cit.*, p. 241 et seq.

The ideas of statutory autonomy were continued to be conveyed by prelate Ulitzka, who frequently sent reminders to Berlin. At that time, the views on autonomy expressed by both governments were converging in Berlin[75]. The activities of the Centre Party did not stop even during the plebiscite [76].

The German side had for a long time not seen the propaganda benefits of the Polish law – the Organic Statute for the Silesian Voivodeship of 15th July 1920 – and only after three uprisings and the plebiscite did the *Preussische Landtag* (Prussian representative assembly) in Berlin also pass a law on the autonomy of Upper Silesia[77]. In contrast to the Polish act, the German law turned out to be little more than a political ploy. It envisaged special protection of the rights of national minorities. It was adopted during a period of rebuilding the German administration, which German nationalists used to unleash post-plebiscite terror on the areas not allocated to Poland[78].

Maintaining a united province of Silesia was not possible mainly due to the Upper Silesian plebiscite announced at the proceedings of the Versailles conference. It was feared that some, yet unknown, part of Silesia would be granted to Poland. Those concerns and the efforts to discourage the participants of the plebiscite to vote for Poland, led to the idea of splitting the region into two provinces. For this reason, the idea of a united Silesia was abandoned for pragmatic reasons, that is for fear of the results of the plebiscite.

To understand the views on the dual division of Silesia (separation of the Polish Silesian Voivodeship and the division of the German Silesia into two provinces) after the First World War it is worth recalling-by way of introduction-the most important administrative authorities in Silesia[79]. The views of the governments of the Reich and Prussia in this respect were realised by two-because of the division of Silesia into two new units, provinces – *Oberpräsidents* (high presidents) of the province. In the Province of Lower Silesia the *Oberpräsidents* were, successively: Hermann Zimmer (1920–1928), Hermann Lüdemann (1928-1933) and Helmuth Brückner, a *Gauleiter*

[75] G. Doose, *op.cit.*, p. 183 et seq.

[76] *Ibidem,* pp. 193-203. The literature on the plebiscite is immense. Essential information on this subject can be found in works on the overall history of Silesia, see Arno Herzig, Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Małgorzata Ruchniewicz, *Śląsk i jego dzieje*, Wrocław 2012 (original title: Arno Herzig, *Schlesien. Das Land und Seine Geschichte in Bildern, Texten und Dokumenten*, Hamburg 2008), p. 194 et seq.

[77] *PGS*, Jg. 1922, p. 205, *Gesetz betreffend die Regelung der Selbstständigkeitsrechte der Provinz Oberschlesien. Vom 25. Juli 1922.*

[78] On the conflict between Ulitzka and Korfanty, see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 256 et seq. For the following period see p. 281 et seq. The former one was referred to by some as a 'German Korfanty', see *ibidem*, p. 267. On the terror see p. 369 et seq.

[79] That division was basically threefold, if we mention the southern part of the district (powiat, Kreis) of Racibórz (the so-called Hlučín Region) assigned to Czechoslovakia.

(party leader) of the Silesian district of NSDAP (1933-1934)[80]. In the Province of Upper Silesia the first was the commissary *Oberpräsident* Joseph Bitta, then Alfons Proske, and, finally, the above-mentioned Lukaschek (from May 1929)[81].

This chapter is naturally focused on local self-governing agents, because they were the only fully internal factor in the territorial integration and disintegration of the Province of Silesia. The most important authorities, in the sense that their views on the unity of Silesia were the most important, were the provincial diets of both German provinces. The introduction of a new order in Upper Silesia was, however, put on hold until the plebiscite. These types of legal solutions were imposed by the Treaty of Versailles and the consonant provisions of the Weimar Constitution (Article 167). On the basis of this regulation, the *Reichstag* passed a law for Upper Silesia, which was intended to be a counterpropaganda reaction to the Polish Organic Statute for the Silesian Voivodeship of 15th July 1920. The German law was passed by the *Reichstag* on 25th December 1920, and it suspended German and Prussian law on Upper Silesia until two months after the division of the plebiscite areas as decided at the Conference of Ambassadors of the League of Nations[82]. This meant elimination of the current Silesian provincial diet and replacing it with two new ones.

The basic rules of the operation of provincial diets resulted from the Constitution of Prussia of 30th November 1920. Article 71 of that constitution still projected the division of Prussia into provinces, and the following provision guaranteed the diets the privileges of local government bodies (maintaining, however, state supervision). Article 73 guaranteed rights to national minorities[83]. To explore the views of political parties functioning in the period of the Weimar Republic in Silesia one must remember the most important representative bodies, namely, the provincial diets of both new provinces. The system of the diets of that period did not differ significantly from the previous one of 1876-1919. This resulted from the fact that until the

[80] On the profile of Zimmer see E. Klein, *Rada ludowa*, p. 40, 41, 69, 73, 167, 343 and 385. Cf also Teresa Kulak, *Propaganda antypolska dolnośląskich władz prowincjonalnych w latach 1922-1925*, Wrocław 1981, p. 19 et seq. For more information on Brückner see Karl Höffkes, *Hitlers politische Generale. Die Gauleiter des Dritten Reiches. Ein biographisches Nachschlagewerk*, Tübingen 1986, p. 37 et seq., T. Kruszewski, *Partia narodowosocjalistyczna na Śląsku w latach 1933-1945. Organizacja i działalność*, Wrocław 1995, pp. 64-66; P.W. Jakubaschk, *Helmuth Brückner, sein Kampf und Sieg um Schlesien*, Hirschberg 1933, pp. 143-147; Helmut Neubach, *Parteien und Politiker in Schlesien*, Dortmund 1988, p. 202 et seq.

[81] The profiles of Bitta, Proske and Lukaschek are developed by G. Webersinn, *op.cit.*, p. 286, 302 and 325. Detailed data concerning these people are also included by G. Hitze, *op.cit.*, *passim*, e.g. on the appointment of Lukaschek see p. 723 et seq.

[82] *Reichsgesetzblatt*, I (further referred to as *RGBl I*), Jg. 1920, p. 1987; Cf G. Webersinn, *op.cit.*, p. 291 et seq. Polish and German propaganda concerning autonomy is discussed by W. Grosch, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-182.

[83] *PGS*, Jg. 1920, p. 543, *Verfassung des Freistaats Preußen. Vom 30. November 1920, Abschnitt VIII. Die Selbstverwaltung*. See also G. Webersinn, *op.cit.*, p. 294 et seq. Art. 73 concerned the so-called legislative autonomy, and Art. 72 concerned administrative autonomy.

dissolution of the diets in 1933 the system was still determined by the provincial electoral law (PO) of 29th June 1875. The only rules which changed completely concerned the election of deputies to provincial diets (Article 74)[84]. The PO regulations of 1875 were repealed in the Weimar Republic and replaced by the principle of four-point electoral law. Those regulations were later changed three times, in 1920, 1925 and 1929. The culmination of this trend was to be a law of autonomy for the Province of Upper Silesia adopted by the Prussian Diet on 25th July 1922[85]. It allowed, in accordance with the political programme of the People's Catholic Party (the Centre Party), for the freedom of the *Oberpräsident*, the president of the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole and the chairman of the provincial college school to take decisions towards maintaining the religious and ethnic freedom of the people, in accordance with Articles 72 and 73 of the Constitution of Prussia.

An important part in the adoption of this law was played by the 59th common diet for both established provinces, which at its first session in April 1921 became the subject of a fierce debate on this issue. The first step on that road was a parliamentary committee report, whose rapporteur was Axel von Freytagh-Loringhoven, one of the most prominent politicians of the monarchist German National People's Party (DNVP)[86]. This took place at the session on 8th April 1921[87]. That renowned scholar could not put aside his deep right-wing worldview while presenting views on that issue. Digressing to legal matters incomprehensible to some members of the left, he tried to fit the drafted act into the regulations of the Constitution of Prussia, Article 70 of which referred to local government, drawing attention to the tasks performed strictly by local government and other tasks commissioned by government authorities. He spent a lot of time dwelling on the duality of state and local government. To understand the views of conservatives on the announced changes to the political system, it should also be borne in mind that there was significant manoeuvring in the ongoing political turmoil of the time. On the one hand, Axel von Freytagh-Loringhoven was on the side which sought to strengthen state power, but on the other hand, he saw that it was necessary to reduce tensions between state and society. Coming from Russian

[84] For more information see T. Kruszewski, *Sejm prowincjonalny na Śląsku (1824-1933), W*rocław 2000, p. 389 et seq.

[85] *PGS*, Jg. 1922, p. 205; Cf G. Webersinn, *op.cit.*, p. 294 et seq.

[86] T. Kruszewski, *Axel von Freytagh-Loringhoven – profesor prawa narodów na Uniwersytecie Wrocławskim*, [in:] *Nauka i nauczanie prawa w dziejach,* ed. T. Kruszewski, Wrocław 2011, pp. 91-100.

[87] *Verhandlungen des 1. Niederschlesischen Provinziallandtagep. 1. Tagung vom 3. bis 6. und 8. April 1921, 2. Tagung – 21. April 1921,* (further referred to as *I NSL*), *Stenographischer Bericht über die Verhandlungen des 1. Niederschlesischen Provinziallandtages, des (59) Oberschlesischen Provinziallandtages und Gemeinsamen 59. Schlesischen Provinziallandtages*, no. 6, 8. April 1921, p. 141 et seq.

lands, he feared that a conflict similar to the October Revolution, still fresh in his mind, could take place. In the end, the rapporteur was torn: on the one hand he saw the usefulness of autonomous solutions, but on the other hand he feared that separatists could use that autonomy for their own purposes. He was thinking, of course, of the Polish national movement, though he did not state that explicitly.

Other parties had not yet joined the debate, and pursuant to the resolution of 13th April 1921, the draft was submitted to the committee for further work[88]. The debate, limited though it was, took place only at the second session of that diet, which lasted from 21st to 25th March 1922, when work on the bill in Berlin was well under way[89]. The discussion was once again dominated by the above-mentioned Count von Keyserlingk, the former Minister of the Reich[90]. As one of the two rapporteurs of the special committee he spoke out against the bill on provincial autonomy, mainly for financial reasons. Supported by reliable calculations, he claimed that the act was unfeasible due to the lack of resources at the disposal of the provinces, and he claimed the promises of increasing them by 50% were false, as they were not followed by any specific activities. Summing up his argument in five points, he rejected the bill on behalf of the committee for the following reasons: 1. although the idea of extending provincial autonomy was right, it was unfeasible without undertaking a reform of government and municipal administration, as well as economic reform; 2. the proposal to make the province responsible for enforcing compliance with the law should be rejected (only the state should perform this task), and in fact the existing scope of provincial government should be retained or expanded; 3.the bill's proposal to transfer administrative powers to local government bodies was a positive step; 4. the advisory bodies created by the bill were insufficient, and the participation of the provincial government in the activities of the state should be expanded; 5. if the bill entered into force, much more money should be provided, otherwise the bill would not be realized.

88 *Ibidem,* no. 8, p. 209.

89 *Ibidem, Stenographischer Bericht über die Verhandlungen des 1. Niederschlesischen Provinziallandtages, des (59) Oberschlesischen Provinziallandtages und Gemeinsamen 59. Schlesischen Provinziallandtagep. – 2. Tagung – (21. bis 25. März 1922). Nr. 12, 24. März 1922*, p. 340 et seq.

90 Robert graf von Keyserlingk-Cammerau was born on 10th March 1866 in Munich and died in 1959. He was a prominent lawyer, ministerial director and co-founder of the DNVP. His first reached the upper echelons of the party in 1910 when he was appointed the president of the Regierungsbezirk of Królewiec (Königsberg, Královec). During the First World War, in 1915-1917 he was the ministerial director in the Prussian Ministry of Agriculture. In 1917 he was appointed an adviser to the General Quartermaster of the Army, General Erich von Ludendorff in the Headquarters. Then, in the years 1917-1918 he was the Reich Commissioner for Lithuania. During the Weimar Republic he was a member of the organization of employers in agriculture between 1921 and 1933, and in 1927 he became a member of the Prussian State Council. In 1932 he supported with Hindenburg the appointment of Hitler to the position of chancellor.

Additional remarks were provided by the second rapporteur, Ulrich Burmann of the SPD and the first mayor of Bolesławiec (Bunzlau, Boleslav, Slezská Boleslav). He expanded on the somewhat laconic remarks of his predecessor, drawing attention to the social and financial aspects and noting the inconsistencies of the government project.

In 1922 the Centre Party, under the active leadership of Carl Ulitzka, called for the establishment of a separate Upper Silesian country within the German Reich. Those views were not supported in political journalism that did not share Christian Democratic ideas, especially that which centred around the DNVP[91]. A conflict with Polish minority groups was also beginning to take shape. Ulitzka was especially keen during the drafting of the bill to expand the autonomy of the Province of Upper Silesia. Most of all he confronted the DNVP, as is clear from his famous quote: 'The enemy stands on the right'[92].

On 3rd September 1922, after the act entered into force, a referendum was held in which the inhabitants of the Province of Upper Silesia were asked whether they would like to remain within Prussia, or to form a separate country of the Reich. This took place after the decision to split the plebiscite area between Germany and Poland. The vast majority of the voters (513,126 versus 50,400 representing the opposite view) opted for the first alternative[93]. This meant the defeat of the autonomists and it limited their activities, even though it did not lead to a complete cessation of their actions [94].

The stance of Lower Silesian authorities towards the disintegration of an united Province of Silesia

During the period of the Weimar Republic, the provincial government in Lower Silesia persisted in its extremely negative assessment of the division of the Province of Silesia. The idea of a united Silesia was ruined by nationalist ideas. German nationalism, which consistently optied for keeping the whole of Silesia in German hands, clashed with a new Polish nationalism which sought to recover the biggest possible part of Silesia. This led to an even further division of the Province of Silesia into two provinces. It should be remembered that two conflicts coincided with one another – an internal German fight between both provinces, accompanied by propaganda attacks

[91] G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 532 et seq.
[92] *Ibidem,* pp. 548-559. Quoted from p. 547.
[93] G. Webersinn, *op.cit.*, p. 292; the turnout was 74 percent. A broad political overview of the struggle to create an autonomous land is presented by G. Doose, *op.cit.*, p. 209 et seq.
[94] G. Doose, *op.cit.*, p. 244 et seq.

on the existence of the Polish part of Upper Silesia. For the issue of the disintegration of Silesia's unity discussed in this chapter, it seems important to present the stance of political parties sitting in the provincial diets. The provincial authorities of Lower Silesia did not focus solely on local attacks, but, following the lead of central institutions, they attacked the Polish state as a whole. A special role in this field was played by the Institute of Eastern Europe in Wrocław[95]. Of interest for this chapter are those arguments which clearly indicated the importance of the loss of the Upper Silesian coal basin, as well as those regarding the loss of markets for Silesian goods[96]. At the same time, it should be remembered that the whole period of the Weimar Republic was characterized by the dissemination of propaganda against Poland. Provincial authorities could act through social and scientific organizations, spreading the idea of 'the Great Silesia region'. This included even archaeologists who, engaged in a fight with Polish colleagues, were asked to find evidence for the alleged German influence of prehistoric Silesia[97].

Authorities of both German provinces shared an aversion to the existence of the Silesian Voivodeship. When the post-uprising terror had finished, the Province of Upper Silesia began to pursue a policy of Germanization against Polish minorities. But the majority of anti-Polish actions came from the Province of Lower Silesia.

The clash of German and Polish nationalisms in the interwar period grew ever deeper. The German side carefully analysed the slogans in Poland that proclaimed that in future they could acquire the entire area of Upper Silesia. Such views were expressed by Polish journalists and were treated by Germany as a threat to their territory[98]. In response, German journalists warned their readers of the threat of a potential 'Slavicisation of the German East'. Perhaps the mildest articles of this nature were those published in the press connected with the SPD[99].

The views of the authorities in Silesia had not undergone any significant changes until the collapse of the Weimar Republic, but they clearly differentiated. The local government of Lower Silesia focused on current operations and their only activity towards counteracting the deepening division of Silesia was a successful sabotage of the actions of the Province of Upper Silesia on the division of the joint institutions which had not yet been divided. However, the government authorities at all times supported various anti-Polish activities that particularly escalated under the influence of minister Gottfried Treviranus, who in his public speeches called Poland 'a seasonal

[95] T. Kulak, *op. cit.*, p. 52 et seq.
[96] *Ibidem,* p. 70 et seq.
[97] *Ibidem,* p. 81 et seq.
[98] *Ibidem,* p. 87 et seq.
[99] *Ibidem,* p. 95 et seq.

state'[100]. Such actions took a variety of forms, including even cartography. A greater number of various maps of an anti-Polish nature were printed, indicating losses in many political, demographic, and economic spheres resulting from the creation of the Silesian Voivodeship[101]. The authorities of the Province of Lower Silesia also supported practical activities, such as lectures, revisionist meetings, political demonstrations, exhibitions, presentations of photographs and slides. The media was also utilized, including films, radio and the press, and propaganda trips to the German–Polish border were also highly popular[102].

The examples provided here do not represent an exhaustive list of actions. It should also be noted that both central and local, self government authorities participated in some of them. An example of this are the visits of Western diplomats, accompanied by staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One regular member of such parties was Georg von Thaer, the country starost (*Landeshauptman von Niederschlesien*), who expressed clear anti-Polish views to representatives of foreign diplomatic posts[103]. Business circles were also employed to help make a case against Poland, which was not difficult because of the anti-Polish attitudes frequently expressed by industrialists and landowners (a prominent politician of the DNVP, Robert graf von Keyserlingk-Cammerau and his wife are often mentioned)[104].

It is worth noting that the political actors in Lower Silesia in the initial period of the Weimar Republic were not reconciled to the collapse of the unity of the province. For them, a sufficient shock was the loss of Silesian Voivodeship and – if it depended on them – they would never allow for the creation of the Province of Upper Silesia[105]. The reverse perspective on the process came from the authorities of Upper Silesia, who emphasized the usefulness of the division to release them from the dominance of the other province. The dispute, which was mainly played out in the press, was especially serious in the 1920s, when both provinces held their positions. The Silesian authorities also prevailed in attacking the existence of the Polish part of Silesia.

The first half of the 1920s saw the collapse of the idea of a united Silesia within Germany. The sole guardian of this bankrupt idea was the provincial diet of Lower Silesia, which could not come to terms with the end of the uniform Province of Silesia. Lower Silesian deputies were supported also by the press in this regard. However, the Upper Silesian press supported Upper Silesian diet in the fight for the overall

[100] *Ibidem,* pp. 130, 180-182. A popular slogan in Poland was *'Treviranus upadł na nus'* ('Treviranus fell on his nose').
[101] *Ibidem,* pp. 130-152.
[102] *Ibidem,* pp. 152-177.
[103] *Ibidem,* p. 179 et seq.
[104] *Ibidem,* p. 195.
[105] For more information on this subject see *ibidem.,* p. 24 et seq.

distribution of the assets of local government[106]. In addition to economic reasons, the disintegration of the unity of Silesia also had a political basis. The Upper Silesian provincial diet fought for the division of joint property, accusing its Lower Silesian counterpart of sabotaging the division. The latter often cited reasons of economic efficiency when claiming to the Upper Silesian diet that some institutions would not meet the economic criteria for independent existence after the division[107].

The stance of Upper Silesian authorities towards the disintegration of a united Province of Silesia

The local government of Upper Silesia frequently expressed clear pro-separatist opinions[108]. They were in favour of the division as it would form a basis for self-government of the new province. The political practice of the province was clearly associated with the views of the Centre Party, and in particular its leader, Carl Ulitzka, who, in his own words, sought to combine Christianity with politics[109]. One of his political slogans concerned nationalist issues which always included a religious element: 'a nation is a community established by God'[110].

The factors which distinguished Upper and Lower Silesia clearly influenced the policy of the government of the Province of Upper Silesia. It differed significantly from the other due to the dominance of a different religious confession, which often covered another national affiliation. A significant number of residents of the Province of Upper Silesia were concerned that in the case of a unification of both provinces they would find themselves under the existing dominance of the Lower Silesian Protestants. The existence of a separate province seemed to be an effective barrier against a repetition of the anti-Catholic policy of the Second Reich. Many politicians still remembered Chancellor Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. Support was provided to the local governments of Upper Silesia by politicians of Polish descent. This was especially true of the group that was of Polish origin but opted for Germany. Their surnames, and sometimes first names, were still Polish, they spoke mostly a Silesian dialect of Polish, but their sense of national awareness was quite labile and tended towards at the German cultural community. On the other hand, politicians that consciously viewed themselves as members of the Polish

[106] *Ibidem,* p. 27 et seq.
[107] *Ibidem,* p. 29 et seq.
[108] For a general description of the province see *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka i kultura europejskiego regionu,* eds Joachim Bahlcke, Dan Gawrecki, Ryszard Kaczmarek, Gliwice 2011, p. 228 et seq.
[109] For more detailed information on the subject see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, p. 560 et seq.
[110] *Ibidem,* p. 805 et seq.

minority also supported the autonomy of the Province of Upper Silesia, considering it a decent half-measure to first tear it away from Germany and in the future connect the whole of Upper Silesia to Poland. Polish interests were expressed by the Polish Circle (Polish fraction) in the Upper Silesian diet. So the balance of political forces until 1933 clearly strengthened separatist tendencies and thus strengthened the policy of permanently dividing a German Silesia into two parts.

The attitude of the local *Landtag* was unequivocally positive about the existence of a separate Province of Upper Silesia. Debates there rarely referred explicitly to the idea of ideological distinctness of the Province of Upper Silesia, but this could be seen when the local diet fought for the largest share of the liquidated assets of the local government from the dissolved Province of Silesia[111]. The consensus of the main political forces in Upper Silesia was evident, and even included the left-wing SPD[112]. However, the Upper Silesian DNVP were clearly opposed to separatist tendencies[113].

Thus, the period of the Weimar Republic was characterized by two contradictory trends regarding the German part of Silesia. The local government of Lower Silesia had never come to terms with the collapse of the united province and guarded those administrative elements which in theory could be divided between the two new provinces[114]. For this reason, the local authorities of the two provinces were in conflict with one another. A number of factors overlapped, of which the political and the religious ones were the most prominent. The main political force in the period of the Weimar Republic in the Province of Lower Silesia was the SPD, which did not remain on good terms with the Christian Democrats (former Centre Party) ruling in Upper Silesia. In addition, the Upper Silesian autonomists were supported by the Catholic Church, which was not the dominant religion in Protestant Lower Silesia.

The preserved minutes of the proceedings of the two provincial diets quite clearly show the political conflict of interest. Lower Silesia wanted to maintain the closest possible relationship between the new provinces, whereas Upper Silesia sought its own independent position in the Reich, starting with autonomy.

Autonomy of the Silesian Voivodeship in the Second Polish Republic

The establishment of the Polish national movement in Silesia in the late 19th century caused after the First World War destruction of the territorial unity of Silesia,

[111] *Verhandlungen des Gemeinsamen 60. Landtages der Provinzen Nieder- und Oberschlesien – 4 Tagung – (8. und 9. Mai 1925), Stenographischer Bericht…,* p. 1.
[112] *Ibidem,* pp. 1 and 2.
[113] *Ibidem,* p. 2.
[114] For a general picture see M. Czapliński, E. Kaszuba, G. Wąs, R. Żerelik, *op.cit.*, pp. 365-382.

the effects of which are still felt today[115].The reborn Polish state successfully joined the fight to connect Upper Silesia to Poland, which inevitably led to the end of the unity of the province. In the actions that led to the creation of the Silesian Voivodeship, a significant role was played from the very beginning by Polish nationalists belonging to the Central Citizens' Committee (CKO) in Poznań (Posen), who were of a national democratic persuasion[116]. The CKO explicitly advocated for joining all the lands of the Prussian Partition inhabited by the Poles to Poland, which was to be achieved by an armed uprising. At the time of regaining independence, Upper Silesian politicians formed an alliance with the Supreme People's Council, the successor to the CKO[117]. Of symbolic importance was the idea of convening a *Polski Sejm Dzielnicowy* (Polish Parliament of Partitions) which would represent the Poles from the Prussian Partition and democratically elect the representatives of Silesia. At the assembly convened in Poznań (3-5.12.1918), 441 delegates out of 1,299 represented Silesia. This region was represented by well-known political activists, particularly the National Democrats[118]. The proceedings were associated with a number of resolutions, the most important of which was called *Ustawa politycznej organizacji Polaków zamieszkałych w dotychczasowych granicach Rzeszy Niemieckiej* (the Act on the political organization of Poles living in the existing borders of the German Reich). Implementing those demands would, first of all, increase the political and cultural autonomy of the Polish population. Support for this could also be found in the Polish councils emerging – like the German ones – that wanted to propose them to the above-mentioned German Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies[119].

The SPD activists ruling in Berlin initially tried to seek an agreement with the Polish councils. In the capital of the Reich it was not yet clear that the scarce voices demanding Polish autonomy in Silesia would evolve to demands for Upper Silesia to join Poland. At that time the Poles issued limited demands in which they claimed autonomy within Prussia. The ruling Social Democrats, trying to gain the support of the Polish side, withdrew the most extreme nationalists from power (especially those who were members of *Ostmarkverein*)[120].

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[115] For an analysis of the views of the organs of state and local government on the economic consequences of the split see Krystian Heffner, Wiesław Lesiuk, *Ekonomiczne i społeczne skutki podziału Górnego Śląska w 1922 roku*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 135 et seq.

[116] For more information on the subject see E. Klein, *O polską władzę na Górnym Śląsku 1918-1922. Ogólne założenia polskiego samorządu narodowego w Prusach*, 'Studia Śląskie, Seria Nowa', 38 (1981), p. 13 et seq.

[117] *Ibidem,* p. 20 et seq.

[118] *Ibidem,* p. 25 et seq.

[119] *Ibidem,* pp. 31-33.

[120] *Ibidem,* p. 43.

The German authorities also tried to influence the Poles through the abovementioned system of councils, but the escalating conflict of both sides inevitably ended with armed struggle. The case of state power in Silesia had been internationalized and – as already mentioned – was settled at the peace conference at Versailles.

The final division of Upper Silesia was approved at the Ambassadors' Conference on 20th October 1921. After the division of Silesia, which resulted from the plebiscite and the Silesian uprisings, the Silesian Voivodeship was established and granted domestic autonomy by the Polish authorities; however, it was also proscribed by international law[121]. The basic regulations were contained in the Constitutional Act of 15th July 1920, which contained the Organic Statute of the Silesian Voivodeship. The Organic Statute provided that the Polish part of Silesia would be given autonomous institutions, of which the most important was the Silesian Parliament (Article 4 et seq.) The Silesian Parliament was entitled to pass laws of a very broad scope, covering 17 areas (including, among others, legislation on the use of Polish and German, as well as on the administrative system)[122]. There was also another group of cases that were already under the remit of public authorities in Warsaw, but the introduction of those provisions required the consent of the Silesian Sejm (Article 5). This included economic legislation, which was so significant for the voivodeship[123].

The interwar period ultimately brought an end to the territorial unity of Silesia. From the point of view of the interests of the Polish state, efforts, in particular until the May Coup by Józef Piłsudski (1926), were concentrated on complying with the regulations of autonomy, and the state doctrine in Silesia was clearly anti-German, emphasizing the Polish identity of the region. Journalistic reports and opinions should be distinguished from the policy of government, which did not engage in revisionist activities that would aim at extending the area of the Polish part of Silesia[124]. Polish journalists, on the other hand, often wrote about the Polish identity of the whole of Upper Silesia, and their activity especially intensified after 1933, when the National Socialists carried out a Germanization policy in German Silesia (changing proper names, family names etc.)[125].

[121] J. Ciągwa, *Autonomia Śląska,* p. 157 et seq.

[122] For information on ecclesiastical legislation see Bolesław Reiner, *Wyznania i związki religijne w województwie śląskim, O*pole 1977, p. 111 et seq.

[123] Cf J. Ciągwa, *Autonomia Śląska,* p. 159 et seq. On the characteristics of the Silesian legislation see p. 162 et seq.

[124] For an overall picture see M. Czapliński, E. Kaszuba, G. Wąs, R. Żerelik, *op.cit.*, p. 394 et seq.

[125] Cf T. Kruszewski, *Udział instancji NSDAP na Śląsku w akcji zmiany nazwisk*, AUWr., no 1715, *Studia nad Faszyzmem i Zbrodniami Hitlerowskimi* (further referred to as *SnFiZH*), vol. XVIII, Wrocław 1995, pp. 221-234. See also Karol Fiedor, *Bund Deutscher Osten w systemie antypolskiej propagandy,* Warszawa-Wrocław 1977.

The political situation in the Silesian Voivodeship at the time of its creation resembled in some respects the situation in the Province of Upper Silesia[126]. There, too, the Catholic religion was dominant and the Christian Democrats inevitably played a significant political role. They had a crucial impact on the shape of the Organic Statute, which is not surprising when one takes into account the political importance in Silesia of Wojciech Korfanty, the leader of the Christian Democrats, for example [127]. Just like their German counterparts from the Centre Party, they fought for the autonomous regulations of Upper Silesia to be as extensive as possible. In the process of creating the Statute they also looked at solutions from the Austrian Partition, the pretext for this being the inclusion of so-called Austrian Silesia to the voivodeship. Their first views were changed in the Statute because a part of the Christian Democrats perceived the Silesian Voivodeship as a state within a state, and even a union of two states: Poland and Silesia. In this respect they inherited the autonomous view from the First World War described above. The importance of the Christian Democrats in the creation of the Organic Statute was significant. The authors of that legislative act included leading Christian Democratic activists[128].

Not having achieved success in the broader international arena, Silesian autonomists focused on the legislative powers of the Silesian Parliament. They tried to make them extremely extensive, though even in this field they suffered some setbacks when one compares their demands with the ultimate effects[129]. They failed to weaken the basic influence of the constitution and Polish legislation on the voivodeship. The scope of Silesian legislative was important, but its content was limited to the region. This is evident in the scope of jurisdiction (see Articles 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 16, 39 and 44), where the issue of using the Polish and German languages came to the fore, but no conclusions about the official character of the latter can be drawn. The right to use both languages was rather due to the observance of international law, as the guarantees of the protection of national minorities were included in the Geneva Convention of 15th May 1922[130].

[126] On the active role of prelate Ulitzka see G. Hitze, *op. cit.*, for the autonomy of the Silesian Voivoidship see *ibidem*, p. 932 et seq., on his policy after the May Coup towards voivode Grażyński see *ibidem*, p. 959 et seq. There were violent clashes with the voivode because of his anti-German policy, see *ibidem*, p. 983 et seq. For his frequent clashes with Korfanty ('Polish *hakatyzm*'), see *ibidem*, p. 969 et seq.

[127] Andrzej Drogoń, *Śląscy chadecy a projekt statutu organicznego województwa śląskiego,* 'Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego', No 782, Studia Iuridica Silesiana, vol. 11, 1986, pp. 152-166.

[128] Andrzej Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego w pracach Klubu Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji w I Sejmie Śląskim, K*atowice 2003, p. 48 et seq.

[129] J. Ciągwa, *Funkcja ustawodawcza Sejmu Śląskiego w latach 1922-1939,* 'Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne', 54 (2002), issue 2, pp. 67-88.

[130] *Ustawa z dnia 24 maja 1922 r. w przedmiocie ratyfikacji konwencji niemiecko-polskiej, dotyczącej Górnego Śląska, podpisanej w Genewie dnia 15 maja 1922 r.,* Dz.U. of 1922, no 44, item 370.

Changes to the statutory rights to autonomy did not come about until the passing of the April Constitution of Poland (1935), which undermined the autonomous guarantees by repealing Article 44 of the Statute. This caused further fierce disputes between Katowice (Kattowitz, Katovice) and Warsaw[131].

The significance of the Upper Silesian Christian Democrats also had a significant impact on the legislation in force in Silesia. The Christian Democrats initiated a number of bills in Silesia, the content of which explicitly reflected the autonomous nature of the voivodeship[132]. Christian Democrat deputies were a tightly-knit group in the Silesian Sejm and they defended the Organic Statute against the centralistic attempts of the authorities in Warsaw, which particularly intensified after the May Coup (1926)[133].

The existence of the autonomy of Silesia was – as already mentioned – the essence of the political concepts of Christian democratic parties which were dominant in the Silesian Voivodeship. Christian Democratic parties played a dominant role in the functioning of the autonomy[134]. These issues must be seen in parallel to those of the German Province of Upper Silesia, as in the early interwar period both regions were ruled by Catholic groups. It can actually be assumed that the Christian Democrats in both administrative units of Silesia first helped bring about their creation and then defended them. These forces successfully defended the Province of Upper Silesia from the encroachment of Lower Silesia and the Berlin government and, in the case of the Silesian Voivodeship, from the authorities of Warsaw[135].

Polish Christian Democrats, especially until the May Coup, continued to have a significant impact on the functioning of the administrative authorities in Silesia. This was the result of the important role played by these political forces during the

[131] *Ibidem,* pp. 76-77.

[132] A. Drogoń, *Stosunek chadecji wobec obowiązywania ustaw śląskich,* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, K*atowice 1994, pp. 121-138, especially p. 124 et seq.

[133] Of considerable importance were the Christian Democrat deputies who were the members of the Legal Committee of the First Silesian Parliament – see A. Drogoń*, Z prac Komisji Prawniczej I Sejmu Śląskiego (1922-1929),* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 4,, *K*atowice 2003 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, No 2031), pp. 98-120.

[134] See A. Drogoń, *Chadecja na śląskim pograniczu. Kilka uwag o roli nurtu chrześcijańsko-demokratycznego w autonomicznym systemie ustrojowym województwa śląskiego,* [in:] *Wielokulturowość polskiego pogranicza. Ludzie – idee – prawo. Materiały ze Zjazdu Katedr Historyczno-prawnych, Augustów, 15-18 września 2002 roku,* eds Adam Lityński, Piotr Fiedorczyk, Białystok 2003, pp. 575-587; *idem*, *Ustrój autonomiczny województwa śląskiego jako przedmiot badań współczesnego historyka prawa – pasje naukowe Józefa Ciągwy,* [in:] *Państwo, Prawo, Społeczeństwo w dziejach Europy Środkowej, Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Józefowi Ciągwie w siedemdziesięciolecie urodzin,* Katowice-Kraków 2009, pp. 151-174.

[135] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 83 et seq. The political significance of the Christian Democrats is shown by the number of Catholics in the Silesian Voivoidship, which is around 1.2 mln, while there were 50,000-80,000 Protestants and 8,000-18,000 Jews. See *ibidem,* p. 86. Detailed data see B. Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

Third Silesian Uprising[136]. This situation lasted until the mid-1920s, when, under the influence of the events of 1926, the Christian Democratic Party began to divide as some of its members appeared to be in favour of cooperation with the new Sanation voivode of Silesia, Michał Grażyński[137]. After 1922, this influence was further intensified, which applies both to the executive power (the voivode's office was staffed by Christian Democratic politicians), and the representative bodies (Silesian Voivodeship Council). What should be borne in mind is the strong character of PMO groups that were associated with a prominent Józef Piłsudski follower and voivode Michał Grażyński[138].

The Christian Democratic group was vitally important in the Silesian Parliament, as evidenced by the various political activities it undertook. The group continued to exert an influence on the authorities governing the Silesian Voivodeship, as the most important posts were filled by Christian Democrats, for example the position of voivode, which was filled by the following members of this political group, in order of assuming office: Józef Rymer, Antoni Schultis and Mieczysław Bilski. During this period the Christian Democrats diverged from merely imitating the Centre Party in order to build their own party to operate on the Polish political scene[139].

The Christian Democrats spoke out on issues which they deemed particularly important in light of their political agenda. Of course, of greatest importance to this group were religious issues. Religious legislation and the method of proceeding in these matters imposed a confessional element on ethnic conflicts, as a large part of the German minority confessed one of the Protestant denominations and the Jewish minority was usually of the Jewish faith[140]. Ethnic conflicts also occurred in the area of education. Legislative and executive bodies were involved in disputes with the representatives of the German and Jewish minorities. Disputes also took place, however, between the legislative and administrative bodies on issues such as the employment of teachers (Silesian autonomists accused the authorities of Warsaw of

[136] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 63 et seq.

[137] See A. Drogoń, *Przed rozłamem. Z dziejów chadecji w województwie śląskim (1919-1928),* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa*, vol. 3, Katowice 2002 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego nr 2048), pp. 128-140. On the situation after the May Coup see *idem*, *Pozycja Klubu Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji w I Sejmie Śląskim (1922-1929)*, [in:] *Z dziejów prawa*, vol. 1, Katowice 1996 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego nr 1581), especially p. 167 et seq.

[138] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 67 et seq.

[139] A. Drogoń, *Pozycja Klubu Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji,* p. 157 et seq. Konstanty Wolny, the marshall of the Silesian Parliament, was also important here.

[140] A. Drogoń, *Stosunek klubu parlamentarnego Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji w Sejmie Śląskim do polityki wyznaniowej Sejmu Śląskiego w latach 1922-1929,* [in:] *Z dziejów sądów i prawa,* Katowice 1992 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, No 1277), especially p. 87 et seq.

replacing local teachers with immigrants from Galicia and Congress Poland)[141]. Another source of conflict was the implementation of land reform, which in the Silesian Voivodeship led to clashes over the parcelling of estates that, frequently, belonged to Germans[142]. The main subject of this policy were the administrative authorities, with the voivode of Silesia playing a leading role, but they had the support of the Silesian Parliament[143].

The activities of Polish administration throughout the interwar period were aimed at maintaining the status quo, meaning that they defended the territorial disintegration of Silesia. This was in accordance with the Polish *raison d'etat*, as it must be remembered that a significant part of government revenue was derived from the Silesian Voivodeship, which was the richest voivodeship in Poland. On the other hand, in the first few years after Silesia became part of Poland the German minority did not disseminate – for obvious reasons – strictly revisionist ideas. *Volksbund*, the main organization representing the Germans which was founded on 27th July 1922, called on German teachers and officials to remain in their positions, but the tendency of those people to leave to German territories grew stronger. After a brief appeasement of the situation in *Volksbund*, anti-Polish tendencies were growing, which especially manifested themselves through attacks on the new Polish teachers from the former Galicia and Congress Poland[144].

An important possibility for the German minority to engage in public activities was given by the right to make parliamentary interpellations, which was regulated by the Silesian Parliament on several occasions[145]. The German minority raised objections to a wide variety of issues, including German education, but most of all with respect to obeying the Convention of Upper Silesia. It was clear that a well-organized German minority used the regulations of the Silesian Parliament to defend

[141] A. Drogoń, *Sprawy szkolnictwa na forum I Sejmu Śląskiego (1922-1929)*, [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 2, Katowice 1999 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego nr 1735), pp. 159-178. Similarly, *idem*, *O celibacie nauczycielek w województwie śląskim. Kartka z dziejów regulacji prawnej szkolnictwa,* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 4, Katowice 2003 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego nr 2031), especially p. 121 et seq., which presents the anti-Polish activities of German schools. It also presents another problem, that is yielding to the pressure of the Catholic Church which tried to mould public education into the form of religious education (the key policy was to compel teachers to live in celibacy, as marriage terminated their employment). For more on the latter act see also J. Ciągwa, *Autonomia Śląska,* p. 170.

[142] A. Drogoń, *Sprawa reformy rolnej w I Sejmie Śląskim (1922-1929)*, 'Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne', 54 (2002), issue 1, pp. 387-398.

[143] A. Drogoń, *Polityka rolna Sejmu Śląskiego. Podmioty realizujące reformę rolną w autonomicznym województwie śląskim,* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 3, pp. 161-174.

[144] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 107 et seq.

[145] See J. Ciągwa, *Geneza regulacji prawnej interpelacji poselskich w Sejmie Śląskim,* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 2 (10), Katowice 2009 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, No 2704), pp. 101-126.

their interests, although they did not formally oppose the Polish state[146]. It should be remembered that the number of those interpellations (11) accounted for a small percentage of all interpellations, which mainly came from the Polish political parties[147].

In various circles of the German minority there was a strong tendency to conduct anti-Polish activities which, from the point of view of the former unity of the province, could in theory be regarded as positive. Such unity, however, was not worth recovering when the German Empire was ruled by anti-Polish forces, which in a wider scale were dangerous for the whole of Europe. Even if German sovereignty over the whole of Upper Silesia had been restored, sooner or later it would have been divided into two parts (see the above-described policy of the Third Reich). The peak of anti-Polish activities led by various German groups was reached in the period of the Third Reich, a regime which many representatives of the German minority identified themselves with. Anti-Polish tendencies had been growing since 1933, when Adolf Hitler came to power[148]. The peak of this trend were the actions of the National Socialist German Workers' Movement in the late 1930s which wanted and tried to tear Silesia from Poland and connect it to the Third Reich[149]. Those actions were undertaken upon the expiry of the Geneva Convention, which had been signed for fifteen years. Thanks to counter-intelligence activity, the National Socialists' conspiracy had successfully been detected.

[146] J. Ciągwa, *Interpelacje niemieckie w I Sejmie Śląskim (1922-1929)*, [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 7, Katowice 2005 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, No 2357), pp. 104-129.

[147] J. Ciągwa, *Prawo interpelacji w praktyce I Sejmu Śląskiego (1922-1929)*, [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 2, pp. 135-158. Most of the interpellations came from the National Workers' Party, see *idem*, *Interpelacje Klubu Narodowej Partii Robotniczej w I Sejmie Śląskim (od 10 października 1922 roku do 12 lutego 1929 roku)*, [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 1 (9), Katowice 2008 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, No 2571), pp. 91-130 and from the Polish Socialist Party, see *idem*, *Interpelacje poselskie Klubu Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej w I Sejmie Śląskim (1922-1929)*, [in:] *Z dziejów prawa*, vol. 4 (12), Katowice 2011 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego nr 2868), pp. 135-186. These movers also dominated in the short-lived second term of the Silesian Parliament which was dissolved by President Ignacy Mościcki in the turbulent 1930 of 'Brest' elections and struggle with the opposition, see *idem*, *Interpelacje poselskie w Sejmie Śląskim II kadencji (11 maja 1930 r.-26 września 1930 r.),* [in:] *Z dziejów prawa,* vol. 8, Katowice 2006 (=Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego nr 2455), pp. 121-152. On German education see also Matthias Kneipp, *Die deutsche Sprache in Oberschlesien. Untersuchungen zur politischen Rolle der deutschen Sprache als Minderheitssprache in den Jahren 1921-1998,* Dortmund 1999, pp. 75-115.

[148] A. Drogoń, *Chadecja na śląskim pograniczu,* pp. 585-587.

[149] See T. Kruszewski, *Likwidacja Narodowosocjalistycznego Niemieckiego Ruchu Robotniczego (NSDAB) w województwie śląskim w 1936 r.*, AUWr., No 1283, SnFiZH, vol. 16, 1993, pp. 203-222.

The stance of Czechoslovak authorities towards a former Province of Silesia and Austrian Silesia

In the Province of Silesia the area that was inhabited predominantly by the Czechs was the southern part of the district of Racibórz (the so-called Hlučín – Hultschin, Hulczyn – Region). However, in the national consciousness of the Czechs, widespread efforts to recover these parts of Silesia, which had been ethnically tied to the Habsburg lands inhabited by the Czech population, began to take place as early as during the First World War, along with the revival of the Czechoslovak state[150]. At the time of gaining independence, the young state put forward territorial claims towards Silesia, a move which can be put down to feelings of patriotic elation. Moreover, certain scholars suggested obtaining territories where they believed the spoken dialect was Czech[151]. Czechoslovakia put forward a territorial request, which appeared later in Versailles, in which it demanded being granted Hlučín Region, which was eventually accepted by the Treaty of Versailles (Article 83). The fight for this territory triggered a response from the Germans side, but the Polish side too had dreamed of acquiring the whole district of Racibórz in the period of the Silesian uprisings[152]. The Czech population living in German Silesia undertook actions similar to those which took place in Polish Upper Silesia in 1918, as well as in Austrian Cieszyn Silesia (Czech: Těšínské Slezsko, Polish: Śląsk Cieszyński, German: Teschener Schlesien) where a conflict with the Poles was beginning to take shape. Czech ideas of joining Czechoslovakia also included Kłodzko (Glatz, Kladsko) or even the district of Wałbrzych (Waldenburg, Valdenburk, Valbřich). However, the claims that are most relevant for this discussion are those related to Hlučín Region and Cieszyn Silesia[153]. Just like the Poles, the Czech activists agitated for the connection of these areas to the emerging Czechoslovakia. The authorities of that country were soon confronted with unrealistic popular demands to connect a considerable area of Upper Silesia to Pszczyna (Pless) and Rybnik (Rybnik) to Czechoslovakia. The authorities instead decided on more realistic and minimalist programmes, being careful to not escalate their claims in Versailles[154]. Germany's fears concerning the Czech claims for the Kłodzko Valley were so high that even military intervention was expected. Troops gathered on both sides of the

[150] Jaroslav Valenta, *Górny Śląsk w czeskiej myśli politycznej do 1918 roku,* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku,* p. 53 et seq.
[151] *Ibidem,* p. 61 *et seq.*
[152] D. Gawrecki, *Československo a Horní Slezsko 1918-1921.,* p. 85 *et seq.*
[153] *Ibidem,* p. 87.
[154] *Ibidem,* p. 89.

border in an area that threatened to become a hotbed of conflict[155]. However, a higher chance of military conflict was that of Hlučín Region which was supposed to be given away by Germany to Czechoslovakia. The largest landowner in the region, Prince von Lichnovsky, in a conversation with a representative of the United Kingdom suggested that there was a need for a plebiscite[156]. German separatists had not yet began to put forward demands following the inclusion of the area into Czechoslovakia[157].

By managing to exert influence on the decisions taken at Versailles, Czech nationalists and Czechoslovak authorities were able to contribute to the territorial collapse of the Province of Silesia. Even though Czech gains were small in comparison to the losses to Poland, they were still painful for German nationalists[158]. From the moment the loss of the Hlučín Region was confirmed, it was widely regarded as one of the most unacceptable and grievous acts in the programmes of German nationalists until its return to German hands in 1938.

The fiercest clash, however, was over Cieszyn Silesia, which was inhabited by both Poles and Czechs[159]. In Cieszyn Silesia both nations pursued a policy of *fait accompli*. As early as 19th October 1918, the National Council of Cieszyn Silesia was established in Cieszyn. Slightly later, on 30th October, it passed a resolution to include that area into the reborn Poland. The Czechs conducted similar activities. They formed *Zemský Národni Výbor pro Slezsko* and also wanted to seize the largest possible part of the Duchy for themselves. The first to act were the Poles who, on the night of 1st to 2nd November 1918, hung Polish flags in Cieszyn (Teschen, Těšín). Soon after that, from 2nd to 5th November, both sides agreed on a provisional boundary line[160]. For the Czechs, that division was strictly temporary. It was more favourable for the Polish side because it meant that almost all Cieszyn Silesia remained within Poland (excluding the district of Frydek). On 23rd January 1919, the Czechs took advantage of Poland's fight for Lwiw (Lemberg, Lwów) and attacked Cieszyn Silesia, seizing most of the area. A new demarcation line was drawn, this time favourable for the Czechs[161]. In February 1919, both sides presented their visions for the border, which contained conflicting territorial claims[162]. Diplomats of both countries fiercely fought for the area known as Austrian Silesia, and the politicians of the Entente preferred to reach

[155] *Ibidem,* pp. 92-93.
[156] *Ibidem,* p. 95.
[157] *Ibidem,* p. 98.
[158] *Ibidem,* p. 90.
[159] *Historia Górnego Śląska,* pp. 226-227.
[160] Bogusław Cybulski, *Rada Narodowa Księstwa Cieszyńskiego (1918-1920), O*pole 1980, pp. 38,39, 43-48.
[161] M. Czapliński, E. Kaszuba, G. Wąs, R. Żerelik, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351.
[162] D. Gawrecki, *Československo a Horní Slezsko 1918-1921,* p. 101.

the decision by a plebiscite. The initial decision in this matter was made by the Conference of Ambassadors of the League of Nations on 4th June 1919. On the other hand, the Treaty of Versailles rejected the idea of an analogous plebiscite in the Hlučín Region which was proposed by the British[163]. Subsequently, Poland and Czechoslovakia conducted further negotiations in Cracow (Krakau, Kraków) on establishing the border, but they ended in failure (21st-29th July, 1919). What is more, a delimitation committee was created, which included delegates from the superpowers (Britain, France, Italy and Japan) and Czech and Polish delegates Col. J. Špaček and Dr. J. Rostek, respectively. Both sides, however, were not open to an amicable solution to the conflict[164]. The conflict was joined by the Allied Powers and on 27th September 1919 they decided to launch a plebiscite to resolve the conflict[165]. Power was taken over by the Plebiscite Commission, which was aimed at limiting hostilities on both sides of the conflict[166].

An armed struggle, as well as an international situation unfavourable to Poland (the Polish–Soviet War) led Poland at a conference in Spa to give up the plebiscite, and the border line reached by the Czechs left many Poles in the part of Cieszyn Silesia known in Poland as Zaolzie[167]. In the first half of 1920, the Polish–Czech conflict began to grow. It could no longer be solved by any of the states and a mediation of victorious powers was necessary. Decisions made at the conference in Spa on 28th July 1920 ended the period of uncertainty in Cieszyn Silesia[168]. The bodies of the would-be plebiscite, the International Plebiscite Commission and the prefects appointed by it along with the Central Committee of the Plebiscite, ceased to exist[169]. The difficult situation that Poland found itself in at the time of the Bolshevik invasion was exploited by the Czechs to obtain the largest possible part of Cieszyn Silesia[170]. The final result of the division of the disputed area was a delimitation of the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia which took place when the two sides signed the relevant protocols on 10th August 1920. The Delimitation Commission

[163] *Ibidem,* p. 90.
[164] *Ibidem,* p. 91.
[165] B. Cybulski, *Prefekt dla wschodniej części Śląska Cieszyńskiego (luty-sierpień 1920),* AUWr., No. 516, Prawo, 91, 1980, p. 121; *idem*, *Rada Narodowa*, pp. 178-181.
[166] Idem, *Rada Narodowa,* p. 200 *et seq.*
[167] D. Gawrecki, *Československo a Horní Slezsko 1918-1921,* pp. 102-104. See also M. Czapliński, E. Kaszuba, G. Wąs, R. Żerelik, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-352.
[168] M. Czapliński, E. Kaszuba, G. Wąs, R. Żerelik, *op. cit.*, p. 351.
[169] B. Cybulski, *Komisarz Rządowy i Tymczasowa Komisja Rządowa Śląska Cieszyńskiego (1920-1922)*, AUWr., No. 583, *Prawo* 103, 1982, p. 123 *et seq.* The world powers were aware that the Commission itself could not cope with the enormity of the tasks and therefore the office of prefects was established, see B. Cybulski, *Prefekt,* p. 125 *et seq.* See also *idem*, *Rada Narodowa,* pp. 181-183.
[170] Demarcation lines from 1918-1920 are shown on a map by B. Cybulski, *Rada Narodowa,* p. 38 (colour map), also *idem*, *Prefekt,* p. 124.

proposed the course of the border line, which persisted until 1938. However, a conflict over the people appointed by the government in Warsaw to form a permanent Polish administration in Cieszyn Silesia was immediately ignited on the Polish side of the border[171]. Fights over the powers of administrative bodies continued until 1922.

In this way, the state authorities of Poland and Czechoslovakia, and Polish and Czech nationalists standing behind them, contributed to the disintegration of Silesia. Each competed with one another. This manifested in actions to get the southern part of the German Silesia, both sides trying to win as much as possible for themselves, and in Austrian Silesia fratricidal clashes for its acquisition began.

The status of the Church and its impact on the territorial unity of Silesia in 1918-1945

The political disintegration of Silesia after the First World War had a direct impact on the organization of the Catholic Church. The events that had led to the formation of a new Church organization in Silesia after the First World War involved the Vatican authorities, who had to take a stand on the Polish–German issue. The Polish side feared the counteractions of the German authorities in Vatican. Eventually, German actions had been successfully stopped by the establishment of the position of high church commissioner were fulfilled by Achilles Ratti, nuncio in Warsaw (later the Pope Pius XI)[172].

Establishment of the Silesian Voivodeship was particularly negatively perceived by the Cardinal and Bishop of Wrocław, Adolf Bertram[173]. This negative attitude had already manifested in the beginnings of the reborn Polish Republic[174]. He expounded his views on 15th December 1919 to the deputy, J. Wierusz-Kowalski. He claimed that the structure created by Cardinal Ratti was unnecessary, because he – as the territorial head of the Church in Silesia – was responsible for the overall organization of the Church. On the other hand, he could not completely oust the high church commissioner appointed by Pope Benedict XV. However, the actions of Cardinal Bertram sought to undermine A. Ratti's influence[175]. Ultimately, the victory

[171] B. Cybulski, *Komisarz Rządowy,* p. 126 *et seq.*

[172] Jan Kopiec, Jerzy Myszor, *Główne problemy działalności Kościoła katolickiego na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1918-1925,* [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku*, p. 108.

[173] A biography of cardinal Adolf Bertram was presented by bishop Ferdinand Piontek, *Adolf Bertram*, [in:] *Schlesische Priesterbilder,* vol. 5, ed. Joseph Gottschalk, Aalen/Württ. 1967, pp. 15-22.

[174] When a delegation of Polish Catholics asked him to support their national needs in the Church, he answered 'Please, do not forget that I am a German bishop', quoted in B. Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[175] *Ibidem,* p. 109.

belonged to Bertram because the Vatican's statement explained that the powers of the High Commissioner did not violate the jurisdiction of the cardinal of Wrocław.

Bertram feared the pro-Polish attitude of the high commissioner at the upcoming plebiscite in Upper Silesia. It was also the time that the cardinal's views, clearly hostile to the division of Silesia, were revealed. It is worth recalling his regulation issued on 21st November 1920, in consultation with the nunciature in Munich, where, under threat of suspension, he forbade priests from conducting any plebiscite-related activity[176]. This particularly applied to non-diocesan priests, and while local priests needed the consent of parish priests from undertaking such actions. The decision was well-received by the parish priests in Upper Silesia, as 75 per cent of them were of German nationality. This was particularly detrimental to the Polish side because the Poles in Silesia were not as well educated as the Germans. Polish authorities spoke fiercely against it, and there were even calls to sever diplomatic relations with the Vatican in parliament[177]. However, at the congress of the clergy in Bytom (Beuthen) on 30th November 1920, 91 priests proposed a resolution calling for a repeal of the regulation[178]. A. Ratti spoke passionately against it, which in turn led to a German retaliation and his dismissal from the position of a high commissioner[179]. However, on 21st December 1920, the new commissioner, Jan Baptista Ogno, repealed Bertram's ordinance. From then on the commissioner, and not the cardinal, could give his consent to priests on this matter[180].

Cardinal Bertram also undertook measures to prevent changes in the organization of the Church in Silesia. He was clearly opposed to any division of the church's organizational structure, and he refused to establish any church administration independent from him in Upper Silesia[181]. He also tried to save himself with half measures, including offering his support to the administrative authorities who had deluded themselves that persuading Poles to stay in the German Reich was possible. An example of such an action was his summoning Fr. Jan Kapica, a Polish priest active in the plebiscite action, and appointing him as the episcopal delegate for the district of Upper Silesia the day after the division of Silesia by the Ambassadors of the League of Nations, that is on 21st October 1921[182]. This appointment had not been consulted

[176] B. Reiner, *op.cit.,* pp. 126-127; Jerzy Myszor, *Historia diecezji katowickiej, K*atowice 1999, p. 25.
[177] B. Reiner, *op.cit.,* p. 128. Fierce protests were also noted in the Polish press in Silesia, *ibidem,* p. 127.
[178] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 87.
[179] J. Kopiec, J. Myszor, *op. cit.,* pp. 111-112.
[180] B. Reiner, *op. cit.,* p. 130.
[181] J. Kopiec, J. Myszor, *op. cit.,*pp. 113-115.
[182] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* pp. 87-88; J. Kopiec, J. Myszor, *op. cit.,* pp. 115-116; J. Myszor, *Historia diecezji,* pp. 17-18. According to the latter work, Cardinal Bertram allowed the existence of the Polish bishopric of Katowice. It also presents a list of deaneries and parishes that were included within the area of the representation.

with anyone and the Polish authorities feared that Upper Silesia would be still dependent on the bishop from abroad. Although Cardinal Bertram appointed Father Kapica himself, he did not trust him and subjected him to control from the Vicariate General in Wrocław[183].

Upon learning of these moves, the Poles started instigating proceedings in the Vatican which led to the establishment of an independent Church administration in Polish Upper Silesia. In February 1922, the Poles revealed their plan to establish such an administration. The German side understood the implications of this action and German priests slowly began to realize that Polish Church administration would be established[184]. Bertram could no longer count on the Vatican, where on 6th February 1922, A. Ratti was elected Pope. This openly pro-Polish Pope did not give any support to the cardinal of Wrocław[185]. Thus, the Polish action ended successfully, as on 7th November 1922, the Holy See appointed a Silesian religious of Salesian Society, August Hlond as the superior of the Apostolic Administration of Upper Silesia[186]. In one of his first orders on 16th January 1923, August Hlond made Polish an official language in his area of influence[187]. In the beginning of his tenure A. Hlond adopted a cautious approach, not wanting to inflame the already tense relations with Cardinal Bertram[188].

The next step in strengthening support for disintegration of former united Silesia was signing a concordat with the Vatican on 10th February 1925, which can be categorized as a Polish success. The concordat recognized the entire Polish state as the jurisdiction of the Polish church organization. Of particular importance was Article 9 of the concordat, which provided that the area of the Polish state could not fall within the jurisdiction of a bishop located outside Poland. This marked the final defeat of Cardinal Bertram in his efforts to retain jurisdiction in the Silesian Voivodeship[189].

Prior to the signing of the concordat, the state authorities in Warsaw made major efforts to establish a separate diocese in the Silesian Voivodeship. Some Polish Church

[183] J. Kopiec, J. Myszor, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

[184] *Ibidem,* p. 117. J. Myszor describes numerous conflicts between Polish and German priests in the parishes, see J. Myszor, *Historia diecezji,* p. 19-20. Those conflicts intensified in 1922, see *ibidem*, p. 30 *et seq.*

[185] The first half of 1922 saw an increasein Polish efforts to separate the Polish Church administration from subordination to the Archdiocese of Wrocław, see *ibidem,* p. 23 *et seq.* This triggered strong protests from Cardinal Bertram, see *ibidem*, pp. 32-34.

[186] The pope achieved this by the decree of the pastoral congregation *Sanctissimus Dominus noster,* see B. Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 133 *et seq.* Because of it the jurisdiction of Cardinal Bertram over the Polish part of Upper Silesia was repealed. It was a matter of the so-called German Silesia, because that Wrocław jurisdiction over Austrian Silesia lasted until 1925, when the concordat entered into force.

[187] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 88.

[188] J. Kopiec, J. Myszor, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

[189] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 89.

units also agreed that this diocese should fall under the control of an existing archdiocese in Poland (the main idea was Kraków)[190]. The projected borders of the new Diocese of Katowice included the Vicariate General of Cieszyn[191].

The most important result of the concordat in this field was the bull of Pius XI *Vixdum Poloniae unitas* of 28th October 1925 which stabilized the Polish Church organization in Upper Silesia through the creation of the Diocese of Katowice[192]. Its provisions were expanded upon by the Executive Decree of the nuncio of 11th November 1925. Those documents subordinated the newly created diocese to the Archdiocese of Kraków. The area of the Diocese of Katowice covered the whole area of the Silesian Voivodeship, that is both the area of the former German Silesia and Austrian Silesia. Finally, the latter was included on 18th November 1925 into the Diocese of Kraków and the following deaneries were created in the area: Bielsko (Bielitz), Cieszyn, Skoczów (Skotschau) and Strumień (Schwarzwasser). The final closure of these trends was the ground-breaking event of the construction of a cathedral in Katowice (5th June 1927)[193]. The construction of the cathedral received the support of the Silesian Sejm, which decided to redeem the public loan borrowed by the Church on its construction[194]. This example illustrates a broader problem of the frequent support of the authorities of the Silesian Voivodeship given to different Church issues in the voivodeship. These included various forms of support for Church schools and religious education in public schools, and the construction of the Silesian Higher Theological Seminary in Cracow[195]. In 1938, after the annexation of Zaolzie, the Diocese of Katowice was also extended to this area[196].

It is also worth mentioning the attitude of the Lutheran Church, of which the majority of the faithful were of German nationality[197]. Analogous divisions developed, as the faithful of Polish nationality and Protestant clergy identifying with Poland led to a split in the Church and the establishment of a Polish Church administration with Bishop Julius Bursche at the head of it[198].

Current literature seeks to objectively portray the attitude of Cardinal Bertram in the interwar period, but the interwar Polish press in the Silesian Voivodeship vociferously attacked him for various clashes between German and Polish priests.

[190] J. Kopiec, J. Myszor, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
[191] *Ibidem,* p. 120.
[192] B. Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 135 *et seq.* Cf J. Myszor, *Historia diecezji,* pp. 41-44.
[193] A. Drogoń, *Autonomia województwa śląskiego,* p. 89.
[194] A. Drogoń, *Stosunek klubu parlamentarnego Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji w Sejmie Śląskim do polityki wyznaniowej,* p. 103.
[195] *Ibidem,* pp. 101-106.
[196] J. Myszor, *Historia diecezji,* p. 238 *et seq.*
[197] B. Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 137 *et seq.*
[198] R. Pastucha, *op. cit.*, p. 125 *et seq.*

The conflict escalated as early as in 1926 in connection with the pamphlet *Prawda o męczeństwie niemieckich katolików w Polsce* (The Truth on the Martyrdom of German Catholics in Poland), which was of a clearly biased nature[199]. Anti-Polish actions in German Silesia were inflamed after Adolf Hitler came to power, climaxing just before the outbreak of the Second World War. On 27th June 1939 Cardinal Bertram suspended Polish worship in churches in Opole Silesia. This clearly suited *Gauleiter* Josef Wagner, who now received the support of the Church for his anti-Polish activities. The administrative powers were enthusiastic about the activities of the archbishop of Wrocław[200]. After the outbreak of the Second World War, Cardinal Bertram supported the unification policy of the German authorities by appointing plenipotentiaries and then *Bischöftliches Amt* in Katowice[201]. This was connected with plans to abolish the Diocese of Katowice[202]. After the outbreak of the Second World War, all organizations run by Polish Catholics were suspended by Bertram[203]. On 2nd March 1940 *Bischöftliches Amt*, acting on his behalf, announced 'Anregungen zur Jugendseelsorge', which also suspended German Catholic organizations. New ones were supposed to be aligned with Nazi organizations in the Third Reich and act on the orders of 1936 and 1938. In the totalitarian regime of the Third Reich there was no place for anything that had not been established by the Reich[204].

Opinions on the actions of Cardinal Bertram are divided. The dominating trend in German literature is to view his activities as a way of implementing the guidelines of Pius XII which were sent to the cardinal on 6th March 1939 in his role as president of the German Episcopal Conference[205]. It has been noted that in his letter of 22nd July 1938 to the Gestapo in Berlin he sought to provide prisoners of concentration camps with religious services, and after the outbreak of the war he intervened on behalf of two imprisoned Polish bishops-Bishop Michał Kozal from Włocławek and Auxiliary Bishop Władysław Goral from Lublin[206].

The biggest dispute concerns, however, Cardinal Bertram's views on the organization of the Church in Polish Upper Silesia. When the embassy of the Third Reich

[199] B. Reiner, *op. cit.,* p. 167 *et seq.*
[200] *Ibidem,* p. 169.
[201] J. Myszor, *Historia diecezji,* p. 294 *et seq.*
[202] *Ibidem,* p. 299 *et seq.*
[203] For more information on this subject see *ibidem,* pp. 342-345.
[204] B. Reiner, *op. cit.,* p. 169. Bertram was summoned by orders of the head of the German civil administration, Gauleiter Fritz Bracht on 2nd October 1939 which abolished secular organizations of the Polish Germans.
[205] Emil Brzoska, *Ein Tedeum für Kardinal Bertram: Adolf Bertram Vorsitzender der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz im Bündnis mit dem Heiligen Stuhl während des Kirchenkampfs 1933-1935,* Köln 1981, p.26. which contains a famous quote: 'save what you can save'.
[206] *Ibidem,* p. 29.

issued to the Holy See a note on 29th of August 1941 calling for the establishment of German bishops in Poland and in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the response of the Holy See on 18th January 1942 was, at the request of Bertram, negative. In reply to this the secretary of state, Cardinal Maglione, reminded Hitler that on the basis of the decree of 13th September 1941, trade and religious associations should be free. On 15th March 1943, Nuncio Orsenigo, supported by Cardinal Bertram, issued a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the persecution of the Church in Poland[207]. The Cardinal also undertook measures to help Silesian Jews[208]. However, in the case of the Diocese of Katowice, even Fr. Emil Brzoska, whose attitude to Bertram was definitely positive, made note of the dispute over jurisdiction between the cardinal and Bishop of Katowice, Stanisław Adamski[209].

These issues are still disputed by German and Polish scholars today. Perhaps the best example of this is the polemics in which Adalbert Kurzeja and Jerzy Myszor were involved in 1996[210]. During the Second World War Bertram saw a chance to recover the lost part of his archdiocese – bishopric of Katowice – and was looking for support from Nuncio Orsenigo. This policy was clearly opposed by Bishop Stanisław Adamski. To strengthen his position in the Katowice dioecese, Bertram was looking behind Adamski's back for a candidate for the German vicar general in Katowice[211]. This is where the greatest disagreement between Kurzeja and Myszor appears concerning the intentions of Cardinal Bertram. Kurzeja believes that Bertram rightly called for the creation of a German vicar general so that he would more effectively try to help Catholics in the Diocese of Katowice[212]. The scholars argue, in particular, about the letter to Nuncio Orsenigo of 9th December 1939 in which the cardinal asked the nuncio to take over the administration of the Diocese of Katowice[213]. The cardinal refuted accusations that he wanted to take over the administration of the diocese of Katowice and did not want to act wilfully without the mandate of the papacy and the German episcopate. Unfortunately, even if his intentions were positive, Bertram's letter coincided with similar demands which were sent to Orsenigo by the Reich

[207] *Ibidem,* p. 30.
[208] *Ibidem,* p. 32 *et seq.* Here Father Emil Brzoska presents critical reasoning towards the sharp criticism of what the author (Protestant historian Klaus Scholder) believed to be half-measure actions of Bertram, see *ibidem*, p. 43 *et seq.*
[209] *Ibidem,* p. 48.
[210] Adalbert Kurzeja, *Kardinal Adolf Bertram und das Bistum Kattowitz 1939-1945*, 'Oberschlesisches Jahrbuch', 12 (1996), p. 107 *et seq.*, i J. Myszor, *Stellungsnahme zum Beitrag Adalbert Kurzeja,* 'Oberschlesisches Jahrbuch', 12 (1996),, p. 121 *et seq.*
[211] A. Kurzeja, *Kardinal Adolf Bertram…,* p. 108.
[212] *Ibidem,* p. 109.
[213] *Ibidem,* p. 110. The content of the letter is displayed in an annex, see p. 118.

Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs (RMKA), which caused a huge blunder[214]. Both authors clearly have a different judgement of the letter, as well as the following one of 24th December 1939 which Bertram addressed to Adamski. The first scholar believes that this was due to Bertram's concerns about Catholicism, while the other one says that these actions had selfish motives, supported by Germanization-related aspirations[215]. Interestingly, Bertram defended Polish sermons during church services, and it was reproached to him that on 27th June 1939 (see above) he forbade the celebration of the mass in Polish. Kurzeja attacks the image of Bertram as a 'devourer of Poland' and a 'Germanizer'[216]. In response, J. Myszor claims that there is a clear correlation between the letters of Bertram and the RMKA, which he further connects with the fact of the appointment two weeks later, on 8th January 1940, of German priest Franz Strzyz as a vicar general. He also recalls the expulsion on 28th February 1941 of bishops Adamski and Bieniek from the diocese[217]. He cites further facts in support of his argument such as the plans for the merger of the Diocese of Katowice with the Archdiocese of Wrocław announced on 29th March 1941 and the official support of this initiative on 20th May 1941 by *Gauleiter* Bracht. Apparently, the fact that puts Bertram in a bad light is a letter to the Nunciature in Berlin written by the Foreign Ministry on 25th May 1941 concerning the permanent dismissal of bishop Adamski from the diocese and hence expressing a wish that the government of the Reich wanted to give the Diocese of Katowice to Bertram. However, the Holy See did not respond to this letter[218]. Myszor notes that the management of the diocese by a bishop other than the diocese bishop was contrary to canon law and constituted a 're-germanization' policy pursued by Bertram. This is evidenced by the abolition of Caritas and other Church organizations[219].

The stance of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) towards the postulate of the unity of Silesia and its failed attempt at restorig unity during the Second World War (1939-1945)

The National Socialists were one of the few groups that had never come to terms with the division of Silesia. In the early years of the Weimar Republic their

[214] *Ibidem,* p. 111. The jurisdiction of Zaolzie, included into the Silesian Voivoidship in 1938, was a similar case as Bertram wanted to take it over also, see p. 112.
[215] *Ibidem,* p. 114.
[216] *Ibidem,* p. 115.
[217] J. Myszor, *Stellungsnahme,* p. 122.
[218] *Ibidem,* p. 124.
[219] *Ibidem,* p. 127. He also gives a personal example of his relative, Józef Ryszka, who was ordained as a priest in 1941 by Cardinal Bertram, appropriating the jurisdiction of Bishop Adamski.

importance was largely insignificant. However, the Great Depression of the 1930s enabled the party to become a significant player on the Silesian political arena. When Hitler took power, the area of German Silesia included one NSDAP party district *(Gau Schlesien)* created on 15th March 1925. *Gau Schlesien* was led by Helmuth Brückner, holding the rank of *Gauleiter*. He belonged to the so-called 'left' wing of the party, proclaiming radical ideas which soon began to disturb the Führer. For a while, however, Brückner's career progressed quickly. After *Machtübernahme* Hitler entrusted him with the position of the *Oberpräsident* of the Province of Lower Silesia and at the same time the duties of the *Oberpräsident* of the Province of Upper Silesia (25th March 1933). On 2nd August 1933 he received an official nomination to the latter function[220]. Thus, for the first time since 1919 one person directed the whole state administration in the area of German Silesia. But then Hitler, in order to eliminate the influence of the 'left' wing, decided to remove one of its proponents from the position of *Gauleiter* of Silesia in early December 1934 (the official statement in this case was announced on 25th December)[221]. Since 1933, the administrative cooperation of both Silesian provinces had intensified, but until 1938, they each retained their distinct characters. It was only in 1938 when the two provinces were combined and the entire region of Silesia came under a single administrative structure once again[222].

In formal terms, *Machtübernahme* did not result in any significant political changes. Both provinces of Silesia formed a single district of the NSDAP. The Province of Lower Silesia still consisted in 1933-1945 of two *Regierungzbezirke* (governmental districts), and the Province of Upper Silesia in 1939 was limited to one. At the level of governmental districts the NSDAP did not appoint its own officers for administrative positions. But on higher level, the same Party official was nominated for both posts of *Oberpräsident* and *Gauleiter*. In that way a Party member became the head of the highest administrative territorial unit of Prussia. The nomination of Brückner to *Oberpräsident* for both Silesian provinces meant introducing the party control over administrative structures without interfering with lower level officers. According to the 'principle of chieftainship', the primacy of the Party leadership was thus extended into the area of state administration. The National Socialists began to exert a direct influence on the administrative policy of

[220] See footnote 79.

[221] Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (further: APWr.), Wydział Samorządowy Prowincji Śląskiej (Provinzialverwaltung Schlesien – PVS), sign. 803, after fol. 451 containing the issue of a newspaper *Nationalsozialistische Beamtenzeitung* no. 17 of the 19th of August, 1934, fol. 663, 664 *Gauleiter's* article.

[222] *PGS*, 1938, p. 29, *Gesetz über die Gebietsbereinigungen in den östlichen preußischen Provinzen vom 21.März 1938*, § 1 acts 1 and 2.

the state. This way of directly linking the Party and state was expressed in the Act of 2nd December 1933. The *Gauleiter*, in his role as *Oberpräsident*, made sure that the administrative apparatus realized all the goals that the NSDAP recognized as a priority. This was not a simple accumulation of tasks, but the Party dictating terms to the state[223].

A mass influx of new members between 1929 and 1932 had led to the development of the organizational structure of NSDAP. At the head of *Gau Schlesien* was Hellmuth Brückner, who, alongside his associates, created a leadership circle *(Gauleitung).* Lower Silesia (encompassing two *Regierungsbezirke* of Wrocław and Legnica) consisted of *Bezirke* (districts) subordinated to a *Gauleiter*, each of which covered several administratvie districts (*Kreise, powiats)*. For the Upper Silesia province there was created an intermediary Party administrative unit, so called *Untergau* (sub-district)-headed by *Untergauleiter* Josef Joachim Adamczyk[224]. This last element, however, shows that even the Nazis had to, to some extent, take into account the division of Silesia into two territorial units. In 1930, the territorial organizations of the Nazi Party were present in more than 300 villages of Silesia.

The territorial structure of the NSDAP in Silesia subordinated to the *Gauleiter* was subject to manifold changes in 1925-1945, and was not stabilized until 1935. Its final form comprised of the complete elimination of party structures parallel to the level of *Regierungsbezirke*. This took place in 1935 with the abolition of *Untergaue*. In this situation, the heads of the NSDAP in *powiats/Kreise* (*Kreisleiters*) were directly subject to the *Gauleiter*. The organizational structure of the Party in *Kampfzeit* (before 1933) was only just beginning to develop and for this reason it was not stable. A characteristic feature of this period was the existence of different Party administrative levels and posts between the level of the *Gauleiter* and that of *Kreisleiter*. Until 1931, in the case of the Province of Lower Silesia between a Gauleiter and a Keisleiter was active a leader of a *Bezirke*, the latter comprising of a number of districts (*powiats*)[225]. These *Bezirke* in Upper Silesia were not subject to the *Gauleiter* directly but indirectly through *Untergau*. The establishment of the *Untergaue* in Lower Silesia was completed in 1931. Since then, there were three *Untergaue* in Silesia, the areas of which overlapped with *Regierungsbezirke*. *Regierungsbezirk* of Legnica created a sub-district of Lower Silesia *(Untergau Niederschlesien),*

[223] Cf Edward Jędrzejewski, *Hitlerowska koncepcja administracji publicznej 1933-1945. Studium polityczno-prawne, W*rocław 1974, p. 101 *et seq.*; Karol Jonca, *Polityka narodowościowa III Rzeszy na Śląsku Opolskim w latach 1933-1940, K*atowice 1970, especially chapter IV.

[224] Franciszek Biały, *Ruch narodowosocjalistyczny w prowincjach śląskich. Początki-postępy-przejęcie władzy*, Wrocław 1987, p. 149 *et seq.*

[225] *Ibidem,* p. 147 *et seq.*

Regierungsbezirk of Wrocław – a sub-district of Middle Silesia *(Untergau Mittelschlesien),* and *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole – a sub-district of Upper Silesia *(Untergau Oberschlesien).*The creation of a single structure of *Untergaue* in 1931was associated with the final removal of the *Bezirke*.

The division of territories into *Untergaue* was abolished at the beginning of 1935 by the Führer. Such an idea was submitted to Hitler by Josef Wagner, a new *Gauleiter* of Silesia (who was also a *Gauleiter* of South Westphalia)[226]. He seized power after Brückner was removed from the party on the 'Night of the Long Knives'. The office of *Untergauleiter* was replaced with Deputy *Gauleiter* (*stellvertretende Gauleiter*); Hitler entrusted this function to Fritz Bracht. The Deputy *Gauleiter* was responsible for particularly important cases in Upper Silesia. In practice, due to the fact that Wagner was a *Gauleiter* in two districts, Bracht often represented the interests of Lower Silesia also. Bracht's role increased in 1936 upon the appointment of Wagner as a Reich commissioner for price control in the office of the representative for the Four-Year Plan. Commissioner Wagner permanently officiated in Berlin. Abolishing the *Untergaue* was to provide Wagner with control over a centralized administration that covered both Silesian provinces. In order for the party to retain control at the abolished level of *Untergaue*, the presidents of *Regierungsbezirke* were accompanied by NSDAP inspectors, who provided opinions on their actions.

It is also important to remember *Gauleiter* Wagner's territorial reforms. Under his rule a significant transformation of government took place. Through the Prussian Act of 21st March 1938, both provinces of Silesia were merged into one Province of Silesia with the capital in Wrocław. The same law dissolved the province of the Frontier March of Posen–West Prussia (Posen Grenzmark – Westpreußen) and its parts were incorporated into the new Province of Silesia[227].

The *Gauleiter's* powers were in practice much broader, as they were supplemented with other state powers which resulted from their accumulating the functions of *Oberpräsidents* in both provinces of Silesia[228]. However, appointing *Gauleiters* as effective *Oberpräsidents* of the provinces was a problem in one of Germany's most powerful states, Prussia. This issue concerned those *Gauleiters* whose districts overlapped with territorial units. An example of this was Silesia and East Prussia. No rule concerning the organizational structure was introduced in this respect, since the districts were able to develop their own rules. As they coincided

[226] K. Höffkes, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-39 and 367-371.

[227] PGS, Jg. 1938, p. 29, *Gesetz über die Gebietsbereinigungen in den östlichen preußischen Provinzen. Vom 21. März 1938.*

[228] On the joining of party and state functions for the benefit of Gauleiters see Peter Hüttenberger, *Die Gauleiter. Studie zum Wandel des Machtgefüges in der NSDAP*, Stuttgart 1969, p. 75 *et seq.*

with the governmental administrative division during the *'Kampfzeit'*, this was used after 30th January 1933 when those *Gauleiters* were appointed as *Oberpräsidents*. If the areas of the districts and provinces did not overlap, their *Gauleiters* were not appointed *Oberpräsidents*[229]. Entrusting *Gauleiters* with the office of *Oberpräsident* in some of the Prussian provinces, as well as the office of Reich Governor *(Reichsstatthalter)* beyond Prussia, was essential for the state. The *Gauleiters*, who by virtue of their positions in the Party apparatus played a dominant role in matters of the NSDAP in their districts, were thus equipped with the powers of government. According to the 'principle of chieftainship', the rulership of the NSDAP was extended to the area of state administration.

The *Gauleiter's* duties as an *Oberpräsident* were based largely on existing legislation. This legal status was simply given an interpretation that was consistent with the policy of the Nazi party. To paraphrase Hegel, it can be said that the concept of the law changed. The new idea was to be served by the 'old' rules. The act of transferring the offices of *Oberpräsidents* to *Gauleiters* raised, however, a number of issues about responsibilities and hierarchical relations. Being a district leader, a *Gauleiter* reported directly to the Führer, but as an *Oberpräsident* he was subordinate, depending on the particular case, to individual ministers of the Reich. In addition, the presidents of *Regierungsbezirke* were ranked lower than a *Gauleiter*, but only because of his position as an *Oberpräsident*. The Act on rebuilding the Reich of 30th January 1934 and the second executive order of 27th November 1934 maintained the subordination of *Gauleiters* as *Oberpräsidents* in professional matters to the ministers of the Reich[230]. This gave rise to various conflicts, as Brückner, and then Wagner, often ignored this structure and appealed directly to Hitler. This led to protests by the Minister of the Interior, Wilhelm Frick, to whom *Oberpräsidents* were subordinated in matters of state law. The whole situation undermined – according to Frick – the authority of the state and therefore he ordered that the presidents of *Regierungsbezirke* should contact government bodies directly, thereby omitting the *Oberpräsidents* (they were only supposed to send them copies of their correspondence)[231]. In this way, a system limiting the impact of *Gauleiters* on actual administrative structures had been formed. Frick's policy was in conflict with the Act of 2nd December 1933 that provided that *Gauleiter*s would have a real impact on the administrative bodies.

[229] Cf Peter Diehl-Thiele, *Partei und Staat im Dritten Reich, Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von NSDAP und allgemeiner Staatsverwaltung*, München 1969, pp. 115-116, which exemplify such districts and provinces.

[230] *RGBl.I,* Jg. 1934, p. 75, *Gesetz über den Neuaufbau des Reichs vom 30. Januar 1934*; *ibidem*, p. 1190, *Zweite Ausführungsverordnung über den Neuaufbau des Reichs vom 27. November 1934*. Cf also P. Diehl-Thiele, *op.cit*, p. 125 *et seq.*

[231] P. Diehl-Thiele, *op.cit.*, p. 129.

This elimination elicited the protests of *Gauleiter*s, who demanded respect for their rights as *Oberpräsidents*.

In 1942 the Führer announced that the presidents of *Regierungsbezirke* were not allowed to contact the authorities of the Reich without *Gauleiter*s/*Oberpräsidents*. With that decision, a process that would lead to the complete degradation of the state apparatus began. The apparatus was, from that moment on, to serve the Party only and no decisions could be made without its consent. In this situation, there was no room for Frick and he had no choice but to leave. His successor was Himmler, appointed by Hitler on 24th August 1943. This was symbolic in nature and meant the total submission of state structures to Party purposes. The process started in 1933 and after nearly 10 years it finished with the total subordination of the state authorities to Party structures.

Anti-Polish acts committed by the Nazi Party after the outbreak of the Second World War resulted in the development of a situation which had arisen in Silesia in 1919.This time, the Nazis regained all territorial losses from the First World War. Earlier, at the Munich Conference (1938) when Czechoslovakia lost the Sudeten district, they had re-connected the Hlučín Region to the district of Racibórz. Their expansion, however, went further, because after the outbreak of the Second World War they incorporated into the Third Reich not only the Polish part of Upper Silesia, but also the areas lying further to the east, that is the western patches of Polish Voivodeships of Cracow and Kielce, yet without Kielce and Cracow. Wagner did not advocate such a long extension of the Province of Silesia to the east; he saw only the need to recover the territories lost after the First World War. He believed that after defeating Poland, the Silesian Voivodeship *(Polnisch Oberschlesien)* should be connected to the German region of Silesia. He did not, however, advocate the idea promoted by the head of the party's office, Martin Bormann, who suggested further extending Silesia eastwards by taking the districts (*powiats*) from the Voivodeships of Kraków and Kielce. He believed that those areas were inhabited by too many Polish residents, which could cause difficulties for Germanization. According to Wagner, it would be better to first 'clean' the area of 'racially alien elements' and then incorporate them into the Reich. Hitler, however, sided with Bormann and made unsatisfactory decisions for both Wagner and his deputy, Fritz Bracht, who was responsible for Upper Silesia. However, the concept of 'Great Silesia' advocated by Wagner and Bracht was not, in a geographical sense, far apart from the ideas of the leadership of the party.

The Second World War thus saw the implementation of the concept of 'Great Silesia', which was, however, not supposed to be restricted to regaining the areas of

Silesia lost in 1922. The aim was to not only take *Ost-Oberschlesien* away from Poland, but further expansion of the province to the east. Changes were introduced by a decree of the Führer and the Reich chancellor of 8th October 1939 on the division and administration of the eastern regions[232]. The Province of Silesia included the current Silesian Voivodeship with all districts (*powiats*), and also the districts (*powiats*) of industrial character of Kielce and Cracow voivodeships further to the west[233]. Most of those territories seized from Poland created the fourth *Regierungsbezirk* within the Province of Silesia-the district of Katowice (only a small part of the territory entered the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole)[234]. Territorial changes were also made between the *Regierungsbezirke* of Opole and Katowice, and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (the connection of Czech and Polish Ostrava in order to create Great Ostrava and include it in the district of Upper Silesia)[235].

Ultimately, however, when after the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 the National Socialists reversed the division of Silesia formed after the First World War, they maintained a unified Province of Silesia for only a short time. This was due to the fact that they were not able to implement their policies satisfactorily across such a vast area. The political situation forced them to restore the division of Silesia into two units when on the basis of the Prussian Act of 20th December 1940, effective from 1st March 1941, Silesia was again divided into two provinces[236]. The shape of the Province of Lower Silesia was analogous to that of 1919-1938, while the Province of Upper Silesia consisted, beside the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole also the newly created *Regierungsbezirk* of Katowice. The latter consisted largely of the area of the Silesian Voivodeship seized from Poland, and was extended by several districts (*powiats*) from the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole and western districts (*Kreise, powiats*) from the Voivodeships of Kielce and Kraków. The capital of the Province of Silesia in 1938-1940 was Wrocław, which, in 1919-1938 and 1940-1945 also, the capital of the Province of Lower Silesia. The capital of the Province of Upper Silesia was Opole in 1919-1938 and Katowice in 1940-1945. The area of *Gau Schlesien* comprised the area of the two provinces. In 1941 it was divided into two new districts *(Gau Nieder-* and *Oberschlesien*). In the district of Upper Silesia (*Gau Oberschlesien*)

[232] *RGBl. I*, Jg. 1939, p. 2042, *Erlass des Führers und Reichskanzlers über die Gliederung und Verwaltung der Ostgebiete. Vom 8. Oktober 1939*.

[233] Cf Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Terytorialne podziały na Śląsku*, part 6: *Wiek XIX i XX,* 'Kwartalnik Opolski', 18 (1972), issue 3, pp. 5-22; T. Kruszewski, *Zmiany podziału terytorialnego na Śląsku w okresie Trzeciej Rzeszy (1933-1945)*, AUWr. No 2136, *SnFiZH*, vol. 22, 1999, pp. 427-438.

[234] E. Jędrzejewski, *Hitlerowska,* pp. 225 and 226, *idem, O niemieckiej administracji na terenach włączonych do rejencji opolskiej w latach 1939-1945,* 'Studia Śląskie', 16 (1969), p. 54 *et seq.*

[235] *Verordnungsblatt der NSDAP, Gau Oberschlesien,* Folge 14-15/41, *Anordnung* Nr. 32.

[236] *PGS*, Jg. 1941, p. 1, *Gesetz über die Bildung der Provinzen Oberschlesien und Niederschlesien. Vom 20. Dezember 1940.*

the *Gauleiter* was Fritz Bracht. In the district of Lower Silesia (*Gau Niederschlesien*) the position of *Gauleiter* was given to Karl Hanke[237].

Josef Wagner proved to be a faithful executor of Hitler's policy in the 1930s. He was a supporter of the policy of Germanization, the aim of which was to remove all traces of Polish culture. Wagner's actions connected with the removal of 'Slavic-sounding' names of towns and other geographic objects were particularly infamous. Subsequently, the *Gauleiter* instigated the Germanization of surnames in both provinces of Silesia[238]. Such endeavours were supported by the Institute of Eastern Europe which indirectly, through its research activities, contributed to the consolidation of anti-Polish tendencies, which ultimately allowed the National Socialists to restore the temporary unity of Silesia during the Second World War[239].

The presented comments were aimed to show basic trends in the administrative development of Silesia under the rule of the 'brownshirt sowers of death'. Hitler's rise to power did not mean significant changes in the regulations, but in practice it led to their being interpreted completely differently.

Summary

For the disintegration of the idea of the unity of Silesia, a decisive moment was the second half of the 19th century which saw the rise of the concept of nationalism, and thus the idea of nation-states. The implementation of this idea in the case of Silesia, inhabited by subjects of three nations, two of which were just building their own states, could only mean the collapse of the uniform administrative structure which had been present within the Second German Reich. The catalyst for implementing these ideas was the First World War, which brought to life the Polish Republic and the Republic of Czechoslovakia, while ruining the Second German Reich. The nascent Weimar Republic did not have sufficient authority to maintain the unity of the Province of Silesia.

[237] For profiles of Hanke and Bracht see T. Kruszewski, *Partia,* p. 67 and 68; K. Höffkes, *op. cit.*, pp. 34 and 35 and 120-124, Cf also Karol Jonca, Alfred Konieczny, *Portret ostatniego gauleitera*, 'Odra', 3 (1963), issue 5, pp. 5-12.

[238] Karol Fiedor, *Bund Deutscher Osten w systemie antypolskiej propagandy*, Warszawa-Wrocław 1977, p. 263 *et seq.* T. Kruszewski, *Udział instancji NSDAP na Śląsku w akcji zmiany nazwisk,* AUWr. no. 1715, *SnFiZH*, vol. XVIII, 1995, pp. 221-234.

[239] Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, *Das Osteuropa-Institut in Breslau 1930-1940. Wissenschaft, Propaganda und nationale Feindbilder in der Arbeit eines interdisziplinären Zentrums der Osteuropaforschung in Deutschland,* [in:] *Zwischen Konfrontation und Kompromiss. Oldenburger Symposium: 'Interethnische Beziehungen im Ostmitteleuropa als historiographisches Problem der 1930er/1940er Jahre*, ed. Michael Garleff, München 1995, p. 54 *et seq.*, especially p. 62 and further.

Maintaining the unity of Silesia was impossible in the existing historical conditions that went back to the 18th century, when, as a result of the three Silesian wars, it came under Prussian rule. The Austrian emperors of the Habsburg dynasty managed to retain only Cieszyn Silesia and Opava Silesia (Czech: Opavské Slezsko, German: Troppauer Schlesien, Polish: Śląsk Opawski), while the rest of the area of Silesia found itself under the rule of the Prussian Hohenzollern dynasty. Silesia was still inhabited by a population of Slavic origin, but their national consciousness was only just beginning to rise; on the other hand, from the Frederician times and ultimately after the 'Spring of Nations' (1848), assimilation trends also intensified. This is evident in the progressive disappearance of the use of the Polish language, especially in Lower Silesia. When Polish national consciousness began to grow, it may have had its biggest impact in Upper Silesia, which lay closer to the Russian and Austrian partitions of Poland. The scope of the Polish language as a native language was quite limited in the *Regierungsbezirk* of Wrocław. The existence of the Polish population, however, was noticed during the conference at Versailles, where it was arbitrarily decided that the border areas of Lower Silesia, where the process of Germanization was not completed, were to become part of the reborn Poland. This concerned single communes (*gminy*) attached to the districts (*powiats*, *Kreise*) of Kępno (Kempen) and Ostrów, whereas the district (*powiat, Kreis*) of Namysłów (Namslau) took part in the Upper Silesian plebiscite in 1921. The world powers which met at the peace conference also decided to connect the southern end of the district (*powiat, Kreis*) of Racibórz (the Hlučín Region) to Czechoslovakia. Thus, after the entry into force of the Treaty of Versailles the uniform Province of Silesia completely disintegrated, and the consequences of this event are still evident to this day. The year 1945 brought a further transformation, but the essence of the division into two separate territorial units in Lower and Upper Silesia (and, from 1950, into three), resembles *a rebours* the situation of 1922–1939. Lower Silesia still forms a separate unit, and Upper Silesia is formed by two units. Today almost the entire area of Silesia is located within Poland, although the former Province of Silesia lies in three countries. The former Saxon part, which following the Treaty of Vienna in 1815 and 1825, was attached to Prussia, and most of the part that lies behind the Lusatian Neisse still belongs to Germany. The northern part of Lower Silesia is scattered over the Lubusz Voivodeship (the districts (*powiats*, *Kreise*) of Zielona Góra (Grünberg) and Żagań (Sagan), which is the most serious violation of the unity of Silesia, as it was excluded outside the administrative area of the former uniform province. The rest of Silesia is divided today into three voivodeships: Lower Silesia, Opole and Silesia, which gives rise to a confusion in terminology. It is

worth remembering that in 1998 there were plans to create a single Upper Silesian Voivodeship, but the awareness of the population of this part of Silesia prevented such a legal solution. Nowadays in Upper Silesia pro-Polish views, pro-German views and autonomous concepts created in the interwar period collide.

It is the epoch discussed in this text that has led to the current division of Silesia into three territorial units[240]. Also, the vague terminology of these three new administrative units stems from this epoch. The former Province of Lower Silesia is continued in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship, the former Province of Upper Silesia (in the Weimar Republic limited to the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole) is now partially continued in the Opole Voivodeship, and finally the last part is still called the Silesian Voivodeship. The latter name is now unfortunate, repeated after the interwar period, and not very sensible. This is due to combining both parts of the former Prussian Silesia and a part of Cieszyn Silesia. Repeating the traditional name, when today the entire region of Silesia and not just a part lies within Poland, causes pointless disputes between Katowice and Wrocław over which of these cities is the capital of Silesia.

The period from 1918 to 1922 was a time of major upheaval that eventually ruined the territorial unity of Silesia. German authorities quite quickly realized that the new states of Poland and Czechoslovakia would come up with territorial claims against the former Province of Silesia. Upper Silesia substantially differed from Lower Silesia; the distinctions between them were based on different grounds. Therefore, the administrative authorities faced not only external conflict with the new neighbours of the Reich in the east and south, but also an internal conflict between the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole and others. It dawned on the authorities in Berlin and Wrocław that the resistance against Upper Silesian demands may lead the inhabitants of Upper Silesia to turn their back on Germany and encourage them to opt for Poland and Czechoslovakia. Polish–German conflicts were accompanied by a Polish–Czechoslovak conflict over Cieszyn Silesia. Therefore, following the policy of lesser evil, the German authorities themselves broke the territorial unity of Silesia and agreed to the creation of two provinces. They hoped that this would attract hesitating residents, some of whom supported autonomy or even wanted to create a new state or a new land in Germany. It must be remembered that Catholicism dominated in Upper Silesia, which was perceived with suspicion by the Protestant Lower Silesia. What finally resolved this issue was a sense of national affiliation. Those Catholic activists who, like Wojciech Korfanty, were close to the Polish culture led to the emergence of the Silesian Voivodeship, and those who favoured

[240] The post-war period in Poland would also see the separation of the northern powiats of Lower Silesia and their connection to the newly created Zielona Góra Voioidship.

Germany, like Carl Ulitzka and Hans Lukaschek, fought for the widest possible autonomy for the Province of Upper Silesia. This struggle has shown the importance of self-awareness; ethnicity did not matter, only a sense of affiliation to Germany was what counted.

What resulted was constitutional, political and social conflict. From the point of view of the administrative authorities, a permanent conflict that penetrated into those three territorial units began from the beginning of the Weimar Republic. The authorities of the Province of Lower Silesia were hostile to the existence of both the Province of Upper Silesia and the Silesian Voivodeship. They viewed matters from a global perspective, and were supported in that by the Institute of Eastern Europe. Silesian authorities reluctantly agreed to the division of the shared property of the former single province, in which they were supported by statutory regulations which gave to the Province of Upper Silesia only 20% of that property. They delayed the distribution of wealth as long as they could; in some cases it took as long as 1933, when *Machtübernahme* came. The Christian Democrats in Upper Silesia had a different policy: they made the division stronger, strengthened independent institutions and called for full autonomy. The authorities of the Silesian Voivodeship pursued a similar policy, as they fought against the government in Warsaw in order to gain the widest possible autonomy. Polish regulations on autonomy were at this time really in force, whereas German regulations on autonomy in the Province of Upper Silesia were contested by the authorities in Berlin, although the Upper Silesian Christian Democrats tried to enforce them until 1933.

Such political ideas ended in Poland with the May Coup in 1926, but even this is not comparable to Germany in 1933. Only in a totalitarian regime like that was there was no room for any local government. The National Socialists were one of only a few political forces which in their organization in 1918-1933 did not take into account the division of Silesia. They also had the possibility of restoring the unity of Silesia. The first move was to combine the offices of *Oberpräsidents* of both Silesian provinces, and then to merge the two provinces in 1938. The next move was to broaden the province by the patches of the former Frontier March of Posen–West Prussia and seizing Hlučín Region from Czechoslovakia. Unification trends were dominant after the outbreak of the Second World War. Apparently, the division of the years 1918-1922 was finally broken. The Silesian Voivodeship was attached to the province and it created a *Regierungsbezirk* of Katowice. Nazi planners, however, went further by incorporating a significant proportion of now fully Polish areas of the western *powiats* of Kielce and Kraków and the Czech part of to the Province of Silesia. This success lasted until the end of 1940 when, due to

technical reasons, they discovered that they were not able to manage such a huge province from Wrocław and from 1st January 1941 Silesia was again divided into two provinces. This situation lasted until 1945 when Silesia, like the rest of the Third Reich, turned into *Trümmerfeld.* The history of Polish Silesia began, which meant a return to the 14th century. However, this was in a new form of the national state, in which there was no room for the German minority.

Relevant to this is the question how the authorities saw the former unity of Silesia. Political trends seem to indicate a significant division of opinions on this issue. If we were to search for somebody else in interwar Silesia strive to maintain its unity and in the long term saw the possibility of its return, we would find the government of Lower Silesia. They never came to terms with the fall of the Province of Silesia; at its division they wanted to keep as many unseparated institutions from the uniform province as possible. The political situation, however, until the fall of the Weimar Republic, never again provided them with a chance to participate in the restoration of the unity of Silesia. Upper Silesia – because of its individuality – was in a different position. In elections, Catholics living there gave a political mandate to the forces interested in the destruction of the idea of a unified Silesia. The local population was not ethnically uniform and, therefore, the new provincial government defending its identity was not able to stop it from further disintegration, and thus the German, Polish and Czechoslovakian Upper Silesia was born. If the democratic system had lasted intact, then no authorities in the former uniform Silesia would break its disintegration. Thanks to the existence of the Third Reich, the restoration of the unity of Silesia became a fact. It was an attempt to overcome the political legacy of the years 1918–1922. The National Socialists by 1939 had done a lot to strengthen the freshly created unity of Silesia within its German part.

The year 1939 saw the restoration of the unity of all of Silesia but in a specific form: the authorities of the Third Reich not only united Silesia within borders of 1918, but they overcome the results of the 18th-century divisions by uniting Prussian Silesia with the former Austrian part. They went even further, reaching for the Polish and Czechoslovak lands nearest Silesia. Those were not, however, lasting trends, because Germany lost the Second World War. What proved to be decisive were the years 1918-1922 and the defeat of Germany in the Second World War. The effect of the activities of local authorities between 1918 and 1945 is the erasing the possibility to restore the idea of the unity of the region of from social awareness in Silesia. There are two regions and regionalisms in Poland – Lower and Upper Silesia – and a smaller, Czech region in the south of the area.

Map 1. Silesia between World Wars (1922-1939) (Dariusz Przybytek)

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Integrating and disintegrating factors for the economy of Silesia in the interwar period

Abstract:

Identifying factors coalescing and disrupting the Silesian economy in the period 1918-1945 is not an easy task. After the region was partitioned into Czechoslovakian, German and Polish parts, such factors can be observed in each of the three areas. They lead to economic self-sufficiency in the different parts of Silesia, which in turn led to the dissolution of traditional economic relations within the region. Autarky proved impossible in only a few areas, such as energy distribution and transportation, yet even in these areas cooperation was minimal. Many integrative factors had limited territorial reach, such as delivery of water and gas in German Lower and Upper Silesia. The greatest number of contradictions can be discerned in German Silesia, where the key internal disruptive factor was the existence of two industrialised coal mining districts (the Upper Silesian and Wałbrzych-Nowa Ruda Industrial Districts). Coalescing and disruptive factors were no longer relevant during World War II, when all of Silesia was once again under the administration of one state, and its economy and industry was yoked to the military juggernaut of the Third Reich.

Keywords:

Silesia, economy, interwar period, transport, railways, waterways, coal, gas industry

Capturing and characterizing integrating or disintegrating factors for the interwar Silesian economy is extremely complex, and it must be noted at the outset that such phenomena are difficult to study in the context of economy in general, regardless of region. It is impossible to ignore the fact that in a free market economy, and such – regardless of certain forms of statism or economic interventionism – was the entire economy interwar Silesia, the main factors determining the functioning of that economic and commercial body were competition and the ensuing struggle for markets for manufactured goods, produced crops and acquired natural resources[1]. What also needs to be considered are political conditions, resulting from the post-war division of the

[1] For more on interventionism in the economy of Silesia see Bogusław Olszewski, *Miejsce Śląska w interwencjonizmie gospodarczym Republiki Weimarskiej,* 'Studia Śląskie', Seria Nowa, 15 (1969), pp. 281-313; *idem*, *Interwencja państwa niemieckiego w rolnictwie śląskim w okresie międzywojennym*, 'Studia Śląskie', Seria Nowa, 9 (1965), pp. 63-130; Karol Fiedor, 'Charakter pomocy państwa niemieckiego dla Wschodu w latach 1919-1933', 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 25 (1971), issue 4, pp. 587-619; Jerzy Jedlicki, *Nieudana próba kapitalistycznej industrializacji*, Warszawa 1964; Tadeusz Grabowski, *Rola państwa w gospodarce Polski 1918-1928*, Warszawa 1967.

former Province of Silesia (*Provinz Schlesien*) between Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland, and thus the change of the national status of different parts of the region, as well as the great world crisis of the early 1930s[2].

Therefore, adopting the above perspective and considering the above-mentioned factors, it seems quite obvious that after the First World War the economic organism of the largest German part of Silesia, whose foundations were created during the 19th century, was in a deep crisis. On the one hand, it lost its historically shaped markets, which now belonged to the new States, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia; on the other hand, the whole industry and economy of Silesia, previously focused on the easy sale of products in the vast Prussian East, the Kingdom of Poland and in Austria-Hungary, was characterized by outdated technology, and thus a limited degree of competitiveness[3]. This is evidenced, for instance, by the fact that in the area of the Żagań (Sagan, Zaháň) Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Industrie- und Handelskammer für das nördliche Niederschlesien*) at the end of the 1920s, as many as 251 out of 477 various types of companies and enterprises were more than 50 years old[4]. Moreover, in the sugar industry, technologies were already outdated by the beginning of the 20th century, when in 1905 the average daily beetroot processing in 1 of 20 sugar factories in the Province of Poznań (*Provinz Posen*) was 1,022 tonnes, and each of the 53 sugar factories in Silesia processed on average only 500 tonnes[5]. Furthermore, the German part of Silesia included two highly industrialized coal basins: Wałbrzych – Nowa Ruda (Waldenburg, Valdenburk, Valbřich – Neurode, Nová Ruda) and Upper Silesia, which, due to hampered or zero access to existing markets, had to compete with each other, thereby splitting the economic fabric of the region. It seems that it may well be argued that the operation of those two industrial zones in the new political realities was a major internal factor disintegrating the economy of German Silesia. The fact is also that although the economy of *Schlesien* experienced an abrupt and painful collapse, the industry of those parts of Silesia which were incorporated into economic organisms of the Second Republic of Poland and the Republic of Czechoslovakia – regardless of the broken economic and technological ties with industries on the German side of the border-thrived without much difficulty. To a vast extent this

[2] For more information Marek Czapliński, *Śląsk od pierwszej po koniec drugiej wojny światowej* [in:] *Historia Śląska*, pp. 349-424.

[3] For more information see Krzysztof Jeżowski, *Rozwój i rozmieszczenie przemysłu na Dolnym Śląsku w okresie kapitalizmu*, Wrocław 1961, pp. 171-174; Hermann Freymark, *Schlesiens Wirtschaft – eine deutsche Lebensfrage*, Breslau 1927, p. 49, *passim*.

[4] Hans Elsner von Gronow, *Grenzmark Nord-Niederschlesien. 50 Jahre Industrie- und Handelskammer für das nördliche Niederschlesien. Sitz Sagan*, Glogau 1929, p. 36.

[5] Paul Krische, *Die Provinz Posen*, Stassfurt 1907, p. 235.

resulted in ripe domestic markets-those parts of the region lost to the German part-as well as in favourable opportunities for foreign export[6].

The situation was no better in agriculture and in the agri-food industry, although in that case the post-war crisis and the impoverishment of the population had spread more evenly among the Czech, German and Polish parts of Silesia. After all, not only German burghers and workers, but also the Polish and Czech ones replaced the more expensive butter with margarine[7]. The border division negatively influenced not only the distilling industry of Greater Poland but also rectified spirit distillery plants in German Silesia, the milling industry and the grain market or the sugar factories in the Poznań Region and sugar refineries in Silesia[8]. Without going into further detail of the economic problems of the fragmented Silesia mentioned in the introduction, one of the key factors of disintegration should be indicated, namely border division and the creation of new nation-states, in particular, Poland and Czechoslovakia. It is clear that those are external factors, but they seem fundamental to the economic problems and trends disrupting the harmony of the Silesian economy in the 1920s and 1930s.

Following the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles, the Silesian Uprisings, the Plebiscite and the decisions of the Council of the Ambassadors, the Prussian provinces of Lower Silesia, with the capital in Wrocław, and Upper Silesia, with its seat in Opole (Oppeln, Opolí) – *Provinz Niederschlesien* and *Oberschlesien* were divided between Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland. As a result of several-year-long divisions, Czechoslovakia gained a significant part of Cieszyn Silesia (Czech: Těšínské Slezsko, Polish: Śląsk Cieszyński, German: Teschener Schlesien), an area of 1,273 km^2 including the economically valuable Basin of Ostrawa (Ostrau, Ostrava) – Karwin (Karwin, Karviná) and an important railway junction in Bogumin (Oderberg, Bohumin)[9]. With regard to the area's economic potential, which thus became part of the young Republic of Czechoslovakia, it suffices to mention only

[6] Teresa Kulak, *Propaganda antypolska dolnośląskich władz prowincjonalnych w latach 1922-1933*, Wrocław 1981, pp. 14-17; Zbigniew Miłobędzki, *Przemysł w województwie śląskim*, Katowice 1938, p. 18.

[7] Franz Ehrhardt, Allgemeiner *Überblick Oberschlesien nach den Diktaten von Versailles und Genf*', 'Die Provinz Oberschlesien', *1 (*1931), p. 4.

[8] H. Freymark, *Schlesiens Wirtschaft*, pp. 53-60, *passim*; Jan Majewski, *Wieś wielkopolska w okresie międzywoejnnym (1919-1939)*, [in:] *Dzieje wsi wielkopolskiej*, ed. Władysław Rusiński, Poznań 1959, pp. 294, 332, *passim*; Erhard Hartstock, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Oberlausitz 1547-1945*, Bautzen 2007, pp. 369-403.

[9] M. Czapliński, *Śląsk od pierwszej po koniec drugiej*, pp. 350-351; Dan Gawrecki, *Śląsk Cieszyński w okresie międzywojennym (1918-1938)*, [in:] *Zarys dziejów Śląska Cieszyńskiego*, Ostrava-Praga 1992, p. 85, 87; Janusz Ignaszewski, *Śląsk Zaolziański w życiu gospodarczym Polski*, Katowice 1938, p. 10, 12; Krzysztof Nowak, *Śląsk czechosłowacki (1918-1920-1938-1939)*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, pp. 251-254.

industrial concerns: 1) *Báňská a hutni společnost* (Mining and Metallurgical Society plc) owning five mines, two coking plants, one briquette plant and huge metallurgical plants in Trzyniec (Trzynietz, Třinec), 2) the concern of Count Larisch-Mönnich of Karwin (5 mines, 1 coking plant), 3) the Miner's guild of Orłów (Orlov) – Łazy (Lazy) (3 mines, 1 coking plant), 4) *Vitkovické horni a hutni težirstwo* (Vítkovice Mining and Metallurgical Plants plc) which, within the area of the Basin, operated the 'Dąbrowa' mine consolidated with the 'Bettina' and 'Eleonora' mines, and also a vast, modern metallurgical and manufacturing complex. Precisely how large the potential was is proved by the fact that coal mining in the Ostrawa-Karwin District in 1936 amounted to almost 9 million tonnes, thus representing about 75% of the total production of that mineral in Czechoslovakia[10]. In addition to Cieszyn Silesia the Czechs also received the small Hlučín Region (Czech: Hlučínsko, German: Hultschiner Ländchen, Polish: Kraik Hulczyński) with an area of 316 km^2, located south of Racibórz (Ratibor, Ratiboř), not only with highly developed agriculture but also economically connected with Racibórz[11].

Poland, on the other hand, maintained its administration over the remaining part of Cieszyn Silesia with Bielsko (*Bielitz*), rich in textile factories, with a total of 1,012 km^2, and also received the eastern part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District (*Oberschlesischer Industriebezirk*)[12]. The area granted to the Poland by the Council of Ambassadors, amounted to 3,214 km^2 with a population of about 1 million. Territorially, it paled in comparison to the whole of Silesia, but economically it was a huge blow to the potential of German Silesia. It suffices to say that in Poland there were 53 of 67 coal mines, all 9 iron ore mines, 10 out of 15 mines of precious zinc and lead ores, 5 out of 9 iron mills, all 18 mills of zinc, silver and lead, and finally 9 out of 12 rolling mills and the same number of steel mills. Within the German part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District, there remained only – according to German estimations – 10-15% of the coal deposits of the Upper Silesian Coal Basin (*Oberschlesischer Steinkohlenbecken*)[13]. In addition to the eastern part of Upper Silesia,

[10] J. Ignaszewski, *Śląsk Zaolziański*, pp. 11-12 *et al*.

[11] M. Czapliński, *Śląsk od pierwszej po koniec drugiej*, p. 365; Helmut Neubach, *Provinz Schlesien*, [in:] *Verwaltungsgeschichte Ostdeutschlands 1815-1945. Organisation – Aufgaben – Leistungen der Verwaltung*, eds Gerd Heinrich, Friedrich Wilhelm Henning, Kurt G. A. Jeserich, Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln 1993, p. 908; Walter Stöphasius, *Die Industrie- und Handelskammer für die Provinz Oberschlesien 1882-1932*, [in:] *Die Industrie- und Handelskammer für die Provinz Oberschlesien 1882-1932*, ed. Walter Stöphasius, Oppeln 1932, p. 110.

[12] On industrial infrastructure of Bielsko see Ewa Janoszek, *Architektura przemysłowa Bielska i Białej w latach 1806-1939*, Bielsko-Biała 2008.

[13] M. Czapliński, *Śląsk od pierwszej po koniec drugiej*, p. 351, 365; Erwin Siegmund, *Entwicklung und Stand der oberschlesischen Industrie*, 'Die Provinz Oberschlesien', 12 (1932), p. 238; Krystian Heffner, Wiesław Lesiuk, *Ekonomiczne i społeczne skutki podziału Górnego Śląska w 1922 roku*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku*, p. 141, 143; Piotr Greiner, *Historia gospodarcza Górnego Śląska*

the Poles – by the Treaty of Versailles – received also small parts of the districts (*powiats*, *Kreise*) of Góra (Guhrau), Namysłów (Namslau) and Syców (Gross Wartenberg) from the Province of Lower Silesia. In total, it was 511 km^2, which in the sphere of economic potential could have gone unnoticed, but they complicated conditions of communication (e.g., in the district of Syców the border disrupted two railway lines and six roads, including the extremely important road connecting Upper Silesia via Syców and Międzybórz (Neumittelwalde) with Góra and Głogów (Glogau, Hlohov), which was another factor of tremendous importance for integration or disintegration[14].

As mentioned earlier, one of the key elements of an irredentist character was the creation of new states at the borders of the divided Silesia. This led quickly to noticeable turbulences in the economy of the entire region, and above all, to its major weakening and the crisis in the German part. Taking the Upper Silesian Industrial District into account, the division of that living economic organism meant separating enterprises of 11 mining and metallurgical cartels, the division of assets of 120 mines and shafts, as well as 55 fields of coal mining and 43 fields of zinc and lead ore mining. It led to such peculiar situations, as in the case of a mine in Radzionków (Radzionkau), where the above ground infrastructure of the plant belonged to Poland, but the airshafts and excavation pits were in Germany. Moreover, the property of a giant mining and metallurgical company *Oberschlesische Eisenbahnbedarf A.-G.-Oberbedarf* (Upper Silesia Rail Need Company plc) was divided in such a way that in Poland lay a foundry with a mine, and in Germany, steel processing plants. As if that was not enough, communication suffered drastically. In total, 15 standard gauge railways were divided, while others, including the double-track main rail from Bytom (Beuthen) to Kluczbork (*Kreutzburg*) significantly lost importance, as well as 9 narrow-gauge tracks, 7 tram lines and 45 different types of roads. Networks of technical infrastructure were cut, including, among others, 8 water mains, 12 high voltage (HV) power lines and numerous pipelines[15].

On top of that there was the previously mentioned loss of markets, e.g. the heavy industry sector of the western part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District. Exports of goods and raw materials of mining and metallurgy to the north and the east were blocked mainly by lower prices of identical materials from the Polish Upper Silesian

(XVI-XX wiek), [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka*, Gliwice 2011, p. 330; G. Behaghel, *Der Aufbau Industrie Oberschlesiens im Wechsel der Zeiten und Wirtschaftsräume*, 'Stahl und Eisen', 5 (1940), pp. 92-98.

14 H. Neubach, *Provinz Schlesien*, p. 917; H. Freymark, *Schlesiens Wirtschaft*, p. 68.

15 K. Heffner, W. Lesiuk, *op. cit.*, p. 142; F. Ehrhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 6; Konrad Rasch, *Die Teilung Oberschlesiens und ihre Bedeutung für die Kohlen-, Eisen- und Zinkindustrie*, Berlin 1926, pp. 24-25; E. Siegmund, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

Industrial District, resulting, among other things, in lower (by about 40%) labour costs, significantly lower freight rates of the Polish State Railways (PKP) in relation to the Association of German Reich Railway (*Deutsche Reichsbahngesellschaft-DRG*), and, finally, government export incentives. Additionally, the demand from Czechoslovakia, territories of the former Habsburg Empire and the Balkan states, largely satisfied the District of Ostrawa-Karwin operating in Cieszyn Silesia, which produced goods and extracted coal at much lower prices as well. As a result, heavy industry, including mining in the western part of Upper Silesia, had to explore markets in the north-west – that is in central Germany – which was dominated by products and coal from the western Ruhr industrial region (*Ruhr Industriegebiet*), or in the nearby Lower Silesia, at the same time colliding with a much weaker Industrial District of Wałbrzych (*Waldenburger Industriebezirk*)[16].

The latter was in an equally critical position, as was the entire economy of Lower Silesia, since the supply of the Silesian industry was based mainly on the demand of the area of the contemporary Polish state, Czechoslovakia and the USSR. Close and ready markets, in which, until the end of the First World War, it was difficult to find competition against southwestern German industrial districts, disappeared instantaneously. I shall only mention that the export of goods from Lower Silesia to Poland in 1932 reached less than 2% of those from 1913, and the export of coal and coke to Czechoslovakia, the main recipient of these fuels before the war, in the 1920s did not exceed even 10% of the pre-1914 amount[17]. As a result, the mining of the Wałbrzych and Nowa Ruda basins was devastated and its condition was far worse than that of Upper Silesian mining, whereby the signs of the crisis were evident as early as the threshold of the First World War, and they were characterized by three main factors: 1) geological conditions of coal beds of small thickness, which were difficult and costly in operation, 2) the unfortunate position in the east of Germany, and the resulting high costs of shipping goods to markets, 3) increasing competition in products and raw materials from the Upper Silesian Coal Basin, where coal was of better quality and cheaper to extract[18]. The same problems existed in other branches of Lower and Upper Silesian industry. In 1929 it was estimated that as a result of the border division with Poland, the bridge and railcar construction factories of Beuchelt in Zielona Góra (Grünberg, Zelená Hora) lost up to 50% of their market opportunities, much like the brick factories operating

[16] E. Siegmund, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-237.
[17] K. Jeżowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-174.
[18] Ernst Tittler, *Das niederschlesische Industrierevier in der Nachkriegszeit*, Berlin 1927, p. 12; Adrian Gaertner, *Die Notlage des niederschlesischen Bergbaues, ihre Ursachen, Folgen und Beseitigung*, Waldenburg 1913, pp. 4-14.

in the Żagań Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and in the case of the famous Weiss clock tower factory in Głogów the loss was up to 80%. Another problem was the customs war with Poland, ongoing since 1925, that struck, among others, the production of spirit in Głogów, not to mention the trade[19].

The entire Lower Silesian textiles and wood industry suffered greatly, particularly the industry at the Sudetian Foothills, which not only lost markets but at the same time experienced huge problems with the acquisition of cheap raw materials from Poland and the USSR for production. It will suffice to note that in 1913 the areas of contemporary Poland, Ukraine and Russia provided the Lower Silesian industry with 23,400 tonnes of flax and 101,800 tonnes of wood, while in 1924 it provided only 1,400 tonnes of flax and hemp, while domestic crops were extremely modest, amounting in 1928 only to 3,160 ha[20]. The turmoil and trouble with finding new markets, and thus faint possibility of normal functioning, was recorded even in the cement factories in Opole (Oppeln) which before the war, sold one third of production in the eastern Upper Silesia, in the Poznań Region and West Prussia. Now the in Polish Silesia fell from 11% of total exports in 1922 to 0.1% in 1926, while exports to the Poznań Region and West Prussia fell from 20.6% in 1913 to 3.7% in 1926[21]. In total, therefore, it was estimated that the acquisition of the Poznań Region, a part of Upper and Lower Silesia, and West and East Prussia, by Poland led to market shrinking for German Silesia on average by 34%[22].

Export of goods and parallel import of raw materials necessary for production collapsed almost completely, thus definitely breaking ties between the economy of German and Polish Silesia and the Polish-German customs war which had lasted since 1925[23]. The project, prepared largely to save German mining in Wałbrzych-Nowa Ruda and Upper Silesia from the competition of 0.5 million tonnes of coal annually imported duty-free from Poland to Germany, was aimed at paralyzing the mining industry in Polish Upper Silesia. However it backfired, seriously affecting the import of raw materials for other industries and export of their production to the east. As a result, the customs war caused temporary disruptions in the Polish mining industry, which, due to limited demand for coal in a poorly industrialized country, had to deal with the sudden surplus of unsold goods. Nevertheless, thanks to the

[19] E. von Gronow, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
[20] K. Jeżowski, *op. cit.*, p. 174, 180.
[21] *75 Jahre Oppelner Portland Zement*, Oppeln 1933, pp. 24-26.
[22] Georg Keil, *Das niederschlesische Industriegebievol. Seine Entwicklung und Notlage*, Berlin 1935, p. 135.
[23] For more information on the customs war see Bertold Puchert, *Der Wirtschaftskrieg des deutschen Imperialismus gegen Polen 1925-1934*, Berlin 1963; Barbara Ratyńska, *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w okresie wojny gospodarczej 1919-1930*, Warszawa 1928.

strike of British miners in 1926, it was possible to gain ready markets in Scandinavia and Italy, which from then on imported Polish coal. Thus, the industry and the economy of Polish Silesia triumphed over the Weimar Republic, yet at the price of virtually total disruption of the already fragile economic ties with German *Schlesien*. After nearly a decade (1925-1934) of the customs war it was difficult to recover lost markets, manufacturers and suppliers[24].

The consequence of the aforementioned disintegrating factors was the increasing competition within German Silesia, and the deterioration of economic conditions across the region, regardless of national affiliations, which indeed coincided with the post-war economic troubles of the whole of Europe, and finally with the global financial crisis of 1929. The natural result of these problems was a self-defence reaction by the economy of the entire region, aiming in the opposite direction; that is towards integration, yet integration not necessarily understood through geography, but rather through specific industries. Indeed it was a phenomenon typical of a free market economy, although it must be stated that the huge economic problems of Silesia also motivated individual countries and various types of institutions to help in various fields. In general, they provided financial and legislative assistance, as well as assistance in the area of communication facilities, which shall be expanded further.

Thus, the beginning was cartelisation and creation of various types of industrial unions, rationalization of factory operation and administration, and, finally, modernization of production lines and related capital injections, according to the simple rule that only the strong survive. This type of phenomena occurred simultaneously in Czechoslovakia, and the German and Polish parts of Silesia. I have already mentioned a number of large concerns in Czech Cieszyn Silesia, so at this point I am only going to draw attention to the aforementioned Mining and Metallurgical Society plc with management in Prague, co-creating one entity with Vítkovice Mining and Metallurgical Plants plc. Following the inter-war concentration and rationalization of operation of both companies, besides the previously mentioned mines, coking and briquetting factories, the assets of the former also included: a steel mill with 4 blast furnaces, a steel plant with 13 open hearth furnaces and 1 electric furnace, a rolling mill with 8 rolling stands, a wire factory in Bogumin, a chain factory in Mala Morávka (Klein Mohrau), an iron ore mine, lime kilns and a power plant. On the other hand, Vítkovice Mining and Metallurgical Plants plc jointly with the 'Karol' foundry (*Karlova huta*) in Liskowiec in the late 1930s already

[24] P. Greiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 330-331; Karl Heidrich, *Ausbau der deutsch-polnischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen*, [in:] *Niederschlesiens Industrie baut auf*, Breslau 1934 (without pagination).

included: 7 coal mines, 1 briquette plant, 2 coking plants, an iron ore mine in Slovakia and Sweden, limestone quarries, 5 blast furnaces, a cast iron foundry, a steel mill with 8 furnaces, a steel foundry with 4 open heat furnaces and 3 electric furnaces, a rolling mill with 18 rolling stands, a pipe factory, a factory of steam and electrical hoists, a boiler factory, a factory of bolts and rivets, a bridge factory, and, on top of all that, 6 factory power plants. What is more, it is worth noting again that the whole entity belonged to the French capital group Schneider-Creusot[25].

A similar concentration of heavy industry was progressing in German and Polish Upper Silesia, although it was accompanied by a significant reorganization of the administrative structure, resulting in separating several management boards from the operating companies with a border. On the basis of the Geneva Convention of the 15th May 1922[26], also known as The Upper Silesian Convention, on the one hand a huge industrial asset of the Prussian tax authorities – incidentally, the holder of the largest coal deposits in Upper Silesia – was divided, but on the other hand automatically a joint-stock *Preussische Bergwerks- und Hütten-A.-G.-Preussag* (Prussian Mine and Foundry Company) company was created in Germany and *Polskie Kopalnie Skarbowe na Górnym Śląsku, Spółka Dzierżawna S.A*. (*Skarboferm*, Polish Treasure Mines plc in Upper Silesia) in Poland. Converting the former Prussian state property into joint stock companies made it possible to gather vast funds for the modernization and restructuring of both companies, whereby in the case of the Polish company its shareholders were divided fifty-fifty between the Polish state and French capitalists. A similar situation was that of the aforementioned *Oberbedarf,* whose factories in Poland were merged into a single company named *Huta Pokój S.A*. in Nowy Bytom, which agglomerated, among others, a 'Pokój' coal mine, 'Pokój' ironworks, iron ore mines in Tarnowskie Góry (Tarnowitz, Tarnovské Hory) and the plants belonging to other companies including: 2 mines: 'Wolfgang' and 'Hrabia Franciszek von Ballestrem' from the Industrial Board of the Ballestrem Counts (*Gräfl. Ballestremsche Industrieverwaltung*), a steel mill Baildon S.A. from *Caro Hegenscheidt* (*Oberschlesische Drahtindustrie Caro Hegenscheidt A.-G.*)), 1 steel mill and 1 rolling mill, Ferrum S.A., from *Oberbedarf,* a power plant of the *Mikołaj* Mining Plant in Ruda (Ruda) from the Industrial Board of the Ballestrem Counts. Due to those transactions, the share capital of the entity automatically grew to 70 million zloty. In Germany, on the other hand, the legacy of *Oberbedarf* was divided into several large companies. What is more, the pre-war

[25] J. Ignaszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[26] *Polsko-Niemiecka Konwencja Górno-Śląska zawarta w Genewie 15-go maja 1922 r. (Polish-German Upper Silesian Convention of the 15th of May, 1992, Geneva).*

Industrial Board of the Ballestrem Counts owning, among others, 4 mines, of which 3 fell to Poland, was used to establish *Wschodniogórnośląski Zarząd Przemysłowy Hrabiów Ballestermów* (East-Upper Silesian Industrial Board of the Ballesterm Counts) in the Silesian Voivodeship with a seat in Ruda, agglomerating not only 3 mines, but also a coking plant, a chamotte factory and a large lumber mill. Another major entity, *Hohenlohewerke A.-G.* (Hohenlohe Plants plc), located mostly in Poland, created a company Wełnowiec Hohelohe Plants S.A., while the two mines remaining in Germany, *Oehringen* and *Sosnitza,* merged into a new company: *Oehringen Bergbau A-G.* in Gliwice (Gleiwitz)[27]. Finally, as a result of the unification processes in various heavy industries of Polish and German Upper Silesia, shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, in the German part there were a total of 10 entities (5 coal, 1 iron and steel, 1 lead, 1 coal and steel and 2 coal and zinc concerns), and in the Polish part there were 18 entities (10 carbon, 2 iron and steel, 1 lead, 1 coal and steel, 3 coal and zinc concerns and 1 carbon, zinc and lead concern)[28].

It is impossible to list here all changes in ownership, administration and transformations aiming at concentration of the plants separated by territorial division. Nevertheless, the trend is clear on three sides of the border. What is more important is the fact that the new entities created after the division began to unite further, or at least to form cartel agreements and syndicates. In this way, in 1925 in German Upper Silesia, in accordance with the will of the Reich Minister of Economics, a voluntary carbon syndicate (*Oberschlesisches Steinkohlensyndikat*) was founded in Gliwice, joined by all coal mines, which gave the whole sales of the extracted mineral to two large commercial companies. The coal industry followed suit, which combined to form a joint commercial company for the sale of coke and by-products. On the other hand, the steel industry turned out to be too weak to establish a separate union. Therefore, it joined the nationwide *Deutsche Rohstahlgemeinschaft,* (German Unification of Raw Steel), which was the production cartel designating to individual steel mills quotas for the production of pig iron and metal products. Worth mentioning here is the merger – extremely interesting from an economic point of view – of the two entities most harmed by the border division, namely *Oberbedarf* from Gliwice and *Oberschlesische Eisenindustrie A.-G.-Obereisen* (Upper Silesian Steel Industry plc) from Zabrze (Hindenburg). From May 1925 both entities were involved in the creation of one strong company, as they were perfectly complementary. *Oberbedarf* kept its steel processing plants in

[27] K. Rasch, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-31; Karl Albach, *Oberschlesiens heutige Gestalt. Kohlen und Eisen in Wiederaufbau und Wirtschaftskampf*, Siegen 1929, pp. 34-35.

[28] G. Behaghel, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

Germany, and *Obereisen*-the iron mines and steel mills. The only missing element were coal mines, but because the German Industrial Board of the Ballestrem Counts was a shareholder of *Oberbedarf*, there was a real chance to incorporate its 'Castellengo' mine owned by the new company. What is more, *Oberbedarf* was a majority shareholder of *Donnersmarckhütte A.-G.* (Donnersmarck Foundries plc) in Zabrze, which made the company the next element of the planned union. Initially, general assemblies of the companies concerned spoke against the merger, but the idea of production rationalization and concentration was so tempting that financial aid in the creation of the Upper Silesian tycoon was offered even by Prussia. As a result, in September 1925, three aforementioned companies merged and created *Vereinigte Oberschlesische Hüttenwerke A.-G.-Oberhütten* (United Silesian Metallurgical Plants plc) based in Gliwice. In September 1931, to save the famous *Gleiwitzerhütte* (Gliwice Foundry) and steel works *Malapanerwerke* ('Małapanew') in Ozimek (Malapane) from bankruptcy, they were also incorporated into the Gliwice holding. Thus, the whole iron and steel industry, and in large parts also the machine industry of western Upper Silesia were created only by two giant companies: *Oberhütten* and *Borsigwerke A.-G.* (Borsig Plants plc)[29].

As in the German part of Upper Silesia, the same actions were also performed in the Polish part. As a result, in 1925, *Ogólnopolska Konwencja Węglowa* (National Coal Convention) was created, and in 1931 transformed into *Polska Konwencja Węglowa* (Polish Coal Convention), a syndicate combining all mines of the eastern part of Upper Silesia. and also the mines in the Kraków and Dąbrowa districts, which in 1938 accounted for 99% of coal extraction in Poland. Additionally, the metallurgical industry created *Syndykat Polskich Hut Żelaznych Sp. z o.o.* (Syndicate of Polish Iron Foundries Ltd.) with its seat in Katowice, one of the most powerful monopolistic organizations in Poland, concentrating foundries and metal plants of not only Upper Silesia, but also Warsaw, Dąbrowa and Starachowice[30].

The advantage of the activity of syndicates and cartels was the possibility to impose a quota on factory production and thus rationalize their operations. What is more, it enabled monopolistic pricing, as well as facilitated the sale of goods abroad, thus gaining coveted markets. However, for the German Upper Silesian steel industry, concentration carried out in this way turned out to be another factor disintegrating the economy of *Schlesien.* It transpired that the metallurgical cartel

[29] K. Rasch, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-49; E. Siegmund, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

[30] Franciszek Biały, *Polska Konwencja Węglowa*, [in:] *Encyklopedia historii gospodarczej Polski do 1945 roku*, Warszawa 1981, vol. 2, p. 106; Zbigniew Pustuła, Syndykat *Polskich Hut Żelaznych Sp. z o.o.*, [in:] *Encyklopedia historii gospodarczej Polski*, vol. 2, p. 352; K. Rasch, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-53; Z. Miłobędzki, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78.

introduced not only uniform prices for rolled products, but also a uniform method of calculating the cost of transport from the agreed freight base. Thus, the customer – regardless of the distance from the foundry – paid the so-called parity costs – that is the cost of transport from the freight base. The problem, however, was that the choice of those freight bases was made only between the towns/places in the west of Germany, such as Oberhausen, Duisburg and Essen. As a result, the Lower Silesian machinery industry, buying rolled steel from the steel mills of Upper Silesia, instead of paying the actual costs of transport had to pay conventional costs, equal to the distance, e.g., from Oberhausen. The result was the severing of economic ties between the Lower Silesian machinery industry and Upper Silesian metallurgy, because the transport charges from the foundries in Upper Silesia were identical with those of the foundries in the Ruhr district, whereas the quality of the wire rod, and, above all, range diversity, were significantly lower than in the steel industry of western Germany. Thus, the machinery industry began to supply the Ruhr foundries, abandoning supplies from Upper Silesian plants (in 1929 the share of the steel industry of Upper Silesia in the supply of the Lower Silesian machinery industry was only 35%), thus contributing to the deepening of the crisis in heavy industry of the region[31].

However, as mentioned earlier, the situation in the Wałbrzych Industrial District was even worse, because several small mines, faced with increasing external competition, were forced to compete directly with each another. The fact is that just after the First World War, due to the lessening of competition of Upper Silesian coal, the situation of Wałbrzych mining improved, although this only lasted until 1924, when the mines of western Upper Silesia seriously increased extraction, and thus began to re-flood traditional coal markets for the mines from Wałbrzych-Nowa Ruda with cheaper coal[32]. A remedy for the deteriorating situation was also a policy of consolidation, albeit coupled with a thorough rationalization of production, as well as with the modernization and expansion of the technical infrastructure of the plants. Help came from Prussia and the Reich, which gave the restructuring companies a loan of 11 million marks, which, in fact, was a subsidy. As a result, the Lower Silesian shareholders of the company of *Oberschlesische Kokswerke und Chemische Fabriken A.-G.,* (Upper Silesian Coke and Chemical Plants plc), that is the *Fuchsgrube, Davidgrube, Seegen-Gottes-Grube, Viktor-* and *Gustavgrube* mines, along with the *Glückhilf-Friedenshöffnung-Grube* miner's guild and *Rütgerswerke A.-G.* company with its 'Kulmiz' mine, combined to form *Niederschlesischen*

[31] K. Jeżowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-191.
[32] G. Keil, *op. cit.*, p. 137, 152.

Bergbau A.-G., concern (Lower Silesian Mining plc) in 1928, whose capital soon after the formation rose from 36 to 40 million marks. What remained outside of the consolidation were the mining plants of the Nowa Ruda district and the mining property of the dukes of Pszczyna (Pless), which was transformed and consolidated, however, in 1930 as *Waldenburger Bergwerks A.-G.* (Wałbrzych Mining Plants plc). The consolidation was followed by highly important rationalization programmes and investments. The key seems to be the construction of a modern coking plant in the area of *Glückhilf-Friedenshöffnung-Grube* (mining plant and the 'Victoria' coking plant), which led not only to the exclusion of old and inefficient coking plants from operation, but, above all, development of a programme of building a long-distance gas pipeline network for coke-oven gas, based on sound foundations, which constituted another integrating element for the economy of Lower Silesia, which shall be discussed further[33].

Consolidation and unification simultaneously progressed in all branches of industry, becoming the simplest means of defence against the crisis, and a primary integrating factor for the economy. However, it shall be stated that it often occurred as a result of stronger companies taking over smaller and weaker companies, often from outside Silesia. In this way, Gustav Becker's factories from Świebodzice (Freiburg), supplying the entire former East Germany with clocks, were taken over by the magnate in the German clock market, Jungans complex, while two large porcelain factories from Wałbrzych were within Hutschenreuther and Rosenthal concerns, and the third one – an electrical and technical porcelain factory – was absorbed into *Gesellschaft für elektrische Unternehmungen – Gesfürel* (Society for Electrical Investment). In addition, *Deutsche Maschinenbau A.-G.-Demag*) (German Machine Building Plant plc) from Duisburg absorbed both machine factories and iron casting houses in Wałbrzych. The Silesian tycoon in the cotton industry, *Dierig A.-G.,* with the parent plant in Bielawa (Langenbielau) merged with the *Hammersen A.-G.* concern in 1930, thus creating Germany's largest company dedicated to the manufacturing of cotton products[34]. It was no different in the agri-food industry either, and a good example here was the sugar industry, operating since the late 19th century in two cartels which implemented quotas on the production of sugar: *Schlesische Zuckerkonvention* (Silesian Sugar Convention) and *Vereinigte Schlesische Zuckerfabriken* (United Silesian Sugar Factories). The first union united 18 factories, the other – 8 factories, and the remaining 13 sugar mills operated independently. Also, the Silesian spirit industry did not succeed as it was developed

[33] *Ibidem*, pp. 152-153; K. Jeżowski, *op. cit.*, p. 192.
[34] G. Keil, *op. cit.*, p. 159; K. Jeżowski, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

particularly in the north-eastern part of the region, and was based on a simple and low-cost supply of potatoes from the Poznań Region. With the outbreak of the customs war, the supply of raw material stopped and imports from greater distances were not profitable due to high freight charges. The result was that some of the distilleries and husking mills had to stop operations, and the rest had to be completely eliminated[35].

Water, gas and electric pipelines divided by the border, as well as the Wałbrzych programme for building trunk gas pipelines, have already been briefly mentioned. It appears that problems in securing supplies of water and energy were other integrating factors for the Silesian economy, although, like the previous ones, their character was rather local, or at least their range was strictly defined. That was the case, e.g., with water supply for the Upper Silesian Industrial District, where the concepts of centralizing the water supply for the region had been known since the late 19th century. Two huge state-owned, multi-commune waterworks were created at that time, powered from the *Adolfschacht* in intakes Tarnowskie Góry and 'Zawada' in Karchowice (Karchowitz/Gutenquell) as well as the County of Katowice Waterworks (*Kreiswasserleitung des Kreises Kattowitz*), supplied with water from the closed mine 'Rosalie' (*Rosaliegrube*) in Dąbrówka Wielka (Gross Dombrowka)[36]. Due to the general lack of water in the entire industrial district, caused by mining activities, until the moment of its division the water supply network of all these factories densely entwined urban and rural clusters of people all over the Upper Silesian Industrial District. With the border division the water mains were cut, regardless of the towns supplied by individual companies, and, what is worse, the only waterworks company left for the whole German part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District was 'Zawada'. Other water intakes were in Poland. Water proved to be such an invaluable commodity that the Upper Silesian Convention provisioned a 15-year moratorium on the supply of water from the waterworks companies located in Poland and Germany to towns and industry, and it also formed a joint, though short-lived (1922-1924), German-Polish board of *Staatliche Wasserversorgungsanlage* (State Waterworks Company)[37].

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35 *Schlesien. Bodenschätze und Industrie*, Breslau 1936, p. 256; H. Freymark, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

36 See Paul Geisenheimer, *Die Wasserversorgung des oberschlesischen Industriebezirks*, Kattowitz 1913; Ernst Grahn, *Die städtische Wasserversorgung im Deutschen Reiche, sowie in einigen Nachbarländern*, München-Leipzig, vol. 1, pp. 134-138; Kazimierz Nowakowski, *Zaopatrzenie w wodę Górnośląskiego Okręgu Przemysłowego*, Katowice 1938; Miron Urbaniak, *Zakład Produkcji Wody „Zawada" w epoce ruchu parowego*, Katowice 2004; Johannes Ziekursch, *Die Entwicklung der staatlichen Wasserversorgungsanlage im oberschlesischen Industriebezirk*, 'Zeitschrift des Oberschlesischen Berg- und Hüttenmännischen Vereins', 1911, pp. 521-542.

37 *Polsko-Niemiecka Konwencja Górno-Śląska*, pp. 78-82.

For 15 years both sides were involved in the total decoupling of their parts of the Upper Silesian Industrial District from the supplies of water from the opposite side of the border. Germany undertook a wide-ranging expansion of 'Zawada' waterworks plants and the construction of a new deep well 'Jelina' and the intake of groundwater Dzierżno (Sersno), thanks to which they increased pipeline capacity fourfold. In addition, they launched a few mine intakes of drinking water, including *Donnersmarckhüttegrube* mine and *Karsten-Centrumgrube* mine in Bytom, and owing to the implementation of the main line from 'Zawada' to Bytom and, thus making the city independent of the supply of water from Poland, they managed to introduce the supply of their entire Industrial District using only their own water intakes. Those investments were led by *Wasserwerk Deutsch-Oberschlesien GmbH* (German Upper Silesia Waterworks Ltd.) located in Zabrze, and founded in 1924. Its creation was necessary in order to raise funds for the works, collected quickly by participating in the Upper Silesian industrial venture with the state *Preussag* at the forefront[38].

In 1924 the Poles established the *Państwowe Zakłady Wodociągowe* (National Waterworks Plant) in Upper Silesia (PZW), which carried out the expansion and modernization of the water plant 'Staszic Shaft' (formerly 'Adolf Schacht'), supplying water to 20 communes and 2 cities in 3 districts, and also started the construction of a brand new water company 'Maczki' on the Biała Przemsza river (*Weisse Przemsa*), supplying water to major cities of Dąbrowa Górnicza and Upper Silesia Basins. The first stage of this project, carried out from 1929 to 1931, cost 15 million zlotys, and ultimately 'Maczki' was used by such cities as Będzin (Bendzin), Dąbrowa Górnicza (Dombrowa), Chorzów (Königshütte, Chořov), Katowice, Sosnowiec (Sosnowitz) and Szczakowa[39].

The existence of the national multi-commune waterworks system in the German and Polish parts of the Upper Silesian Industrial District was unique both in Poland and in Germany, due to historical reasons, yet it was obviously an integrating element, allowing the functioning of communities, and in large part enabling

[38] M. Urbaniak, *Zakład Produkcji Wody „Zawada"*, pp. 27-37; D. Schwantke, *Die Wasserversorgung des deutsch-oberschlesischen Industriebezirkes*, 'Das Gas- und Wasserfach', 1931, issue 19, pp. 421-427; D. Hache, *Die Wasserversorgung in Oberschlesien und deren Zukunft*, 'Das Gas- und Wasserfach', 1922, issue 4 and 5, pp. 49-51 and 67-71; Tytus Laskiewicz, Felicja Rymowicz, *Gliwice – Zabrze – Bytom w okresie lat 1921-1939 pod względem gospodarczym i przemysłowym*, Katowice 1947, p. 25; Franz Rompe, *Aus Verwaltung und Wirtschaft des oberschlesischen Industriegebiets*, Breslau 1934, pp. 121-122; K. Albach, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74; W. Stöphasius, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[39] K. Nowakowski, *Zaopatrzenie w wodę*, p. 43-52; *idem, Zagadnienie zaopatrzenia w wodę Górnego Śląska i Zagłębia Dąbrowskiego*, 'Przegląd Techniczny', 1927, issue 4 and 5, p. 51-54 and 78-81; *idem, Zarys projektu i budowy państwowego wodociągu z Maczek dla Zagłębia dąbrowskiego i górnośląskiego*, 'Przegląd Techniczny', 1932, issues 4-5, pp. 45-48.

operation of industry, which is completely forgotten in the literature on that subject. Similar examples are difficult to find in Lower Silesia, but at least two projects of multi-commune water supply are worth noting. The first one was a unique gravitational multi-commune waterworks in Nowa Ruda, realised during the interwar period, based on water intakes located on the slopes of the Sowie and Stołowe Mountains (Eulen- and Heuscheuergebirge, Owls and Tables Mountains), supplying water to two cities and several rural communes[40]. The second one, the construction of a multi-commune waterworks for the Piława (Peile) area, was planned and designed between 1938 and 1939 as part of the water management programme already developed for the whole of Silesia. The outbreak of the war prevented the realization of this truly risky venture, but its scale is a classic example of Nazi technical ideas. Waterworks were supposed to supply water to a total of about 20 locations along the Sowie Mountains range, among them, to the highly industrialized centres of the Dzierżoniów Industrial District (*Reichenbacher Industriebezirk*): Bielawa, Dzierżoniów (Reichenbach), Piława Górna (Gnadenfrei) and Pieszyce (Peterswaldau). The water intake was to be utilized in three large storage reservoirs connected via pipelines: 1) one near Lutomia (Leutmannsdorf) with a capacity of 1.45 million m^3 2) another above Bielawa – 0.66 million m^3 and 3) the last one above Pieszyce – 0,44 million m^3. The whole cost was estimated at 6 million marks, yet it would still supply water only to the residents, as the supply for industrial plants was to be provided by a separate reservoir[41].

A factor which integrated the economy more thoroughly than the supply of water was the gas industry and energy production. Particular progress and new quality was evident in the area of the former, because of the continuation or emergence of concepts of centralized and long-distance gas transmission, and also the trend towards replacing traditional coal gas with coke-oven gas. New ideas are already evident in the aforementioned Dzierżoniów Industrial District, where in 1922 *Gaszentrale unter Eule GmbH* (Under Owl Mountain District Gasworks Ltd.) was formed, whose shareholders were the city of Dzierżoniów and the rural communes of Bielawa and Pieszyce. All these centres used old town gasworks from the 1860s, completely unsuited to their needs. Therefore, in order not to build three new gasworks, they decided to set up a company and raise a common gasworks in Dzierżoniów. After its start in 1922, the old plants were out of operation and converted into substations, while the entire gas supply for three localities was

[40] Zygmunt Król, *Wodociąg grupowy 'Nowa Ruda'* [in:] *Zabytki techniki wodociągowej Polski*, ed. Stanisław Januszewski, Wrocław 1989, pp. 123-126.

[41] *Schaffung eines Gruppenwasserwerkes im Peilegebiet in Schlesien*, 'Ostdeutsche Bauzeitung', 1938, issue 27, p. XI.

taken over by *Gaszentrale unter Eule*. Despite these efforts, the supply of the district gasworks excluded Piława Górna and Ząbkowice Śląskie (Frankenstein, Frankenštejn), but undoubtedly a great step was made towards the integration of the energy base for Dzierżoniów Industrial District[42]. In addition to investment in Dzierżoniów, the district range in Lower Silesia had also, among others, gasworks in Bolesławiec (Bunzlau, Boleslav/Slezská Boleslav), Duszniki Zdrój (Bad Reinerz), Kłodzko (Glatz, Kladsko) and Zgorzelec (Görlitz, Zhořelec). In total, there were 7 district manufactured gas plants, supplying gas to 45 localities, and also 5 district gasworks distributing coke-oven gas to another 49 localities[43]. The latter arose from the implementation of a construction programme for trunk gas pipelines, based on coke-oven gas, which was produced in the Wałbrzych District.

I have already mentioned the construction of a modern central coking plant ('Wiktoria') in Wałbrzych, which began to sell manufactured coke-oven gas to *Gaszentrale Niederschlesien GmbH.* (Lower Silesia District Gasworks Ltd.), set up in 1926 and based in Wałbrzych. This company took over supplying gas, among others, to 30 localities of the pre-war *Gaszentrale Altwasser* (Stary Zdrój District Gasworks) in Wałbrzych, and it also took over the operation of the trunk pipelines to Świdnica (Schweidnitz, Svídnice) and Świebodzice, which had been in operation from a similar time. To make even better use of the opportunities created by coking plants in Wałbrzych, the board of the Lower Silesia province decided to create in 1929 a company *Ferngas Niederschlesien A.-G.-Ferngas* (Lower Silesia Trunk Gas Pipelines plc) transformed in 1938 into *Ferngas Schlesien A.-G.* (Silesia Trunk Gas Pipelines plc). In 1930, this company started the construction of a one of a kind long trunk pipeline from Wałbrzych via Jelenia Góra (Hirschberg, Hiršberk/Jeleni Hora) to Cieplice Zdrój (Bad Warmbrunn), and entrusted its operation to *Gaszentrale Niederschlesien G.m.b.H.* In the following years, including the Second World War, *Ferngas* built subsequent parts of high-pressure trunk gas pipelines, reaching e.g. Legnica (Liegnitz, Lehnice), Lubawka (Liebau, Libava), Zgorzelec and Wrocław. As a result, a 370-kilometre *Ferngas'* gas network system cooperating with coal gasworks placed German Lower Silesia among the regions with the most logical and economical gas supply systems in Germany. It is also an example of how the energy sector was an integrating factor for the province of Lower Silesia, because coke-oven gas was used not only by the people but also the industry, as exemplified at least by: chemical and ceramic factories in the Stary Zdrój

[42] Oscar Vaupel, *75 Jahre Gasversorgung im Kreise Reichenbach 1863-1938*, Reichenbach 1938, p. 15, 17, 24.

[43] Romuald Rzeszoś, *Gazownictwo Dolnego Śląska a problem gazownictwa polskiego*, 'Gaz, Woda i Technika Sanitarna', 1946, issue 7, p. 189.

(Altwasser), porcelain factory in Jaworzyna Śląska (Königszelt), 'Karol' steelworks (*Carlshütte*) in Stary Zdrój, glassworks in Pieńsk (Penzig OL), or factories of clay and firebrick in Strzegom (Striegau, Střihom)[44].

Similar possibilities in the construction of a gas network, based on coke-oven gas, also existed in the Upper Silesian Industrial District, therefore – in the German part of the District – a programme of a centralized system of coke-oven gas supply was implemented. Its manifestation was, although not limited to, establishment of a limited liability company which served a combined gas infrastructure of Bytom, Gliwice and Zabrze (*Verbandsgaswerk Beuthen-Hindenburg OS GmbH.*). The company bought coke-oven gas, among others, from the following coke plants: *Gleiwitzer Grube, Skalley* and *Dellbrückschacht,* treated it in Zabrze gasworks, and then distributed it to consumers through the shared pipeline network. It must also be mentioned that as early as in 1931, technical plans and economic calculations were developed to build – within *Ferngas* – a trunk gas pipeline network from Zabrze to Wrocław via Brzeg (Brieg, Břeh) and Opole, and thus to connect the Upper Silesian and Wałbrzych Industrial Districts through the trunk gas pipeline. Ultimately, however, the idea remained in the design stage[45].

In contrast to Germany and the increasingly widespread use of coke-oven gas, in the Polish part of Upper Silesia, where coal was abundant, the base was solely traditional light gas. However, the Polish Upper Silesian District did not escape centralizing tendencies, a sign of which was the functioning of the Upper Silesian Gas Headquarters plc in Hajduki Wielkie (Bismarckhütte), which in the mid-1920s supplied gas to 17 communes of the Silesian Voivodeship, including Katowice, Kochłowice (Kochlowitz), Lipiny (Lipin), Świętochłowice (Schwentochlowitz), and also the industrial firms functioning in these places. Self-generating communal gasworks usually existed only in the more remote centres of the Upper Silesian Industrial District, namely in Bielsko, Królewska Huta (currently: Chorzów), Mikołów (Nikolai, Mikulov), Mysłowice (Myslowitz), Pszczyna, Rybnik and Tarnowskie Góry, whereas the Polish part of Cieszyn (Teschen, Těšín) did not have its gasworks and was forced to buy gas from the plant on the Czech side of the border[46].

[44] *Ibidem*, p. 189-191; Wilhelm Ferbers, *Kokereigasversorgung im niederschlesischen Industriegebiet durch die Gaszentrale Niederschlesien G.m.b.H., Waldenburg, Schlep*, 'Das Gas- und Wasserfach. Journal für Gasbeleuchtung und Wasserversorgung', 74 (1931), issue 23, pp. 333-340; Kazimierz Smoluchowski, *Dolnośląskie gazociągi dalekosiężne*, 'Gaz, Woda i Technika Sanitarna', 1947, issue 1, pp. 1-2; G. Keil, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-154.

[45] T. Laskiewicz, F. Rymowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

[46] Józef Konopka, *Gazownictwo polskie i jego rozwój w świetle liczb i wykresów*, Warszawa 1928, pp. 19, 80-89; *Statystyka gazowni w Polsce za rok 1936/37*, Warszawa 1938, pp. 1-15.

The integrating factors of the widest range were definitely the energy networks and their importance for the unity of the economy in Silesia, which was clear even before the First World War. As a result, a sound foundation for the rational energy economy of the region was created long before the division. Conducive to this were undoubtedly natural conditions created by a dense network of water flows, which provided a relatively easy opportunity to build hydroelectric power plants, as well as easy access to coal as a fuel, and what that entails-economical construction of thermal power plants. Another factor which facilitated planning and carrying out electrification work and expansion of electricity infrastructure over the entire interwar Silesia was the activity of several financially strong electric companies, already well-established before the First World War. That was, for instance, the case with *Elektrizitätswerk Schlesien A.-G.* (Silesia Power Plant plc) founded in 1909 in Wrocław, combined in 1922 with the *Niederschlesischen Elektrizitäts- und Kleinbahn A.-G.* (Lower Silesian Electrical and Narrow-Gauge Railways plc) in Wałbrzych. The electric tycoon in the Silesian energy market in the mid-1920s had already had an HV network of 2,500 km in length, supplying the area of 8,500 km^{2,} consisting of 18 districts (Kreise), including 25 cities and 900 other localities[47]. On the other hand, *Überlandzentrale Mittelschlesien GmbH.-ZÜM* (District Power Plant Middle Silesia Ltd), established in 1911 and based in Strzegom, transformed in 1920 into an union of the districts of Dzierżoniów, Jawor), Strzegom, Środa Śląska (Neumarkt in Schl., Slezská Středa) and Świdnica. After 25 years of operation they had a high-voltage network of a length of 885 km, supplying electricity to the area of 1,800 km^2 including 4 cities, 300 licensed local networks and 100 electric cooperative networks[48]. Since 1923, *Überlandwerk Oberschlesien A.-G.-ÜWO* (District Electric Power Plant Upper Silesia plc) operated in the Opole Region based in Nysa (Neisse), a company whose shareholders were the province of Upper Silesia, the Prussian state and the German Reich. Its stunning development in the 1920s, including sales exceeding 50 million kWh in 1928 was largely – just like in the case of the aforementioned *ZÜM* – the result of comprehensive electrification of the countryside. It suffices to say that in 1921-1926 the number of electricity consumers of *ÜWO* increased fivefold, while the increase in generating electricity of an identical amount occurred between 1924 and 1928[49].

[47] *Elektrizitätswerk Schlesien Aktiengesellschaft Breslau* [in:] *Breslau*, ed. G. Halama, Berlin 1924, pp. 116-119; *Historia elektroenergetyki dolnośląskiej*, Wrocław 1989, pp. 16-17.

[48] *25 Jahre Überlandzentrale Mittelschlesien in Striegau 1911-1936*, [Striegau 1936], pp. 8-12.

[49] K. Albach, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75; Bogdan Cimała, Wiesław Lesiuk, *Rozwój elektroenergetyki w rejencji opolskiej* [in:] *Monografia Zakładu Energetycznego Opole P.A.*, eds Stanisław Senft, Ewa Dawidejt-Jastrzębska, Opole 2002, pp. 16-28.

Überlandwerk Oberschlesien A.-G. was a company involved in the construction and operation of the energetic network and the sale of electricity, but the energy was produced by *Oberschlesische Elektrizitätswerk A.-G.-OEW* (Upper Silesian District Power Plant plc) in Gliwice. In their case, along with the division of Upper Silesia, there was already severe turbulence, resulting from the loss of the most powerful power plant of the Upper Silesian Industrial District, namely the plant in Chorzów, covering two thirds of the electricity demand in the German part of Upper Silesia. Although also on this area the Upper Silesian Convention introduced a moratorium on mutual supply of electricity to the whole Upper Silesian Industrial District, which lasted only three years. This led to an immediate expansion and modernization of a large thermal power plant 'Zaborze', and to intensified work on the expansion of a huge thermal power plant in Szombierki (Schomberg) near Bytom built in 1917-1920 on the initiative of the Schaffgotsch counts. These investments, largely, yet by no means completely, enabled them to make German Upper Silesia independent from the supply of electricity from Poland[50].

In turn, in the Polish part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District, to administer the distribution of the wealth of *OEW,* a separate company called *Oberschlesisches Kraftwerk SA Katowice-OKW* (Upper Silesian Power Plant plc) was created, which in 1933 was transformed into Katowice Silesian Electric Plant plc (*Ślązel*), and which exploited the power plant in Chorzów. In the meantime, the high-voltage-line 60-and-20-kW-system was built, allowing the power plant in Chorzów to work, e.g. with mine power plants 'Donnersmarck' and 'Jankowice' of the concern of the Donnersmarck princes, 'Emma', 'Charlotte' and 'Anna' of the Rybnik Coal Miner's Guild, as well as a huge and modern power plant belonging to the company Elektro Plants Ltd. in Łaziska Góne (Ober Lazisk, Horní Lazyska). As a result, the total installed power of 7 power plants was 240 MW, and annual production in the 1930s reached 550 million kWh. Incidentally, this enormous power and production was periodically used by the industry of the German part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District, as their own power plants were not sufficient to meet demand. Therefore, in 1931 the power plants in the Polish Upper Silesian Industrial District sold to the western part of the District 24.8 million kWh and up 28.4 million kWh in 1932, while in 1935 the Polish Upper Silesian Industrial District bought from the German part 8.4 million kWh. Without going into further details of the energy cooperation between both parts of Upper Silesia, I shall recall once again that the Czech part of Cieszyn until 1926 also drew energy from the power plant located in the Polish

[50] K. Albach, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75; *Zespół Elektrociepłowni Bytom P.A. Moc energii w zdjęciach, dokumentach, faktach*, Katowice 2003, pp. 11-16; W. Stöphasius, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

section of the city. That year it ended cooperation with the Polish local government, and the supply of electricity was taken over by the Moravian – Silesian power plant from Ostrava – Karvina District which was operating in Cieszyn Silesia[51].

Undoubtedly, the key problems influencing integration or disintegration were transport conditions, generally understood through the network of rail and inland waterways. The programme of construction of German motorways (*Reichsautobahnen*) within Silesia, carried out ostentatiously after Adolf Hitler came to power, was no longer such a fundamental matter. In fact, it meant only the 231-kilometre stretch from Forst via Legnica and Wrocław to Brzeg and the short (31-kilometre) Łany (Lohnia)-Gliwice-Bytom was built. The aforementioned 262 kilometres of motorway surface, which was supposed to connect Berlin with the Upper Silesian Industrial District, with a total of 3,171 kilometres of motorway built by the end of September 1939, accounted for only 8% of the whole motorway network of the Third Reich[52]. However, the other roads for motor vehicles in Silesia were important only for the local transport, and for longer routes they were generally too few[53]. Meanwhile, communication problems in the area of rail and inland waterways were the most important both integrating and disintegrating factors for the entire Silesia, although they were particularly acute probably in *Schlesien*.

With the rise of Poland and the division of Upper Silesia, the border cut across tens of railway lines and countless roads, and within the province of Lower Silesia alone there were 10 railways and 30 roads disrupted[54]. Well-known was the example of Bytom, where out of 9 access roads to the city, only one whole road remained in Germany, or the example of the aforementioned road from the Upper Silesian Industrial District to Głogów, 8 kilometres of which in the district of Syców was left in Poland. On the other hand, out of the three major marshalling yards, which served before the First World War to send most of products and raw materials from the Upper Silesian Industrial District outside, were Tarnowskie Góry in Poland, and Gliwice and Pyskowice (Peiskretscham) in Germany[55]. However, railway communication was of such great integrating importance that the Upper Silesian Convention in this regard also provisioned a 15-year moratorium on the privileged rail transit (without customs) for a few standard gauge and two narrow gauge railway routes, appointed jointly by the Polish and German sides[56].

[51] Aleksander Groza, *Zagadnienie elektryfikacji na Śląsku*, Katowice 1937, pp. 30-31, 40, 50-51.
[52] Andrzej Brożek, *Były pruski Wschód w sieci Reichsautobahnen*, 'Przegląd Zachodni', 1 (1969), issues 1-2, pp. 113-114.
[53] H. Koernig, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
[54] E. von Gronow, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.
[55] H. Koernig, *op. cit.*, p. 17; H. Freymark, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
[56] Michał Jerczyński, Stanisław Koziarski, *150 lat kolei na Śląsku*, Opole-Wrocław 1992, p. 107.

The division of the border, however, inevitably distorted this very important bonding element of the Silesian economy. Therefore, the first and most important task for the Germans in the field of railway transport was to create a well functioning administration within the Upper Silesian district of Opole. The former Prussian *Königliche Eisenbahndirektion – KED* (Directorate of Railways) was from that moment located in the Polish town of Katowice (Directorate of State Railways, later the Regional Directorate of State Railways – DOKP), while the inclusion of the railway network remaining on the German side under the administration of *Reichsbahndirektion-RBD* (Reich Directorate of Railways) in Wrocław would mean its catastrophic overload. Therefore, in 1922 the Germans set up a new *RBD* in Opole[57], which was responsible for the administration and operation of the railway traffic in Opole Silesia and in the western part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District with 16 mines and 18 railway crossings with Czechoslovakia and Poland[58]. That directorate also conducted major railway investments aimed at creating a coherent frame of rail within German Upper Silesia. In the first phase in 1928, to bypass Tarnowskie Góry junction located in Poland, a single-lane section of Zabrze-Mikulczyce (Mikultschütz)-Tworóg/Brynek (Tworog/Bryneck) was built, and parallel to that was the extensive development of junctions and stations in Bytom, Gliwice (with a daily shunting capacity of 5,000 cars!), Racibórz and Kędzierzyn (Kandrzin/Heydebreck), in 1925 leading from the latter new collision-free rail links to Koźle (Kosel, Kozlí) – one of the largest inland handling river ports belonging to the *DRG*. At the same time, thanks to the funding granted to, among other things, build necessary railways in the eastern parts of Germany, the so-called 'Act to help the East' (*Osthilfegesetz*) of 1931[59], *RBD Oppeln* in 1934-1936 built a single-lane line Koźle-Leśnica (Leschnitz) – Strzelce Opolskie (Gross Strehlitz). A 30-kilometers trail was a significant trade short-cut, which also provided widespread access to the famous St. Annaberg (St. Anne's Mountain)[60]. On the other hand, *RBD Breslau* together with the newly formed *RBD Osten* (East) in Frankfurt an der Oder, whose administration in the south reached up to Lubsko (Sommerfeld), Żagań, Głogów and Góra, concentrated on the facilitation of rail traffic to the north-west[61]. This was to make the transport of coal and products from the entire German Silesia towards Brandenburg

[57] For more information on the activities of *RBD Oppeln* see Hans Wolfgang Scharf, *Eisenbahnen zwischen Oder und Weichsel*, Freiburg 1981, pp. 340-394.

[58] *Oberschlesien. Verkehr, Wirtschaft und Volkstum*, Berlin 1935, p. 19.

[59] See *Gesetz über Hilfsmassnahmen für die notleidenden Gebiete des Ostens (Osthilfegesetz)*, 'Reichsgesetzblatt', 1931, part I, no. 14.

[60] M. Jerczyński, P. Koziarski, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-113; *Oberschlesien. Verkehr, Wirtschaft*, p. 19.

[61] For more on the activities of *RBD Breslau* and *RBD Osten* see H. W. Scharf, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-283, 394-404.

with Berlin and towards Pomerania with Szczecin (Stettin) easier and more efficient and thus to create transport corridors to Silesian markets. Therefore, already in the mid-1920s, a double-lane bypass of Legnica junction to Miłkowice (Arnsdorf) was built, which thus became an important marshalling yard, and Wrocław gained collision-free exits from rail freight bypass to Legnica and Głogów, and also significantly extended and modernized a railway junction. At the same time, a stretch from Lubiąż (Leubus, Lubuš) to Malczyce (Maltsch) with its rail handling harbour on the Odra river was completed, which was particularly important for the mines of the Wałbrzych Industrial District, although in Malczyce handled only 1/30-1/70 of coal that was reloaded on barges at the port in Koźle. In addition, the second track was laid on the Opole-Brochów (Bockau) and Nowa Sól (Neusalz a.O.)-Czerwieńsk (Rothenburg), stretches, so the transport of Upper Silesian coal was facilitated to Szczecin and Piła (Schneidemühl) in the Frontier March of Poznań-West Prussia (*Grenzmark Posen-Westpreussen*), and further – through the so-called Polish corridor to the sea – to East Prussia. Finally, also in 1928, a fully electrified main line Wrocław-Wałbrzych-Jelenia Góra was put into service, and it was of the utmost importance for the cargo transport from the Wałbrzych-Nowa Ruda District[62]. Here it should be mentioned that the rail, which united the entire region, at the same time facilitated competition of Upper Silesian coal on the Lower Silesian market with that extractet at the Wałbrzych-Nowa Ruda mines and thus was a disintegrating factor. This fact had long been observed, because, according to Dr. A. Gaertner, when the train connection from Kędzierzyn via Kamieniec Ząbkowicki (Kamenz) and Kłodzko to Wałbrzych Podgórze (Waldenburg Dittersbach) was opened in October 1880, in all major stations on this line there were forwarding points for Upper Silesian coal. In this way, the prosperity of Wałbrzych-Nowa Ruda mines caused by the opening of the sales market around Wielka Sowa Mountain (Big Owl, *Hohe Eule*) thanks to new railway connections did not last long. Just over the decade of 1881-1891 weak mines in Nowa Ruda lost over one million marks due to Upper Silesian coal competition[63].

It is difficult to discuss all railway undertakings of an integrating nature for the economy of German Silesia, however, rail initiatives are highly important, as they concerned not only the economy, but also various types of local government, businesses, and even state institutions of both German provinces. It involves a concept created in the 1920s in the neighbouring Frontier March of Poznań-West Prussia of creating the so-called Frontier Rail or the Frontier March Rail (*Grenzlandbahn/*

[62] M. Jerczyński, P. Koziarski, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94, 111-113; A. Gaertner, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.
[63] A. Gaertner, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

Grenzmarkbahn). The idea behind this concept was to create the shortest transport corridor – especially for Upper Silesian coal – to East Prussia (*Ostpreussen*) along the Polish border. The planned line was to run from Oleśnica (Oels) on the main Rail of the Right Bank of the Odra River (*ROUE*), forming the north rail freight bypass of Wrocław and to connect near Oborniki Śląskie (Obernigk) with the main Wrocław-Poznań rail line. Then the rail would lead to Żmigród (Trachenberg, Trachenberk), where the branch was to lead to Wąsosz (Herrnstadt) and Góra. From the latter, the line was intended to lead towards Wschowa (Fraustadt), and then to Sława Śląska (Schlawe) and continue to Zbąszynek (Neu Bentschen), Międzyrzecz (Meseritz) and up to Skwierzyna (Schwerin a.W.), where via Drezdenko (Driesen) it would reach Stare Bielice (Altbeelitz) on the main Eastern Railway (*Ostbahn*) leading west to Berlin and east via Piła up to Königsberg in East Prussia. Thanks to this risky idea, the shortcut between the German Upper Silesian Industrial District and Krzyż Wielkopolski (Kreuz) on *Ostbahn* was to reach nearly 90 km in relation to the currently used railway connections. The idea, above all, promised tangible financial benefits for the Silesian economy and it was so inspiring that it was supported not only by economic self-government bodies, such as the Chamber for Industry and Commerce of Opole or Żagań, but also by a powerful *Oberschlesischer Berg-und Hüttenmännischer Verein* (Upper Silesian Association of Mining and Metallurgy) and the authorities of the *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole. It was interesting for Wrocław, for which the proposed bypass would mean reducing the load for its own junction and its facilitation for wide passenger traffic, allowing for the development of satellite settlements, and thus the development of the city. Ultimately, however, the great idea of the Frontier Railway did not receive the approval of the *Reichstag*, and as a result there was only the Skwierzyna-Stare Bielice stretch[64].

Remaining still within the issues of communication conditions of the German part of Silesia, it seems impossible not to mention the huge integrating role of inland waterways, including in particular the Odra river), called by the Germans 'a life nerve of Silesia' (*Lebensnerv Schlesiens*). For the economy of the whole of Silesia – Upper Silesia in particular, though – the Odra river was, above all, a much cheaper transport alternative than the monopolistic rail transport, so much that the competitive sale of coal to central Germany and Brandenburg with Berlin was, in fact, possible only through the Odra Waterway (*Oder Schifffahrtsstrasse*). Therefore, throughout the interwar period, all the political, economic, and industrial factors of both provinces focused their attention on regulating the Odra river and

[64] For more information M. Urbaniak, *Kolej Skwierzyna-Stare Bielice. Kolejowy modernizm w Polsce*, Łódź 2013.

facilitating its traffic, from the Upper Silesian Industrial District up to Szczecin. Suffice it to say that even shortly after the First World War, the Odra Waterway was the crucial argument for maintaining economic and administrative unity of the former province of Silesia, becoming a starting point for the idea of a 'great economic union of Silesia' (*Grosswirtschaftsverband Schlesiens*)[65].

Although the river was navigable from Racibórz up to its mouth, below Wrocław it was too shallow, and below the mouth of the Warta river there was its sharp gradient, which in total made it more difficult to navigate barges of increasing tonnage. Meanwhile, the construction of the already famous *Mittellandkanal* (Midland Canal), a waterway connecting the western industrial districts of Germany with Brandenburg and the Odra river in the east, started and the canal would allow free and, above all, cheap transport of coal and goods from the Ruhr Industrial District towards eastern provinces of the state. As a result, mines and factories from the western Germany would successfully compete with Silesian enterprises on last open and available for the economy of the whole Silesia markets[66].

Therefore, since the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, there was a number of significant investments to improve the functioning of the Odra Waterway. Most of them – like the construction of motorways – were carried out as part of the great Nazi program of public works (*Öffentliche Arbeiten-ÖFFA*). As a result, a storage reservoir in Otmuchów (Ottmachau) on the Nysa Kłodzka river, under construction from 1928, was already completed in 1933 and then, after a 3-year test operation, it began to be used. It could collect 126 million m^3 of water used for recharging the Odra river during drought. At the same time the construction of the Mała Panew (Malapane) river reservoir in Turawa (Turawa) started, cooperating with Otmuchów, with a capacity of 90 million m^3, completed in 1938. Similar was the situation with another, third storage reservoir near Dzierżno (Sersno, Stauwerder) on the Kłodnica (Klodnitz) river, which was opened also in 1938 and was of great importance (recharging the canal) for another hydrological investment, namely the 41-kilometre Adolf Hitler Canal, today Gliwicki Canal from Gliwice to Koźle built between 1934 and 1939. Due to the construction of the modern canal with 6 locks, the only major inland waterway canal in interwar Poland, 140-tonne barges which used to sail on the old Kłodnicki Canal (Klodnitzkanal) could be replaced with barges of 1,000 tonnes. However, due to the standardized shipping type 'new *plauerka'* (*Neue*

[65] T. Kulak, *Propaganda antypolska*, pp. 24-26.

[66] *Oberschlesien. Verkehr, Wirtschaft*, p. 23; H. Koernig, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-17; H. Freymark, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46; A. Gaertner, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

Plauener-Masskahn) commonly used in the inland navigation on the Odra river, the channel was sailed by vessels of up to 760 tonnes[67].

It is difficult to estimate the significance of the aforementioned Adolf Hitler-Kanal for the economy of Upper Silesia, and the Odra Waterway for the economy of the entire German Silesia. It is certain, however, that the inland waterway combined with a dense railway network were among the most important factors that integrated the economic organism of German Silesia, not to mention the fact that every large industrial plant, in particular mines or foundries, had its own railway sidings.

Meanwhile, in the Polish part of Silesia such an investment as the Adolf Hitler Canal could only be dreamt of, due to the lack of technical conditions. However, in 1936 Zbigniew Wasilewski wrote about the inland waterway transport used on the Biała Przemsza river: 'The only means of transport used to floating coal, is a 'Cracow' wooden scow, which can take the full load of 50 tonnes (...), sensitive to wind and wave, an object used only in our waters'. What is more, this 'floating' was carried by horses because the Przemsza river was too shallow for tugboats. Thus, even though the river from Mysłowice to its mouth was densely strewn with ship's holds, water transport for the Polish part of the Upper Silesian Industrial District was in fact not significant[68]. State authorities and the authorities of the Silesian Voivodeship could only focus attention on the rail network, especially given that railway junctions in Bytom, Gliwice and Kluczbork, important for transport to the north-south, were located in Germany[69].

In the first place it was necessary to bypass the junction stations situated in Germany, which was done by the construction of a single-track rail link Zabrze Makoszowy (Hindenburg Makoschau)-Mizerów (Miserau) for Gliwice junction (1923-1924) and a double-track main line Chorzów Stary-Brzeziny Śląskie (Birkenhain)-Szarlej Piekary (Scharley Deutsch Piekar), bypassing the junction in Bytom (1925). On the south of the Upper Silesian Industrial District between 1923 and 1925 a single-track line Bluszczów (Bluschau)-Brzezie (Hohenbirken) at the Odra river was built, as well as the Pawłowice Śląskie (Pawlowitz OS, Slezské Pavlovice)-Chybie (Chybi) line, bypassing the German junction in Chałupki

[67] *Oberschlesien. Verkehr, Wirtschaft*, p. 24; H. Koernig, *op. cit.*, p. 13; Walter Bubeck, *Der Adolf-Hitler-Kanal und seine Bedeutung für die schlesische Wirtschaft*, Breslau 1935, pp. 5-27; P. Greiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 332-333; Adam Szewczyk, Stanisław Januszewski, *Śluzy Kanału Gliwickiego*, [in:] *Zabytki przemysłu i techniki w Polsce*, ed. Stanisław Januszewski, Wrocław 2002, vol. 6, pp. 127-128; T. Laskiewicz, F. Rymowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 23; Gustav Königs, *Die Oder. Lebensnerv Schlesiens*, [in:] *Niederschlesiens Industrie baut auf*; Konrad Fuchs, *Schlesiens Industrie*, München 1968, p. 44.

[68] Zbigniew Wasilewski, *Znaczenie dróg wodnych dla przemysłu śląskiego*, Katowice 1936, p. 27 (the quoation and information above).

[69] M. Jerczyński, P. Koziarski, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

(Annaberg), and thus directing the Polish coal cargo to southern markets. In addition, several junctions, e.g. in Tarnowskie Góry, Katowice Ligota (Ligota), Wodzisław Śląski (Löslau) and Rybnik were modernized and extended to adapt them to increased traffic to the north-east. On the other hand, to get around restrictive transport tariffs prevailing in the German Kluczbork transport corridor and to allow unfettered coal transportation to Greater Poland, between 1925 and 1926 at a high-speed – more than a 100-mile single-lane trail Kalety (Kalety)-Herby Nowe-Wieluń Podzamcze near the Polish Kępno – was built. As a result the problematic German Kluczbork junction was bypassed, which facilitated transport of coal to Greater Poland and to Polish Pomerania. In order to gain foreign markets for the Polish Upper Silesian Industrial District, the construction of a famous Coal Main Line (Polish Upper Silesia-Ports in Gdynia and Gdańsk) started, connecting the 508 km stretch between Tarnowskie Góry with the newly built port of Gdynia and the existing port in Gdańsk. This risky investment was undertaken at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s by PKP (State Polish Railways) in cooperation with the French and Polish Railway Society. Thus, the Polish project on the scale of the German *Grenzlandbahn*, unlike the latter came to effect and its consequence was the construction of a huge marshalling yard at Tarnowskie Góry, of the estimated daily shunting capacity of 4,500 cars. What is also worth mentioning at this point is modernization of border stations in Cieszyn and Zebrzydowice (Seibersdorf, Žibřidovice) carried out in agreement with Czechoslovakia, and also the building of the iron route from Rybnik via Żory (Sohrau, Žáry/Žárov) to Pszczyna in 1934-1938, financed not by the PKP, but by the Treasury of Silesia[70]. At the turn of the 1920s and 1930 two impressive modernist rail stations in Będzin and Szarlej-Piekary were also built and the new rolling stock repair workshops were erected in Katowice Ligota[71].

It is difficult to list here all transport investments related to the economic unity of Silesia, but the fact is that in the Silesian Voivodeship a lot was done in this regard, indeed. Suffice it to say that out of the 745 km of standard gauge railways of the Silesian Voivodeship in 1938, over 200 km were already built after the division of the Upper Silesian Industrial District. At the same time, rail transport traffic

[70] *Ibidem*, p. 107-111; Eugenia Brzosko, *Rozwój transportu w Polsce w latach 1918-1939,* Szczecin 1982, p. 93, *passim*; Grzegorz Kotlarz, Henryk Dąbrowski, Edward Wieczorek, *Magistrala węglowa*, Rybnik 2008, pp. 155-157; Bogumił Hummel, *Odbudowa i utrzymanie kolei*, [in:] *Dwudziestolecie komunikacji w Polsce Odrodzonej,* Kraków 1939, p. 156; *Dziesięciolecie Polskich Kolei Państwowych 1918-1928,* Warszawa 1928, p. 16.

[71] See Ewa Perlińska, *W służbie Polskich Kolei Państwowych. Dworce w Szarleju-Piekarach i Będzinie*, [in:] *Oblicza sztuki 20-lecia międzywojennego na obszarze obecnego województwa śląskiego*, ed. Teresa Dudek Bujarek, Katowice 2011, pp. 63-71.

of the voivodeship was approximately 42% of the whole of Poland, and in tonnage it was 50% of the whole country! Polish Silesia also had the best and most modern network of roads for motor vehicles in Poland, which consisted of 2,348 km (1938), out of which 251 km of motorways, mostly asphalt ones, had been built, and 1,299 km had been modernized since 1922. What is more, 76 km of tram networks were operating, and on the Silesian roads there were 27 bus lines. It took an hour to fly from Katowice airport to Warsaw, and from the airport in German Gliwice it was possible to connect with the network of airports in the Reich[72].

In conclusion, I shall mention one more important factor uniting the economically disintegrated interwar Silesia, although not of material importance, namely different types of economic and vocational institutions operating in Silesia. First of all, we should mention chambers of commerce and industry operating throughout all of German and Polish Silesia since the 19th century (in the Polish part there was only one Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Katowice). Covering vast and heavily industrialized regions of Silesia, concentrated on trade and rich in craftsmanship, economic government institutions were in a privileged position because they did not have to follow standardized administrative procedures, thus they could reach the government directly with their memorials, petitions and various requests of economic and commercial nature. Chambers, therefore, submitted memorials and engaged primarily in improving not only rail transportation but also bus communication carried out by private carriers and by a state-owned postal carrier. They suggested changes to the train timetables, supported the construction of certain rail connections, and also pushed the government authorities and railway managements to grant special freight rates to the Silesian industry. What is more, they gave opinions on social, customs and tax legislation and fought for the creation of economic ties with neighbouring regions. In a word, they engaged in all types of actions of an economic and commercial nature, which aimed to support the economy of the region[73]. It may also be reminded that the chambers of German Silesia played a big part in preparing in 1938 the famous memorial 'Die Not der preussischen Ostprovinzen' (The Poverty of Prussian Eastern Provinces), the consequence of which was, among others, the aforementioned *Osthilfegesetz*[74]. What is more, in order to

[72] Z. Miłobędzki, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-55.

[73] For more on the activities of commercial and industrial chambers in Silesia see *Die Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Schweidnitz und Landeshut i. Schles. 1849-1924*, Schweidnitz [1924]; E. von Gronow, *op. cit.*; Z. Miłobędzki, *op. cit.*, p. 79; *75 Jahre Industrie- und Handelskammer Liegnitz 1851-1926*, Liegnitz [1926]; W. Stöphasius, *op. cit.*

[74] For more information on the memorial and its creation, see Andrzej Brożek, *Udział niemieckich czynników oficjalnych na Śląsku w przygotowaniu memoriału Die Not der preussischen Ostprovinzen*, 'Studia Śląskie. Seria Nowa', 15 (1969), pp. 11-31.

facilitate economic cooperation between German and Polish Silesia, in the interwar period in Wrocław a Polish-German Chamber of Commerce[75] operated.

Separate chambers represented agriculture and sometimes crafts, as exemplified by *Śląska Izba Rolnicza* (Silesian Chamber of Agriculture) in Katowice, *Izba Rzemieślnicza* (Chamber of Crafts) in Katowice or *Handwerkskammer* (Chamber of Crafts) in Wrocław. Those institutions were engaged, e.g., in production and education related to agriculture or crafts[76]. What is more, there were also different types of associations, societies or trade unions, to mention only the aforesaid German Upper Silesia Association of Mining and Metallurgy in Gliwice with its Polish counterpart – *Unia Polskiego Przemysłu Górniczo-Hutniczego* (Polish Union of Mining and Metallurgical Industry) in Katowice, both dealing mainly with the issues of economic, communication and social policy, and also, e.g., *Polski Związek Towarzystw Kupieckich w Katowicach* (Polish Union of Trade Associations in Katowice, in 1938 it had 1,800 members) or German: *Bund Schlesischer Industrieller* (Silesian Union of Industrialists) and the Silesian branch of *Schlesischer Zweigverein der deutsche Zuckerindustrie-SZDZ* (German Sugar Industry Association)[77]. While mentioning these institutions it should, however, be noted that while acting as a unifying factor for the Silesian economy they performed this role, in fact, in a specific economic matter, except maybe for the chambers for industry and commerce, and, above all, their territorial scope was limited. In general, therefore, they minded the interests of a well-defined branch of industry or trade and industry within the activities of the relevant chambers of industry and commerce. Rare ventures included such projects as the *Adolf Hitler-Kanal*, *Grenzlandbahn* or the Main line Upper Silesia-Porty Gdynia-Gdańsk, which stimulated the activity of all self-government bodies, industry associations and unions or trade unions.

From this brief outline it is evident that finding integrating or disintegrating factors for the interwar Silesian economy is extremely difficult. It should also be clear that political divisions proved to be so strong that all of those factors autonomously occurred on the three sides of the border, essentially aiming at economic self-sufficiency of individual parts of Silesia in the new political reality. Therefore, they did not integrate the whole of the former Silesia; on the contrary, they led to disintegration and the final cutting of historical economic and financial ties.

[75] K. Jeżowski, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

[76] See *Festschrift der Handwerkskammer zu Breslau aus Anlass ihres 25 jährigen Bestehens*, Breslau 1925; Z. Miłobędzki, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[77] T. Laskiewicz, F. Rymowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12; Wioletta Maksylewicz-Przybylska, *Elity gospodarcze śląskiego cukrownictwa (1802-1945)*, Słubice 2011, p. 229; Z. Miłobędzki, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75; K. Rasch, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Otto Reier, *Der organisatorische Gedanke in der zwanzigjährigen Arbeit des Bundes Schlesischer Industriellen*, Liegnitz 1929.

Another fact is that in the case of some areas, such as energy and transport, the total autarky of Czechoslovakian, German and Polish Silesia proved impossible, but it is obvious at a glance that cooperation in this field between the pieces of the region divided by the borders was carried out to a limited, if not forced, extent. What is more, it is also clear that many integrating factors were of a defined territorial scope, not covering even the whole Silesia in the given country, a perfect example of which is the German Silesia. There were also such elements as the railway system, which apparently were an obvious unifying element, but on the other hand, through facilitating the transport of goods they contributed to the growth of competition in the area, and thus they had a negative impact on the economy of the region. Clearly, however, most contradictions of this kind occurred in Silesia, where the fundamental internal disintegrating factors included the coexistence of two highly industrialized districts, and also probably the conflict of interest arising from different economic nature of the provinces of Lower Silesia and Upper Silesia. However, from the point of view of the entire Silesia external disintegrating factors proved to be crucial, namely the border divisions and the creation of new states, mainly Poland and the Czechoslovak Republic.

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Social structure and social groups in the processes of integration and disintegration of Silesia as a region (1918-1945)

Abstract:

A complete overview of cohesive and disruptive factors affecting the integrity of Silesia in the social context during the period 1918-1945 seems an impossible task, which can be explained by the multitude of events and issues occurring in this turbulent quarter of a century, as well as by the overlapping of various realms of identity. The regional perspective was present in all social groups during the period under examination; however, with the possible exception of the Upper Silesian proletariat, they were not its primary carriers. Social groups from lower classes were active mainly in their local areas, thus indirectly forming regional bonds. Silesia as a whole was relevant to the wealthier inhabitants of cities and industrial districts, whose mobility and education allowed them to overcome local limitations. Ownership and great wealth influenced several levels simultaneously, including the regional one. Landowners were, by comparison, a much more stable backbone of the region due to their traditions and attachment to the land.

Keywords:

aristocracy, landowners, entrepreneurs, intelligentsia, workers, peasants

The period which commenced with the end of the First World War and lasted until the end of the Second World War is characterized by substantial instability, which is clearly visible in the case of Silesia, even in the shifting of its borders. Severe ethnic conflicts, violent ideological and political disputes arising during this period divided the residents of the region to a degree previously unheard of, and two deep economic crises-both the post-war and the global one-not only exacerbated social tensions, but also violated the economic foundations of the previously existing social order. What should also be noted is the acceleration of the processes of globalization and modernization processes that were creating a mass culture society, and the pressure of the Nazi totality, which lead to the *Gleichschaltung* of the society[1]. The significance of the signalled events does not need to be proven; after

[1] For more information on the history of the region during the years 1918-1945 see *Historia Śląska,* ed. Marek Czapliński, pp. 385-466; *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 3, ed. Josef Joachim Menzel, Stuttgart 1999, pp. 81-104; *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas*: *Schlesien*, ed. Norbert Conrads, Berlin 1994, pp. 616-653; *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*, pp. 507-591; *Historia Górnego Śląska*, pp. 219-266; Dan Gawrecki a kol., *Dějiny českého Slezska 1740-2000*, Opava 2003, pp. 295-404;

all, the crucial character of the interwar period and both world wars determines their special position in historiography. In reference to the subject of this work, it should be noted that the density of the events that occurred and the phenomena surrounding them both distorts and obscures the perception of the region from the perspective of the social groups of that time. It seems impossible to fully and accurately present a balanced tally of the influential disintegrating and integrating factors for the Silesian region in social terms during the interwar period and the Second World War. That is caused by the multitude of issues that appeared during this violent quarter of a century and overlapping circles of different identities. The state and shape of current Silesian-related research by no means allows for a formulation of any final answers to the issues highlighted in the title of this article.

In the literature on Silesia during the period between 1918 and 1945 historians have given priority to the national, class or party issues over the question of regional identity, which was of rather modest interest to them. Moreover, these preferences are entirely understandable, as they highlight the factors which proved undoubtedly important for the dynamics of subsequent events. What should be remembered is that the undertaken research had for decades been incorporated into a fairly rigid political framework introduced after 1945. The Slavic hosts of the lands under discussion laid emphasis on the fight against the German element, which culminated in years of struggle with the Third Reich. What is more, in the countries dominated by the communists – in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic – it was required to concentrate on the position and struggle of the proletariat. The democratic transitions which started in 1989 removed the obligation to deal with labour or peasant movements, yet at the same time they did not result in comprehensive research of other communities and social groups of the region, which has determined the scale of the existing deficits. As a result, in the case of interwar Lower Silesia, there are practically no significant representations of social groups. In the case of Upper Silesia, although a number of works are available, a complete picture cannot be obtained from them, and in the case of older studies we encounter distortions concerning the history of the proletariat.

The identity of Silesia was undoubtedly constituted of the community identity of those that had inhabited the German, Polish and Czech Silesia during the first half of the 20th century. Regional consciousness stemmed from historical and cultural tradition as well as a political and administrative framework in much greater respect than from the social order itself. In practice this means that in the period being

Województwo śląskie (1922-1939). Zarys monograficzny, ed. Franciszek Serafin, Katowice 1996; Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk podczas drugiej wojny światowej*, Katowice 2006.

studied a regional perspective occurred in all social groups, yet the groups themselves were not its primary carrier. Moreover, the scale of regional references in particular groups developed differently, moving to the level of a narrower or wider local identity in peasant and working-class circles. We will follow the approach of Marek S. Szczepański, a well-known sociologist, in stating that a regional identity manifests itself through references to small – local – homelands *(Heimat)* in conflict with each other but – to the eye of an outside observer – coherent and integrated in the case of an external threat[2], then the aforementioned localization of particular social groups shall be considered as a region-building factor. Whether with one or the other, it is necessary to add that the aforementioned localisation was at times a dominant identification, which inhibited the development of an appropriate regional identity. Either way, both levels of spatial reference co-existed in interwar Silesia. The only issue which remains unresolved is their significance within each of the particular circles and social groups vulnerable to the fluctuation of national and political sentiments.

The differences in political and constitutional, ethnic and national, or social and economic considerations made the society of Silesia at that time function within Lower and Upper Silesian affairs. The growing fracture requires, therefore, a flexible understanding of the space of the region (or regions). What should be noted, after all, is the separate development of Lower and Upper Silesia, and within the latter – of the German, Polish and Czech parts. This study marginally discusses the western part of Czech Silesia with its capital in Opava (Troppau, Opawa), which started out in the context of a German political entity called the Sudetenland[3]. The Silesian and 'Sudeten' identities of the Sudeten Germans who were more prevalent in the area did not exclude one another, but adding a new vector of identification one which further blurs the perception of the attitudes of the local populace and requires further study. In the selection of social groups we have confined ourselves to a simplistic division into a plebeian populace of peasants and workers, the middle class (the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, including the clergy) and the great property owners and financiers (the gentry, the industrialists and the bankers). We are aware of the fact that the boundaries between these classes are blurred in the 20th century, however, we want

[2] Marek S. Szczepański, *Od identyfikacji do tożsamości. Dynamika śląskiej tożsamości – prolegomena*, [in:] *Dynamika śląskiej tożsamości*, eds Janusz Janeczek, Marek S. Szczepański, Katowice 2006, pp. 19-27.

[3] For more on this subject see Piotr M. Majewski, *'Niemcy sudeccy' 1848-1948. Historia pewnego nacjonalizmu*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 161-428; Emil Franzel, *Sudetendeutsche Geschichte. Eine volkstümliche Darstellung*, Mannheim 1990, pp. 294-414; Wolfgang Braumandl, *Die Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik des Deutschen Reiches im Sudetenland 1938-1945*, Nürnberg 1985.

to provide a typical example – useful in generalizations and not a comprehensive description of the social structure.

Great property owners

The particular position of wealthy gentry and industrialists makes it difficult to determine their regional perspectives and collective impact on the cohesion of Silesia. The contacts and horizons of this elite environment undoubtedly often went beyond the 'narrow' frames of the province, which shall be considered as a disintegrating agent. What may be worth mentioning in the case of the aristocratic circles are the extensive family affinities and, until the Second World War, strong connections with the courts of Berlin or Vienna in the Prussian and Austrian parts of Silesia, respectively, and in the case of more significant industrialists, bankers or merchants – national and international financial and trade ties. The possibilities of less affluent families of gentry and manufacturers were much more limited in this regard, while not excluding similar aspirations. At the same time, what is particular is the fact that members of high society functioned simultaneously in a purely local dimension, although it is difficult to speak of real integration. They felt somewhat responsible for the communities living in the vicinity of their landed and industrial properties, particularly for their own employees and their families. This responsibility was reflected, among others, in the form of charitable activities and a significant number of foundations (not only religious ones). The activity in this field can be explained as being both pragmatic and prestige-related, and in the case of the highborn also because of the traditions of patronage and obligations stemming from the ethos of the state. The help provided was accompanied by an interest in the life of the local residents, which is proven, by participation in larger celebrations, honorary membership in local associations and support for their initiatives, among others. It facilitated the integration of local communities, providing it with a valuable patron and promoter. The indicated involvement of the gentry and financial elites could have also partially affected their own identification. An interesting example in this matter appears to be Countess Gabriela von Thun und Hohenstein of Kończyce Wielkie (Gross-Kuntschitz, Velké Kunčice) in Cieszyn Silesia (Czech: Těšínské Slezsko, Polish: Śląsk Cieszyński, German: Teschener Schlesien), who apparently liked to refer to herself as 'a local'[4].

[4] Iwona Nowak, *Dama dworu na podcieszyńskich włościach. Hrabina Gabriela von Thun und Hohenstein (1872-1957) jako przedstawicielka elit Śląska Cieszyńskiego w pierwszej połowie XX wieku*, [in:] *Wieki stare i nowe: Ludzie i elity pogranicza*, eds Maciej Fic, Ryszard Kaczmarek, Katowice 2012, pp. 149-155.

The aforementioned multidimensional character of Silesian nobility existed in its general shape from the 19th century up until the Second World War[5]. However, the years of severe political and economic disruptions of the period under discussion resulted in some adjustments. The fall of Central-European monarchies and the elimination of state society relics deprived the Silesian nobility of their privileged position and stable ideological standing, while economic problems made them lose a part of their financial spending power[6]. On the local level, a drop in position and significance was noticeable to a lesser extent, because great gentry – despite the launching of agricultural reforms – still retained economic and intellectual influence. Even in these areas they were often confronted with competing political and national egalitarian slogans, although they still remained a point of reference at least for people with a traditional viewpoint. We do not have the benefits of comprehensive studies on the behaviour and views of the Silesian gentry from the interwar period, however, we venture to say that not only did they contribute to the support of local identity, but they also must have become more explicitly rooted in this stable microworld. They did not find their place in the new political reality, and therefore they withdrew from public service. Few exceptions, such as Count Michael von Matuschka and Count Peter Yorck von Wartenburg in the presidium of the province, do not undermine the clear trend which was occurring all over Germany[7]. It should be added that the new political circumstances divided Silesian landowners, which is clearly exemplified by their inconsistent attitude towards Hitler[8]. However, yet of even greater significance to the issue posed of an essentially German Silesian nobility is to the division of the region after the First World War.

At the beginning, it should be noted that at the time of the traditional political order's collapse, in 1918, the 'Austrian' and 'Prussian' gentry from Silesia – like other social groups – essentially did not proclaim slogans of a regional reunion, and at first, were focussed on Vienna or Berlin, respectively. The Polish – Czech dispute

[5] Cf. Romuald M. Łuczyński, *Rezydencje magnackie w Kotlinie Jeleniogórskiej w XIX wieku*, Wrocław 2007, pp. 339-350; Wiesława Korzeniowska, *Ziemiaństwo na Górnym Śląsku w XIX i XX wieku*, Opole 1997, pp. 158-177, 190-203.

[6] Cf. Eckart Conze, *Adel und Moderne in Ostmitteleuropa*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*, vol. 1: *Herrschaft – Kultur – Selbstdarstellung*, eds Jan Harasimowicz, Matthias Weber, Oldenburg-München 2010, pp. 305-318.

[7] Cf. Iris von Hoyningen-Huene, *Adel in der Weimarer Republik. Die rechtlich-soziale Situation des reichsdeutschen Adels 1918-1933*, Limburg 1992, pp. 79, 236-240, 410.

[8] Ulrich Schmilewski, *Der schlesische Adel-Herkunft, Zusammensetzung und politisch-gesellschaftliche Rolle vom Mittelalter bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*, vol. 2: *Repertorium. Forschungsperspektiven – Quellenkunde – Bibliographie*, eds Joachim Bahlcke, Wojciech Mrozowicz, Oldenburg-München 2010, pp. 87-91.

over Cieszyn Silesia was extended with a favour being granted regarding the Polish or Czechoslovakian border projects, however, other political settlements had no real chance of establishing themselves there. Their own plans, including the desired unity of the frontier Karviná-Ostrava (Karvin, Karwina-Ostrau, Ostrawa) area, impelled local entrepreneurs, including the powerful Count Hans von Larisch-Mönnich, to choose the pro-Czech option[9]. The vast majority of great landowners from the Prussian part of Upper Silesia defended German *raison d'état* and German state possession, which probably stemmed mainly from their national character. There are, however, cases illustrating different calculated plans, which indicate a preference for the Upper Silesian framework. Count Hans Georg von Oppersdorff of Głogówek (Oberglogau, Horní Hlohov) spoke during the plebiscite of 1921 in favour of the Polish side, which was meant to maintain the unity of the eastern and western part of Upper Silesia[10]. Therefore, calculated moves and the self-interests of the gentry did not deprive them of a pro-regional orientation, even though reactions to the difficult conditions created after the Great War were various in character.

An extremely interesting case-though one still requiring deeper analysis on the regional level-seems to be that of Johann Heinrich XV von Hochberg's family, the Duke of Pless, whose assets included goods in Silesia (Książ, Fürstenstein) and Upper Silesia (Pszczyna, Pless). It is worth noting that he was a man with an established international position, which was confirmed by his marriages: first to an English aristocrat (Maria Theresa Cornwallis-West), and later to a Spanish aristocrat (Clothilde de Silva y Gonzales de Candamo). Apparently, his personal dream was to attain the title of Duke of Silesia, and at the end of 1918 he was also supposed to conduct informal talks on an international level regarding the Silesian region's being treated as a separate state body. Similar plans could have seemed realistic only at the moment of the collapse of German statehood and were quickly abandoned. The Duke began shortly to spur on the elites of Silesia assembled in Silesian Club *(Schlesischer Club)*, an exclusive club led by him, to strongly support German interests in a dispute over Upper Silesia. It is worth noticing that what comes into play in both cases is the Duke's regional identity, but also the need to maintain both warehouses of his goods within one country. Although the duke supported the separatist activities of the Upper Silesian Association *(Bund der Oberschlesier),* he probably perceived it in terms of an anti-Polish diversion.

[9] Andrzej Stępniak, *Kwestia narodowa a społeczna na Śląsku Cieszyńskim pod koniec XIX i w początkach XX wieku (do 1920 roku)*, Katowice 1986, pp. 208-209, 254, 299, 330, 336, 340.

[10] Wojciech Lange, *W stronę Polski, czyli nie odwzajemnione uczucie hrabiego Oppersdorffa*, [in:] *Problemy narodowościowe Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX i XX wieku*, eds Antoni Czubiński, Piotr Okulewicz, Tomasz Schramm, Poznań 2002, pp. 293-300.

During the struggle of the plebiscite and the Silesian Uprisings he explicitly supported the German side, and his son Johann Heinrich XVII led the German minority's key organization in the Polish Silesian Voivoidship *(Deutscher Volksbund für Polnisch-Schlesien).* In the 1930s Jan Henryk XV fundamental shifted his attitude towards Poland and moved from the German of Książ to the Polish city of Pszczyna, which was undoubtedly influenced by his family troubles and financial problems, and probably also by his dislike of the Nazis. However, the conditional, aforementioned decisions, variations and other problems – including the commissioner's board and abolishing the *fideikomis* (the fee tail estate) of Pszczyna in 1937 – did not in the end, blur the authority which the Duke enjoyed on the local level. It is proven by the fact that about fifteen thousand residents from Pszczyna and its surroundings attended his funeral in 1938. We should also bear in mind the situation in 1923, when Wojciech Korfanty asked the Duke to lend him a carriage with the Hochberg coat of arms for the duration of the visit of the President of Poland to Upper Silesia, which was supposed to evoke positive associations among Upper Silesians. The myth of the good duke is still alive in this area[11].

Aristocratic families remained a clear point of reference for the community of Silesia, and that was because of multigenerational ties with the region and the territorial concentration of goods. The significant position of the Schaffgotsch family, after all, had been built up in the area of Jelenia Góra (Hirschberg, Jeleni Hora, Hiršberk) beginning in the 14th century, and a great part of the noble families had helped to create the history of Silesia for at least a hundred years. The compactness and size of the estates undoubtedly had an influence on the understanding of the region's space. For the record it should, therefore, be noted that in 1937 in German Silesia alone, the Duke of Ujazd (Ujest), Hohenlohe-Oehringen of Sławięcice (Slawentzitz) had 31,216 hectares of land at his disposal, Count Schaffgotsch of Cieplice owned 26,941 ha, the Duke of Racibórz Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst of Rudy (Rudy) – 30,218 ha, the Duke of Żagań, Talleyrand-Perigord – 23,004 ha, the Prussian duke from Kamieniec Ząbkowicki – 14,265 ha, Duke Hatzfeld of Żmigród – 15,941 ha, Prince Schoenaich-Carolath of Zabór (Fürsteneich) – 11,549 ha, the Duke of Pszczyna – 11,748 ha, and Count Maltzan of Milicz – 11,299 ha. In addition to these lands, Donnersmarck,

[11] W. Korzeniowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-121, 184-188; Jerzy Polak, *Jan Henryk XV książę von Pless: życie i działalność (1861-1938)*, 'Materiały Muzeum Wnętrz Zabytkowych w Pszczynie', 6 (1990), pp. 129-156; *idem*, *Postawa wielkich właścicieli ziemskich na Górnym Śląsku wobec powstań śląskich na przykładzie księcia pszczyńskiego*, [in:] *Powstania śląskie i plebiscyt w procesie zrastania się Górnego Śląska z macierzą*, ed. Andrzej Brożek, Bytom 1993, pp. 383-390; Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Udział książąt pszczyńskich w życiu politycznym Prus i II Rzeszy Niemieckiej*, [in:] *Szlachta i ziemiaństwo polskie oraz niemieckie w Prusach i Niemczech w XVIII-XX*, ed. Włodzimierz Stępiński, Szczecin 1996, pp. 179-198.

Hohenlohe and Hochberg owned substantial landed estates in the part of Silesia which was later incorporated into Poland, whereas the latter owned the powerful *fideikomis* (the fee tail estate) of Pszczyna (42000 hectares) occupying nearly half of the district (*powiat*) of Pszczyna! A significant area of land fell also to other owners. Considerable national and dynastic estates, including those owned by Prince Friedrich Wilhelm von Hohenzollern, the heir to the throne, and Frederick Augustus, the former King of Saxony, who died in 1932 in Szczodre (Sibyllenort), partly lacked a regional context, but they had a local context. It is probable that a similar situation was that of the Lower Silesian estates of the non-Silesian dukes of Solms-Baruth and counts of Arnim-Muskau[12].

The interests of the landed gentry of Silesia were represented by Silesian chambers of agriculture *(Landwirtschaftskammer)* situated within administrative boundaries, and are thus of little use in diagnosing the regional identity of the social group under discussion[13]. The existence of such an identity seems to be proved by the fact that the representatives of the nobility of Silesia – deprived in 1945 of their regional anchor – were still active in regional associations such as the Silesian Nobility Association *(Vereinigung Schlesischer Adel),* the Association of Catholic Nobility of Silesia *(Vereinigung Katholischer Edelleute Schlesiens)* and the Silesian branch of the Evangelical Order of St John *(Schlesischer Zweig des evangelischen Johanniterordens)*[14]. Worth further notice is also the interwar political activity of Nikolaus Count von Ballestrem of Pławniowice (Plawniowitz), who led the then conservative Catholic Silesian nobility. For our discussion it is important that these circles spoke out against the division of Silesia and separated themselves from the Upper Silesian leaders of the Centre Party involved in the Upper Silesian province project[15]. This example seems to confirm the existence of a regional perspective in the circles of gentry and that they sustained a conceptual unity of Prussian Silesia[16]. What should thus be acknowledged in the period researched here is the presence of

[12] Hans-Joachim Richter, *Die Entwicklung des Großgrundbesitzes in Schlesien seit 1891,* Breslau 1938, Franciszek Serafin, *Wieś na polskim Górnym Śląsku po 1922 roku*, [in:] *Górny Śląsk po podziale w 1922 roku: Co Polska, a co Niemcy dały mieszkańcom tej ziemi?*, eds Zbigniew Kapała, Wiesław Lesiuk, Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, vol. 1, Bytom 1997, pp. 58-73.

[13] See, among others, Alfred Reimann, *Die Organe der landwirtschaftlichen Verwaltung, die landwirtschaftlichen Vereine und Körperschaften Preussens, in ihrer historischen Entwicklung und ihren Beziehungen zur Entwicklung der Landwirtschaft*, Merseburg 1901, p. 34.

[14] U. Schmilewski, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[15] Guido Hitze, *Nikolaus Graf Ballestrem 1900-1945*, [in:] *Schlesische Lebensbilder*, vol. 11, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Insignen 2012, pp. 531-547.

[16] That regional context should not be obscured by the examples of families oriented outside-for example, the family of Moltke from Krzyżowa (Jochen Thies, *Die Moltkes. Von Königgrätz nach Kreisau. Eine deutsche Familiengeschichte*, München-Zürich 2010), were practically only associated with the family seat in Silesia.

a crystallized regional identity of Silesian gentry, who persisted in their strong attachment to the land they owned. It shall be noted in passing that in comparison to other parts of Germany, they boasted the largest share of agricultural land in the region – 32.8% (compared with an average of 13.04% in Germany) and their representatives dominated among the largest German landowners[17], which obviously made Silesia stand out and certainly made its circles of gentry appreciated.

Great financiers, industrialists

The above-mentioned regional context of the Silesian gentry coincides in some part with the analogous issue concerning great industrialists. This convergence stems from a characteristic feature of Upper Silesian industry, namely its dependence on such aristocratic families as the Donnersmarcks, the Ballestrems and the Larisch family[18]. The commercial success brought about by industrialization also allowed the 'lesser' born to count on ennoblement, a well-known example of which was the promotion of Franz Winckler and Joanna Grycik (Gryzik), the heiress to the fortune of Karol Godula[19]. Obviously, the circles of Silesian capitalists were not limited to nobility alone. After all, the 19th century saw the creation of hundreds of private enterprises. Dominate among these were the large rolling stock factories of Linke-Hofmann-Werke in Wrocław, which grew by a merger in the interwar period to become a nationally dominate in the machine and metal industry. Because of fact, the headquarters of the company was transferred to Berlin[20].

At the time of our interest, the vast majority of large companies operating in Silesia did so in the form of joint-stock companies, which makes it difficult to understand the attitudes of the region's financial elite. The difficult years of the post-war crisis (until 1923), the consequences of Upper Silesia's division in 1922 and the

[17] I. v. Hoyningen-Huene, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79, 122-127.

[18] Silesian magnates owed the promotion to circles of the most affluent Germans and profits from industry. Just before the outbreak of the First World War, the rating of Prussian millionaires was as follows: Prince Henckel von Donnersmarck from Świerklaniec (Neudeck) (a fortune estimated at 254 million marks, and an income of 12.15 million marks a year) held the second position, Prince Hohenlohe-Oeringen from Sławięcice (respectively 154 and 6.5 million marks) – the fourth position, The Hochberg Duke of Pless (99 and 2.25 million marks) – the sixth position, and Earl Thiele-Winckler from Moszna (Moschen) (87 and 3.89 million marks) – the ninth position. – Rudolf Martin, *Nachtrag zu den 12 Provinzbänden des Jahrbuchs der Millionäre im Königreich Preußen. Die reichsten Millionäre im Königreich Preußen*, Berlin 1913, p. 2.

[19] Arkadiusz Kuzio-Podrucki, *Tiele-Wincklerowie. Arystokracja węgla i stali*, Bytom 2006; *idem*, *Die Tiele-Winckler. Eine Oberschlesische Kohle- und Stahlaristokratie*, Tarnowskie Góry-Kiel 2007; Irena Twardoch, *Z dziejów rodu Schaffgotschów*, Ruda Śląska 2008; eadem, *Geschichte des Geschlechts von Schaffgotsch*, Ruda Śląska 2011.

[20] Oswald Putze, W. Höck, *120 Jahre Linke-Hofmann-Busch. Salzgitter Watenstedt 1839-1959*, vol. 1: *Werke in Breslau, Bautzen und Werdau*, Braunschweig 1959, pp. 25-111.

customs war launched by Germany against Poland (from 1925), and finally the global economic crisis of the 1930s marked out adverse developmental lines, which resulted in the fall of a number of establishments and their takeover by capital from outside of Silesia. It must be mentioned because it further blurred the Silesian 'identity' of enterprises, thus contributing to the economic disintegration of the region. Some companies managed to avoid subordination to external centres, and even widened their own spheres of influence, as demonstrated by the example of the textile conglomerate Dierig-Werke AG from Bielawa (Langenbielau), but the overall trend was definitely negative and it intensified in the 1930s[21]. A specific situation developed in Upper Silesia, involved in a Polish-German-Czech conflict. The authorities of Poland and Czechoslovakia wanted to weaken the dominance of German entrepreneurs, so they were favourable to the inflow of French, Belgian or American capital, which was devoid of any regional context.

The German side tried to use their economic advantage to weaken Poland. For instance, it did not make use of the opportunity provided by the Treaty of Upper Silesia of extending, in 1925, the free circulation of goods within the boundaries of the plebiscite area, which was consistent with the Polish-German customs war and which created serious difficulties for the Upper Silesian industrial region divided by the border. Although the decisions were taken in Berlin, the national perception also influenced the actions of the German capitalists connected with the Polish Silesian Voivodeship. Their pro-German attitude and reluctance to operate within the Polish economy resulted, among others, in the transfer of investment to the German side, which took place at the expense of the 'Polish' plants[22]. It is mentioned here, because such measures led to the economic disintegration of Upper Silesia. The research of Franciszek Biały seems to indicate that the attitude of the German Upper Silesian industrialists towards Poland was also a result of the location of their plants. The capitalists who were generally functioning within Silesia sought *a modus vivendi* with the Polish authorities, and those who held the property on both sides of the border were uncompromising at times. During the Upper Silesian Uprisings the first group supported the idea of a separatist state of Upper Silesia. This group was headed up by Gustav Williger, Chairman of the Upper Silesian Union of Mining and Metallurgy Industrialists *(Oberschlesischer Berg- und Hüttenmännischer Verein).*

[21] Krzysztof Jeżowski, *Rozwój i rozmieszczenie przemysłu na Dolnym Śląsku w okresie kapitalizmu*, Wrocław 1961, pp. 186-191.

[22] Cf. Mieczysław Grzyb, *Narodowo-polityczne aspekty przemian stosunków własnościowych i kadrowych w górnośląskim przemyśle w latach 1922-1939*, Katowice 1978, pp. 43-46; *idem, Z problematyki organizacji i działalności górnośląskiego przemysłu ciężkiego w latach 1921-1923*, 'Prace Historyczne. Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach', 4 (1975), pp. 63-84.

The other group perceived this attitude as a betrayal of German interests. The differences that arose in this respect, including the unequivocal support of German industrial circles from the German Province of Upper Silesia for the customs war with Poland, which was detrimental to the interests of German companies in the Polish Silesian Voivodeship, led to the disintegration of this group[23]. While it is possible to speak about a regional perspective in this area, it was conditioned largely by economic, or national interests.

Taken as an example the *Giesche's Erben* conglomerate seated in Wrocław seems to indicate that any regional sentiments of the shareholders and executives had a limited impact on the direction of the company's development. In 1922 its Upper Silesian plants were located for the most part on the Polish side of the border, which was perceived as a serious difficulty. After complex legal transformations to the use of U.S. capital *(Silesian American Corporation)* the factories were left as financial security for the company, but the new investments were located within Germany: initially in Silesia and Westphalia and later in Brandenburg, where the strategic metallurgical complex had been created[24]. Economic performance, customs and transport tariffs usually determined the actions of industrial and financial circles. Industrialists indeed functioned within the industrial districts, thus promoting regional integration in the case of the districts contained within the borders of the region. Lack of such unity triggered the appearance of some disintegrating factors. These were visible in Cieszyn Silesia, where the German community wanted to keep their dominant economic and political position and maintain cooperation with the neighbouring industrialized surroundings of Biała (Galicia), Místek (Friedberg, Mistek; now: Frýdek-Místek) and Moravská Ostrava (Mährisch Ostrau) (Moravia). National and economic interests determined the choice of concept for the extended (!) region and efforts made to gain its independence. The idea of a Cieszyn state turned out at that time to be unrealistic; hence the Germans ultimately supported the side of Czechoslovakia. The German industrialists were convinced by the unity of the Moravian-Silesian mining and metallurgy district of Ostrava-Karvina and the significant economic potential of that country. The textile district of Bielsko and Biała (Biala, Bělá) was of lesser importance[25].

[23] Franciszek Biały, *Górnośląski Związek Przemysłowców Górniczo-Hutniczych 1914-1932*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1967, pp. 128-131, 140-153, 204-205.

[24] Wilhelm Treue, *Georg von Giesche's Erben 1704-1964*, Hamburg 1964, pp. 81-113.

[25] Janusz Spyra, *Niemcy na Śląsku Cieszyńskim wobec Rady Narodowej Księstwa Cieszyńskiego i wydarzeń 1918-1920*, 'Pamiętnik Cieszyński', 8 (1994), pp. 55-76; Piotr Dobrowolski, *Ugrupowania i kierunki separatystyczne na Górnym Śląsku i w Cieszyńskiem w latach 1918-1939*, Warszawa-Kraków 1972, pp. 59-67, 72-73.

Interwar Silesia had professional associations of merchants and industrialists, but they more often divided into Upper and Lower Silesian ones (and smaller units), due to the differences in their development and economic profiles, as well as access to central aid measures. Although business associations and territorial chambers of industry and commerce reflected mainly the need for cooperation in the name of the interests of given groups, they still affected the cohesion of the region. The Chamber of Industry and Commerce of the Province of Upper Silesia *(Industrie- und Handelskammer für die Provinz Oberschlesien)* tried to be actively present in the contemporary economic, political and social life of Upper Silesia. It shall be noted that in a comprehensive monograph of the history of that chamber one will find recurring references concerning the region, while the references to Silesia as a whole have been practically omitted[26]. The circles of Silesian capitalists generally did not seek to consolidate in a regional dimension, but constituted themselves within a narrower spatial framework. What should be added to this is a clear localization of industrialists, particularly pronounced among the group of smaller entrepreneurs. This is evidenced by the significant activity of this group of people within the cities and industrial centres. Their factories, housing attached to factories and other investments affected the immediate space of these areas, indirectly becoming an integrating factor for the population. Industrialists-similar to the gentry-were therefore seen as a reference point, since the fate of the company often conditioned the well-being of the whole local community.

Groups of lower social standing

The socio-economic and socio-political crisis – resulting from the devastating nature of the First World War and eventually, also from the failure of the powers wielding Silesia before 1918 – resulted in a radicalization of the social and political moods of various inhabitants of the region. Revolutionary hardships, the fall of the Habsburgs and the Hohenzollerns, and finally the introduction of republics in Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland brought major political changes, but they did not lead to a fundamental reconstruction of the social system. Participation by the social democrats and the agrarian parties in the government formed at that time was appreciated by the lower parts of society, while at the same time revealing some moderation in their elites. The attitude of the Silesian proletariat in the first years

[26] [Walter] Stoephasius, *Die Industrie- und Handelskammer für die Provinz Oberschlesien 1882-1932*, [in:] *Die Industrie- und Handelskammer für die Provinz Oberschlesien 1882-1932*, ed. [Walter] Stoephasius, Oppeln 1932, pp. 7-188.

after the Great War was affected both by the urgent need to find the means to live, as well as by a sense of real internal and external threats. The latter feeling consolidated the society around the idea of the nation and state, while also indirectly strengthening regional ties. The awareness of national or regional community yielded to rivalry when it came to meeting the needs for living conditions. The dramatic shortage of food created a conflict of interests among the residents of industrialized centres, which was evidenced, among other incidences, by the bloody riots of 1923 in Nowa Ruda (Neurode, Nová Ruda) provoked by a rumour that the *landrat* (district administrator) of Nowa Ruda supposedly sent some wagons with food to neighbouring Wałbrzych (Waldenburg, Valdenburk, Valbřich)[27]. The concurrent radicalization of social and political attitudes undoubtedly weakened the unity, but it was the case not only of local unity and not only on this part of the continent. Inadequate supplies, insufficient wages in an age of rampant inflation and difficulties in finding jobs and housing were creating bitterness and led to a series of strikes and disturbances in Silesian cities and among agglomerations of workers[28]. They developed on a local basis, including major industrial centres and districts. Analogous to the manufacturers, those industrial districts shaped the identity of the workers united by a common fate[29].

The primary factor which determined the industrial districts was economic cohesion. In the former Austrian area of Cieszyn (Teschen, Těšín), Silesia its historical boundaries blurred in the very place where industry developed at the junction of the regions; so it was in the textile region of Silesian Bielsk (Bielitz, Bílsko) and Galician Biała and in the coal and iron district of Ostrava-Karvina on the border of Silesia and Moravia, where after the Great War, the circles of German socialists came up with an idea to create the East-Silesian Republic of Workers *(Arbeiterrepublik Ostschlesien)*[30]. Similar unity did not occur in the case of the previously German industrial region of Upper Silesia (Katowice (Kattowitz, Katovice)), the Austrian Cracow basin (Chrzanów (Krenau)) and the Russian Dąbrowa Górnicza

[27] Joseph Wittig, *Chronik der Stadt Neurode*, Neurode 1937, pp. 490-493.

[28] See eg Teresa Kulak, *Historia Wrocławia*, vol. 2: *Od twierdzy fryderycjańskiej do twierdzy hitlerowskiej*, Wrocław 2001, pp. 281-286; *Dzierżoniów. Zarys monografii miasta,* ed. Stanisław Dąbrowski, Wrocław-Dzierżoniów 1998, pp. 168-171; *Wałbrzych. Zarys monografii miasta na tle regionu,* ed. Stanisław Michalkiewicz, Wrocław 1993, pp. 142-146; Franciszek Biały, *Z dziejów ruchu robotniczego na Dolnym Śląsku 1918-1923, Klasa robotnicza na Śląsku,* vol. 1, Opole 1975, pp. 153-200.

[29] The local range of social disruptions were also sustained in the following years, which is clearly expemplified by the city of Opole – Edward Mendel, *Stosunki społeczne i polityczne w Opolu w latach 1919-1933*, Warszawa-*W*rocław 1975; *idem*, *Studia nad stosunkami społecznymi i politycznymi w Opolu w latach 1933-1939*, Opole 1988.

[30] J. Spyra, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

(Dombrowa) basin (Sosnowiec (Sosnowitz, Sosnovec)), whose economic profiles were indeed similar and which were located within interwar Poland, but they were separated administratively and, what is equally important, in terms of culture and civilisation[31]. What requires attention is another phenomenon occurring within Upper Silesia not yet divided by the border of 1922. A political – and to some extent also a national – radicalization of the working class circles of the Upper Silesian industrial district (Bytom (Beuthen), Gliwice (Gleiwitz, Hlivice), Katowice) in the period of revolutionary ferment (1918-1919) led the agricultural elites of the Upper Silesian district of Opole to comply strictly with the moderate authorities of Wrocław. Although ultimately the councils of workers and soldiers of the industrial district also recognized the sovereignty of the Central Council for the Province of Silesia in Wrocław *(Zentralrat für die Provinz Schlesien),* they still maintained large autonomy[32]. A similar radicalism and some separateness occurred at that time even in the case of the Wałbrzych mining basin in Lower Silesia, which seems to further confirm the fact that the regional perspective in the working class environment yielded to the perspective of a common fate.

Although workers' parties and revolutionary bodies were building regional structures, it is difficult to treat this as confirmation of the regional identity of the masses. As with other political parties, all subsequent organizational levels which were formed had to fit into the existing frameworks, including state and administrative frameworks. Due to political requirements, the aforementioned revolutionary Central Council for the Province of Silesia reached with its influence also to the southern ends of Greater Poland (not covered by the Greater Poland Uprising)[33]. It should generally be concluded that the people and the programme of political parties were the result of local, regional and national needs, opportunities and decisions. It is evident in the case of the Lower Silesian structures of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* – SPD) and the Communist Party of Germany *(Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands),* whose candidates for deputies were both people associated with Silesia and those sent from outside[34]. According to the memories of Immanuel Birnbaum, an editor of *Schlesische Volkswacht* – the press organ of the Silesian SPD district, who was born in East Prussia, the political line of that journal was dependent on the politically strategies at that

[31] Eugeniusz Kopeć, *Południowo-zachodnie kresy Rzeczypospolitej 1918-1939. Społeczne warunki integracji*, Katowice 1981, pp. 69-75, 84. This valuable study also appeared under a different title: *idem*, *'My i oni' na polskim Śląsku (1918-1939),* Katowice 1986.

[32] Edmund Klein, *Rada Ludowa we Wrocławiu, Centralna Rada dla Prowincji Śląskiej,* Warszawa 1976, pp. 61-80.

[33] *Ibidem*, pp. 92-96.

[34] Helmut Neubach, *Parteien und Politiker in Schlesien*, Dortmund 1988, pp. 183-201.

time[35]. Obviously, this example cannot revoke regional references in the activities of the Silesian political parties; however, it forces greater care when interpreting them. What should at least be mentioned is the inconsistent policy of the communists, who were trapped between ideological internationalism, regional pragmatism, and often, also, national conflict. Their *strictly* Upper Silesian groups that developed after the First World War in the Upper Silesian industrial district turned out to be ephemeral, therefore in later years the only thing that worked there were the regional structures of the communist parties of Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland. The significant successes of the communists in Czechoslovak Cieszyn Silesia – and to a lesser extent also in the German Province of Upper Silesia – were supposed to be the result not only of the proletarian character of the area, but also of the avoidance of nationalist rhetoric. The communists were able to stand against the decision of the Czechoslovakian authorities about the administrative connection between Silesia and Moravia in 1928, which is understood both in light of the Silesian orientation of their political background, as well as because of a concern about the reduction in revenue in the representative bodies of the Moravian-Silesian region. In the Polish Province of Silesia the communist movement had not gained a similar meaning, but even there-despite this apparent weakness-it was difficult for its activists to break down the regional (historical) borders and establish closer cooperation with their colleagues from the neighbouring Dąbrowa Górnicza and Cracow basins[36].

The working class character of Upper Silesia, marked by a serious national conflict, shaped the unique political character of that province. The most trusted among the Polish voters were, after all, centre-leftist parties whose position in the political arena of the country was weaker, such as the Christian Democrats, the National Workers' Party, the Polish Socialist Party and later the Sanation's Christian National Union of Labour. The main political parties of Upper Silesia merged with the national party structures; nevertheless, they did not lose their clear regional context[37]. That autonomy, and in exceptional cases, separateness (e.g. secession of the

[35] Wilhelm Matull, *Ostdeutschlands Arbeiterbewegung: Abriß ihrer Geschichte, Leistung und Opfer*, Würzburg 1973, pp. 75-82.

[36] Dan Gawrecki, *Śląsk Cieszyński w okresie międzywojennym (1918-1938)*, [in:] *Zarys dziejów Śląska Cieszyńskiego*, Ostrava-Praga 1992, pp. 89-91; *Dzieje robotnicze Śląska i Zagłębia Dąbrowskiego*, ed. Jan Walczak, Katowice 1986, pp. 93-219; *Dzieje ruchu robotniczego na Górnym Śląsku*, ed. Franciszek Hawranek, Opole 1982, pp. 87-89, 187-196.

[37] Cf Henryk Przybylski, *Życie polityczne jako czynnik integracji Górnego Śląska z Drugą Rzeczypospolitą*, [in:] *Rola i miejsce Górnego Śląska w drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, ed. Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, Bytom-Katowice 1995, pp. 136-148; Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Separatyzm górnośląskiej organizacji PPS w latach 1922-1928 (Refleksje i uwagi polemiczne)*, [in:] *Rola i miejsce…*, pp. 329-334; Sylwester Fertacz, *O niektórych odrębnościach życia politycznego w województwie śląskim*, [in:] *Rola i miejsce…*, pp. 335-338.

Silesian Socialist Party in 1928), was based on regional grounds, which, at least to some extent, was due to the social specifics of the province and the regional bonds among the workers prevailing in the area. Moreover, similar phenomena can be observed in the German Province of Upper Silesia, where workers' parties competed with the dominant Upper Silesian fraction of the Christian Democratic Centre Party (Catholic People's Party-*Katholische Volkspartei),* led by father Carl Ulitzka[38].

Social and national conflicts

A particular identity-related context evolved in a part of Upper Silesia which was marked by a vehement German-Polish dispute. The conflict was of a strong social nature, since the Polish-speaking population of workers and peasants prevailing in that region felt discriminated against by the Prussian (German) officials and at the same time-economically exploited by the German propertied classes[39]. A sense that the Polish-speaking inhabitants were double handicapped weakened the regional bond, and in practice narrowed it to their own group. Assigning the source of harm to the Germans and persuading Upper Silesians that their fate would change for the better in an idealized Poland determined the fact that the Polish-speaking plebeian population led by a small number of Polish intellectuals turned to the Polish movement. Arka Bożek, a well-known peasant activist of Upper Silesia, explained after many years: 'We were dreaming about a perfect Poland, a Poland of justice, a Poland without lords and serfs. It was supposed to be the home of truly free and equal people.'[40]. The Polish – German antagonism, growing in an atmosphere of a plebiscite struggle and the Silesian Uprisings, strengthened the national identity at the expense of the regional one. The classless solidarity proved not particularly attractive to proletarianized Upper Silesians because it did not change the social *status quo.* The advantage of Polish solidarity was that it did not include classes of a distinctly German character. Polish identity was growing out of a complex of grievances. Future governor Michał Grażyński estimated that the Polish movement in Silesia drew on both the national element-hatred for the Germans, as well as the social element-hatred for the manufacturer, the official and the landowner[41]. In such circumstances, the Association of Upper Silesia established at the end of 1918 only

[38] Cf Guido Hitze, *Carl Ulitzka (1873-1953) oder Oberschlesien zwischen den Weltkriegen*, Düsseldorf 2002.

[39] See Tadeusz Minczakiewicz, *Stosunki społeczne na Śląsku Opolskim w latach 1922-1933*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1976, p. 11.

[40] Arka Bożek, *Pamiętniki*, Warszawa 1957, p. 86.

[41] Tomasz Falęcki, *Regionalizm powstańców śląskich (do 1939 roku)*, [in:] *Regionalizm a separatyzm – historia i współczesność: Śląsk na tle innych obszarów*, ed. Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, Katowice 1995, pp. 49-50.

briefly broke through to the masses with the slogan of the regional state system, and then it became marginalized[42].

Love of the Upper Silesian land, the memory of the relative abundance and alleged coexistence of the residents in the mythologized era of Wilhelminian Germany, and finally the aversion to strangers from Poland strengthened the regional perception of the Upper Silesians who were disappointed with the changes that occurred after 1922, which is too quickly labelled as Silesian separatism. The vast group of workers and peasants from the Polish Silesian Voivodeship did not find the expected social promotion, which gave rise to a sense of resentment. Their situation was worsened by the years of deep economic crisis, when a simple yet predictable existence was replaced with uncertainty, unemployment and impoverishment[43]. Some of the disgruntled turned to German or separatist parties[44], others chose the programme of workers' parties. The latter should indeed be regarded as a sign of normalization, shifting a socially based dispute from the level of national confrontation to the level of class struggle. What collapsed in the interwar Poland was the myth of a Poland of justice which had previously moved the Upper Silesians so greatly[45]. In general, it shall be concluded that the social and economic tensions coupled with the national ones disintegrated the Silesian national community, and also indirectly disintegrated the region.

The Polish-speaking and plebeian by nature population of Upper Silesia defined the region somewhat through themselves, which is what Father Emil Szramek briefly commented on in 1934 saying that 'the Silesian man is the soul of Silesia'[46]. Arka Bożek, mentioned above, phrased it more in a peasant way when he wrote that 'we are the hosts [of our land]. For centuries we have grown out of it and we have been the masters of its treasures. And we alone are entitled to be in charge of this, which is our property'[47]. Merging the national factor with peasant tradition was characteristic of the Upper Silesian population and had no analogy in other Polish lands. The separateness of the Upper Silesians was proved not only by their actual

[42] For more information on the separatist concepts of Upper Silesia see P. Dobrowolski, *op. cit.*

[43] Jan Walczak, *Położenie robotników w polskiej części Górnego Śląska 1922-1939*, [in:] *Górny Śląsk po podziale*, pp. 51-55.

[44] The disappointed group gave strength for example to Związek Obrony Górnoślązaków (*The Association for the Defence of Upper Silesians*) led by Jana Kustos, see Maciej Fic, *Jan Kustos (1893-1932). Separatysta czy autonomista?*, Katowice 2010.

[45] See, among others, Maria Wanatowicz, *Ludność napływowa na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1922-1939*, Katowice 1982, pp. 211, 276-282; Jan Walczak, *Formowanie się frontu walki klasowej na Górnym Śląsku i w Cieszyńskiem w warunkach niepodległości narodowej (okres II Rzeczypospolitej)*, [in:] *Z problemów integracji społeczno-politycznej na Górnym Śląsku przed II wojną światową*, ed. Władysław Zieliński, Katowice 1980, pp. 67-107.

[46] Emil Szramek, *Śląsk jako problem socjologiczny*, Katowice 1934, p. 6.

[47] A. Bożek, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

social differences, but also by their desire to remain in their own social circle, as pointed out in 1938 by sociologist Paweł Rybicki[48]. It can even be referred to as a form of isolationism stemming from overlapping territorial, social, religious and ethnic alienation[49]. The Germans, and later also the Poles, were associated with harm and a threat to the homely surroundings[50]. This explains the reluctance towards the Polish immigrants, who were supposedly taking jobs and promotion opportunities away from the Upper Silesians, and what is more, they brought different cultural patterns. Maria Wanda Wanatowicz has shown that except for the Polish intelligentsia, Polish migration to Upper Silesia was not particularly intense at that time, yet what mattered, in fact, was the public impression[51]. Plebeian Upper Silesia had contact with 'noble' Poland within the borders of the Silesian Voivodeship, which hindered integration on both sides. The elitism proper of the Polish intelligentsia, the lordly lifestyle of migrant personnel and their treatment of the Upper Silesians with suspicion and superiority created a barrier and suggested a simple division into local people and foreigners. The Polish immigrant intelligentsia substituted the German one, yet they could not understand the specifics of the region[52]. The social nature of the Upper Silesian community was thus upheld.

The people's character of the Silesian Uprisings (1919-1921) and the autonomous status of the Silesian Voivodeship, unique on a national scale, (1922-1939) reinforced the Upper Silesian self-identification. The low social standing inhabitants of Silesia were also ennobled by a standard of living which was higher than in other areas of the country, including a range of social benefits. The sense of pride and ennoblement were accompanied by a self-containment and aversion to Polish foreigners. These evident cultural differences divided the Upper Silesians from the Polish elites, and in the case of lateral relationships the key problem was professional and economic rivalry. Fear of the expected competition dictated, among others, the administrative closure of the Upper Silesian labour market in 1926. It should be noted that eventually almost all political currents of the region adopted an anti-immigrant stance[53]. The already present regional resentments took on renewed force, which is shown, among other cases, in the sharpening and spreading of the

[48] Paweł Rybicki, *O badaniu socjograficznym Śląska*, Katowice 1938, pp. 35-36.
[49] See T. Falęcki, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.
[50] Marian Grzegorz Gerlich, *'Śląska krzywda' – przejaw zbiorowego poczucia poniżenia wśród górnośląskiej ludności rodzimej (okres międzywojenny)*, 'Etnografia Polska', 38 (1994), issue 1-2, pp. 5-23.
[51] M. Wanatowicz, *Ludność napływowa,* pp. 121-124.
[52] See Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, *Inteligencja na Śląsku w okresie międzywojennym*, Katowice 1986.
[53] M. Wanatowicz, *Ludność napływowa*, pp. 219-257.

gorol and *hanys* stereotypes. While the former one actually referred to newcomers from other Polish lands (originally from Galicia), the latter one was the quintessence of an Upper Silesian. The economic crisis further deepened the hostility of Silesian workers towards the generally unskilled immigrants, who were prepared to accept lower pay, were ready to be of service for superiors in work and thus were used as strike-breakers. What is more, the workers inflowing from the Polish agricultural regions came from another, by Upper Silesians acknowledged as underdeveloped circle of civilisation, hence in Silesia they were considered simple, which only deepened tensions in the region[54]. In general, the Upper Silesian plebeian community remained in a circle of pre-established behaviours and values. They were literate, but uneducated, poor yet hardworking, and their sense of dignity and self-esteem was rooted in employment. According to Eugeniusz Kopeć, a historian, physical work was a constitutive feature of regional affiliation[55]. How significant, in this context, is the statement of Father Jan Kapica, who welcomed the Polish Army entering Upper Silesia in 1922 with the words, 'We, Silesians, will learn from you, the Poles from other areas how to speak nicely, and you will learn from us how to work nicely'[56].

Ludwik Landau, well-versed in socio-economic issues wrote at that time that the essential features distinguishing the Polish part of Silesia from the rest of Poland were advanced industrialization, the resulting high proportion of the working population, and a low percentage of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry[57]. According to the census carried out in 1931, 54.6% of the population of Silesian Voivoidship were workers employed in mining and industry (with an average of 19.2% in Poland)[58]. The most strongly urbanized and industrialized area of interwar Poland (1.1% of the area and 4.4% of the population) held at the same time as much as 75% of its heavy industry! On the German and Czechoslovakian side the disparities were not so large, but still, even there a plebeian and workers' perception of the region was formed. This was conducive to maintaining an impression of a unified Upper Silesia divided by national borders, while blocking the all-Silesian identity of the Upper Silesians. Ethnically German and socially developed Lower Silesia

[54] Eugeniusz Kopeć, *Problemy stratyfikacji środowisk robotniczych w okresie wielkiego kryzysu (na przykładzie bielsko-bialskiego okręgu przemysłowego)*, [in:] *Wielki kryzys gospodarczy 1929-1933 na Śląsku i w Zagłębiu Dąbrowskim oraz jego społeczne konsekwencje*, ed. Józef Chlebowczyk, Katowice 1974, pp. 117-131.

[55] E. Kopeć, *Południowo-zachodnie kresy*, pp. 38-41.

[56] Quoted after Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, *Górny Śląsk pomostem pomiędzy Polską 'A' i Polską 'B' (Rola Górnego Śląska w procesie integracji gospodarczej Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, [in:] *Rola i miejsce*, p. 85.

[57] Ludwik Landau, *Wybór pism*, Warszawa 1957, p. 180.

[58] Franciszek Serafin, *Stosunki demograficzne i społeczne*, [in:] *Województwo śląskie*, pp. 90-94.

was far less interesting to them. On the Lower Silesian side, a similar constraint seems to be absent, since the social and economic heterogeneity of Lower Silesia facilitated the acceptance of sub-regional differences. Moreover, it is impossible to ignore the well-established position of the middle class and intelligentsia, sharing their Silesian identity with groups that held a lower position in the social hierarchy. Finally, it should be noted that the administrative distinction of the Province of Upper Silesia encountered resistance from the authorities of Lower Silesia and the acceptance of the Upper Silesians, who felt their own otherness. It is accurately defined on a linguistic or ethnic level, however, it is at the same time forgotten that it was linked to the social situation of the region[59]. It shall, therefore, be repeated that the plebeian character of a significant part of the Upper Silesian community contributed to the disintegration of Silesia.

Villages' and small towns' citizens: local identity

Plebeian groups essentially functioned at the local level, absorbing national and state messages promoted by state institutions and elites. The regional format was the intermediate level, and took the form of a wider local identity. There are two thorough representations of workers and rural communities in interwar Silesia which make it possible to penetrate into the fabric of society and politics. It is significant that what is found both in a sociological description of the Murcki (Emanuelssegen) settlement located near the mine (now a district of Katowice), and in a reconstruction of life in a Jarnołtówek (Arnoldsdorf, Arnoltovice) village in the mountains of Opava are basically exclusive references to these settlements. Their inhabitants seem to operate in the narrow space of local affairs and relationships, which overlapped with distant echoes of political and national conflicts. As shown by Julius Graw, revolution, economic crises and Nazi pressure were not able to break the conservative community of Jarnołtówek, which, according to tradition, was led by a Catholic priest. A unifying factor for the people was church and school, and that common poverty was alleviated through village solidarity. The external world reached Jarnołtówek through the district authorities from the city of Nysa (Neisse, Nisa). Hardly any children went to school in the city and the peasant-workers who worked in the nearby factories did not mean that they could gain entry into the circles of workers. A small flow of tourists, seasonal work trips and pilgrimages to Silesian

[59] Stanisław Ossowski, *Zagadnienia więzi regionalnej i więzi narodowej na Śląsku Opolskim*, [in:] *idem*, *Dzieła*, vol. 3, Warszawa 1967, pp. 294-295.

cult centres did not challenge the local character of the community whose regional dimension has been ignored by the author[60].

The main message of the study of Józef Chałasiński, who discussed relations in the village factory is very similar. In Murcki (Emanuelssegen) he found an incumbent community of workers linked by place of employment, and to a large extent related by family ties and proud of their roots[61]. The aforementioned study explored Polish-German antagonism; however, the author did not overlook the related, awakened sense of regional distinctiveness shaped by the proletarian ethos of Upper Silesia. He wrote eloquently that 'An Upper Silesian feels like a worker, but the worker it is not just any: it is a first-rate worker'[62]. Nevertheless, the residents functioned essentially within the same colony and mine which organized their world. What is also worth mentioning are their strong attachment to the land and their persistent attachment to Silesian folk culture, which transferred the rural behavioural patterns, established by centuries to industrial housing[63].

The working population of Upper Silesia retained their fear of the outside world that they had brought with them from their villages[64], which definitely inhibited the progress of regional identification. Moreover, in times of crisis and struggle for employment, any 'stranger' could be a threat, even though he came from a neighbouring village. Such an attitude led to an isolation in the sources of strike outbreaks, because the workers did not evince greater solidarity[65]. Much depended, of course, on the seriousness of the problems and the relationships that developed. Under normal circumstances, the attention of the peasant and workers' communities' members concentrated on local issues, hence they cared more about the problems of the *gmina* (commune) or the parish than about the cases of a trans-local character[66]. Shortly after the Second World War, a sociologist, Stanisław Ossowski

[60] Julius Graw, *Arnoldsdorf / Kreis Neisse: Untersuchungen zur Sozialstruktur und Mentalität einer oberschlesischen Dorfgemeinschaft 1920-1950*, Cloppenburg 1996.

[61] Józef Chałasiński, *Antagonizm polsko-niemiecki w osadzie fabrycznej 'Kopalnia' na Górnym Śląsku. Studium socjologiczne*, Warszawa 1935, pp. 14-15 et seq.

[62] *Ibidem*, p. 100.

[63] Tomasz Nawrocki, *Trwanie i zmiana lokalnej społeczności górniczej na Górnym Śląsku na przykładzie Murcek*, Katowice 2006, p. 76, pp. 81-82, 109-110, 137-139.

[64] Piotr Madajczyk, *Obcość jako wyznacznik powstawania i funkcjonowania granic etniczno-narodowych na Górnym Śląsku*, [in:] *Górny Śląsk wyobrażony: wokół mitów, symboli i bohaterów dyskursów narodowych*, eds Juliane Haubold-Stolle, Bernard Linek, Opole-Marburg 2005, pp. 109-110.

[65] M. Wanatowicz, *Ludność napływowa,* p. 282; Jan Walczak, *Formowanie się frontu walki klasowej na Górnym Śląsku i w Cieszyńskiem w warunkach niepodległości narodowej (okres II Rzeczypospolitej)*, [in:] *Z problemów integracji społeczno-politycznej na Górnym Śląsku przed II wojną światową*, ed. Władysław Zieliński, Katowice 1980, pp. 67-107.

[66] Cf E. Kopeć, *Południowo-zachodnie kresy*, p. 64.

consciously assessed that Poles from the village of Giełczyn[67] in Opole Silesia belonged primarily to a 'close and substantial' community of ' local people' connected by ties of tradition and coexistence[68]. Perhaps it appeared similar in the villages inhabited by the Germans. A belief expressed in the literature that the Silesian village was a real mainstay of regional tradition[69], is not necessarily false. That tradition is still being built from local components. Moreover, the isolation was undermined by the aforementioned instability and, finally, by progressive modernization. One of its elements was the strong development of the cooperative movement, agricultural farmers' circles and peasant associations[70].

The strong local and sub-regional identification of rural and small-town communities generated substantial production of books and periodicals of that kind in the interwar period. It is enough to recall the then fashionable calendars (including the one issued in Międzylesie (Mittelwalde, Mezilesí) from 1911 to 1942 entitled 'Guda Obend!'[71]), which cherished a love of the homeland, its history, culture and nature. The publishing houses – similar to regional museums and associations – appeared in even greater numbers already before the First World War, but the disturbances and threats that occurred after that also contributed to a distribution of folk and local content. This grassroots need to express affection for a small homeland permeated in German circles with an intellectual movement for the protection of the transient cultural and natural heritage *(Heimatschutz),* with a bourgeois taste for sightseeing and tourism, and a national need to prove the German character of the surrounding area threatened by the territorial claims of Poland and Czechoslovakia[72]. What is pertinent to our discussion is the local identity of those simple people, concentrated on the land close to their heart and steadfast in the conviction of its

[67] Giełczyn is the fictitious name made by Stanisław Ossowski for a real community to disguise its identity.

[68] S. Ossowski, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

[69] Jan Walczak, *Wokół etniczno-kulturowej tożsamości Górnego Śląska (Uwagi polemiczne i dyskusyjne)*, [in:] *Rola i miejsce,* pp. 327-328.

[70] *Historia chłopów śląskich*, ed. Stefan Inglot, Warszawa 1979, pp. 294-298, 313-317, 330-335.

[71] For example, the editors of the Kłodzko calendar wrote in the first yearbook that it was created for the beloved earldom of Kłodzko – for the homeland *(Heimat).*It suggested that the recipient of the journal should feel homely *(heimlich)* thanks to it, as long as the recipient has the true heart of a resident of Kłodzko and has love for the native land (*Heimaterde*), see 'Guda Obend! Glatzer Volkskalender für das Jahr 1911', Glatz 1911, p. 27.

[72] Cf. Ulrike Frede, *'Unvergessene Heimat' Schlesien. Eine exemplarische Untersuchung des ostdeutschen Heimatbuches als Medium und Quelle spezifischer Erinnerungskultur*, Marburg 2004, pp. 31-42. What is more, the recalled study proves the duration of the affiliation of the German residents to the homeland lost after 1945 (*verlorene Heimat*) and about the need for describing those lands. Suffice it to say that in the case of the land of Kłodzko, Ząbkowice and Wałbrzych (about 10% of the area of Lower Silesia), after the Second World War there was prepared in a *Landsmanshaft* at least 164 publications *(Heimatbücher),* of which most were dedicated to villages.

value. Similar circumstances also explain the popularity of the local press[73]. It should be added that the all-Silesian regional magazines, including 'Wir Schlesier' and 'Schlesische Heimat', were directed at the more demanding urban and intellectual circles, whose perspective was much broader.

Bigger towns' and cities' inhabitants: between local and regional identity

It is difficult to expect industrial workers to represent a specific regional horizon when most of them – unless we count the migration – had rarely left their place of residence and work. Paid holiday leaves affected the mobility to a rather limited extent, judging from the fact that close to 68% of employees in the large factories of Berlin declared in 1933 that they had never (!) seen them as an opportunity to leave Berlin[74]. Silesian workers travelled little, as evidenced by a modest-compared with neighbouring Saxony and the Czech Republic – development of working-class tourist groups (*Touristenverein 'Naturfreunde'*) and a negligible participation of these circles in promoting skiing, a holiday activity which was very popular in the interwar period[75]. Some change was caused by the activity of *Kraft durch Freude*, a Nazi organization promoting mass recreation. Still, its potential regional dimension was dominated by the national political context, so characteristic of the Third Reich. Tourism and winter sports developed mainly in bourgeois circles, and their example was followed also by the lower social classes, especially near the Sudetenland. The distance from the tourist areas was important because time and financial constraints allowed the non-affluent part of the society to travel only locally. In these circumstances, departure on a religious pilgrimage to regional sanctuaries was an important exception and gave rise to a regional context. This was at least the case of Góra Św. Anny (St. Anna's Berg), which was a point of reference (and direct meeting!) for the Upper Silesians. It was the 'holy mountain of Upper Silesia' where 'its heart was beating'[76].

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[73] Tomasz Przerwa, *Nieodzowność 'obcego' w małomiasteczkowej prasie dolnośląskiej pierwszej połowy XX w.?*, [in:] *Prasa regionalna jako źródło do badań historycznych okresu XIX i XX wieku*, eds Joanna Nowosielska-Sobel, Grzegorz Strauchold, Tomasz Ślepowroński, Wrocław 2011, pp. 55-67.

[74] Timothy W. Mason, *Sozialpolitik im Dritten Reich: Arbeitsklasse und Volksgemeinschaft*, Opladen 1977, pp. 183-185.

[75] Tomasz Przerwa, *Miedzy lękiem i zachwytem. Sporty zimowe w śląskich Sudetach i ich znaczenie dla regionu (do 1945 r.)*, Wrocław 2012, pp. 113-140.

[76] For example Max Czerwensky, *Schlesien in weiter Ferne: Erinnerungen eines vertriebenen Priesters an seine Heimat*, Dülmen 2007, pp. 46-52, 58; Andrzej Hanich, *Góra Świętej Anny – centrum pielgrzymkowe Śląska Opolskiego 1945-1999. Studium historyczno-pastoralne*, Opole 1999, pp. 27, 31, 78-99, 104-132.

In the case of residents of large urban centres, the Silesian vision of the region was, apparently, the strongest, but what is greatly missing to deepen this thesis are papers describing the life of the Silesian bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia in the interwar period. We can only base our assumptions on individual accounts and general historical surveys. The regional perspective of these layers was conditioned by their increased mobility, job mobility natural for this group and the already mentioned fascination with tourist trips. There is no way to ignore their better education and the sense of responsibility they felt for the less developed surroundings. That trans-local perspective gave urban residents a broader sense of being at home, and resulted from their greater opportunities and wider horizons. It should be added that the pro-regional attitude of the middle class was particularly important here, because this class was a societal leader both in a cultural and intellectual respect. Although the political and economic instability of the 1920s and 1930s weakened the economic position of the middle class, at the time it was bringing them closer to the lower classes and facilitated the spreading of their ideas about the region.

Among the intelligensia, the Silesian perspective was a typical phenomenon, which seems to be proven by the many Silesian scientific associations which sprung up in the German Wrocław back in the 19th century and were still active after the Great War. What is more, the interwar period saw the appearance of new structures, including the Historical Committee on Silesia (*Historische Kommission für Schlesien*) and the Silesian Geographical Society (*Schlesische Gesellschaft für Erdkunde*). On the Czech and Polish side there were indeed competing organizations, but they were devoid of academic background. Wrocław remained the only Silesian university and polytechnic centre. In assessing the profile of various regional associations, what remains is the general uncertainty as to the extent to which they grew from a regional orientation, and the extent to which they served national purposes. It is well illustrated by the effort of the Germans involved in promoting 'tribal culture' (*Stammeskultur*). They appealed to a unification concept involving the divided Silesia and the all-Silesian identity, but in fact they wanted to unite Sudeten Germandom with the region of neighbouring Germany. In this quite offensive project the historical borders of Silesia were crossed, at the same time building a Silesian perspective. Silesian Culture Weeks were organized (*Schlesische Kulturwoche*), and the periodical 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch für die deutsche Kulturarbeit im gesamtschlesischen Raum' was issued. German Upper Silesian elites, including the people surrounding Karl Schodrok and his 'Der Oberschlesier', were searching for their own form of regionalism, similar to the administrative authorities, who, in collaboration

with the opinion-shaping circles intensified the promotion of Silesia and Silesianess[77].

More can probably be said only about the native Upper Silesian intelligentsia, relatively small in number, but highly bound to the region. Its most typical group was the Catholic clergy, who enjoyed considerable authority, trust and the respect of the Upper Silesians. The priests were becoming the natural leaders of the commoners, who were deprived of other elites. They understood the problems of the commoners, supported them in word and deed. They were both priests and devoted defenders, involved in protecting Silesian tradition and social ties[78]. This fusion of the Catholics with their spiritual leaders was responsible for the power of the Catholic Church in Upper Silesia and the success of the Christian Democratic parties which represented it. Indeed, religion played a special role in the life of the Upper Silesians. Much of the Upper Silesian priests descended from the commoners (33% of the priests of the diocese of Katowice had peasant roots, and 25% of them were of working-class descent)[79]. Their family homes provided them with a keen sense of regional community, which they sought to protect and nurture. Assuming German or Polish nationality usually did not deprive them of the understanding of the needs of the faithful of the opposing nationality. In the name of regional tradition and Catholic values they were also ready to act against those fellow countrymen who did not adapt to the local community and who transferred foreign cultural patterns and a secular worldview to Upper Silesia. The Upper Silesian clergy were not enemies of immigrants, but-like most Upper Silesians-felt that the immigrants should respect what constituted a Silesian. The Catholic clergy was a group which united or even constructed Upper Silesia. Their commitment on regional grounds is symbolised by priest Carl Ulitzka, who played a part in the administrative separation of the German Province of Upper Silesia[80].

In 1922 Poland inherited, in Upper Silesia, a small group of Polish secular intelligentsia. The congress of the Silesian Academic Association in 1919 was attended by

[77] Tobias Weger, *Zwischen alldeutschen Phantasien und sudetendeutschen Anschlussplänen – die 'gesamtschlesische' Idee der 1920er und 1930er Jahre*, [in:] *Schlesien als literarische Provinz. Literatur zwischen Regionalismus und Universalismus*, eds Marek Adamski, Wojciech Kunicki, Leipzig 2008, pp. 91-101; Eduard Mühle, *Obraz historii i polityka historyczna. O historiograficznej konstrukcji „ogólnośląskiego obszaru plemiennego" i jego politycznej instrumentalizacji*, [in:] *Górny Śląsk wyobrażony*, pp. 55-77; Wojciech Kunicki, *Śląsk. Rzeczywistości wyobrażone*, [in:] *Śląsk. Rzeczywistości wyobrażone*, ed. Wojciech Kunicki, Poznań 2009, pp. 51-57; Teresa Kulak, *Propaganda antypolska dolnośląskich władz prowincjonalnych w latach 1922-1933*, Wrocław 1981, pp. 81-87.

[78] E. Kopeć, *Południowo-zachodnie*, pp. 61, 109-110, 127-129.

[79] Henryk Olszar, *Kościół katolicki na Górnym Śląsku w życiu Kościoła w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, [in:] *Rola i miejsce*, pp. 129-132.

[80] G. Hitze, *Carl Ulitzka*, pp. 491-559.

only 110 people, most of whom were priests. The shortage of Polish staff made it necessary to bring educated Poles from other parts of the country, to the Silesian Voivoidship which in itself should be considered a region-disintegrating action. District-related frictions within the Polish intelligentsia in this area not only divided that group, but also affected the attitudes of the whole community. The differences in the ethos – including the 'noble – szlachta' arrogance of the newcomers – was offensive to the Upper Silesian intelligentsia who had grown in the egalitarian atmosphere of Upper Silesia and felt a strong sense of regional ties connecting them with the proletarian community. They focused their attention mainly on local issues and manifested patriotism in this very narrow form, which was visible, among other things, in the defence of the Silesians and the values which they had created. Considerably little attention was given by the Upper Silesians to higher education and a several-year-long period of Polish rule decided that the national Upper Silesian intelligentsia was growing at a slow pace and, what is more, suffered heavy losses during the Second World War[81]. The aforementioned alienation of the immigrant intelligentsia was not only characteristic of the Polish. During the war the German invaders brought experienced executives from Germany (including German Silesia) into the region of Katowice, and who – according to the research of Ryszard Kaczmarek – felt alienated there, or else were overcome with the task of fitting the residents into the national and political objectives of the Third Reich[82]. Where their activity was successful, it weakened regional orientation, where it was not accepted, the Upper Silesians strengthened within their own identification.

Among the German inhabitants of Silesia Hitler gained the support of all social groups; nevertheless, the participation of the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia in the leading circles of the Nazi Party (NSDAP) seems to prove their special position in the Nazi movement[83]. The question of how these groups influenced the shaping of regional Nazi governments remains open. The Third Reich was characterized by far-reaching unification and centralization, which has prevented a correct reading of the regional components of social behaviour. The fact is that the Nazis initially appreciated the concept of regional unity *(Gau Schlesien),* but during the war they

[81] M. W. Wanatowicz, *Inteligencja*, pp. 8, 26, 56, 84-94, eadem, *Inteligencja w województwie śląskim 1922-1939*, [in:] *Losy inteligencji śląskiej w latach 1939-1945*, ed. Zbigniew Kapała, vol. 1, Bytom 2001, pp. 7-21.

[82] Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Inteligencja niemiecka na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1939-1945*, [in:] *Losy inteligencji śląskiej,* pp. 44-61; *idem*, *Pod rządami gauleiterów. Elity i instytucje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939-1945*, Katowice 1998, pp. 197-211.

[83] See Tomasz Kruszewski, *Partia narodowosocjalistyczna na Śląsku w latach 1933-1945. Organizacja i działalność,* Wrocław 1995; *idem*, *Struktura organizacyjna i społeczno-zawodowa NSDAP w powiecie dzierżoniowskim w latach 1933-1945*, Wrocław 1992, pp. 149-170.

divided it into a Lower Silesian part *(Gau Niederschlesien)* and an Upper Silesian one *(Gau Oberschlesien)* which combined the adjacent Silesian and non-Silesian industrial districts into the Forge of the Third Reich. What comes to light here is the realm of political decisions.What should be emphasized once more is the primacy of nationalist attitudes, which created pressure in Germany to erase the Slavic heritage of Silesia, including Polish and Czech geographic names. A similar pressure directed once more against the Germans occurred also in Poland and Czechoslovakia. The attitude of society – including local communities – to these activities requires research, yet it can already be noted that not everybody accepted it[84].

In the years 1939-1945 the attention of the residents of Silesia was occupied primarily with the war efforts that sharpened national and political orientation. The war losses and forced migration weakened the social dimension of the region, which was strongly evident at the end of the war[85]. Social and regional issues clearly yielded under the pressure of important basic problems. Against this background, a more lenient treatment of the Polish-speaking Upper Silesians by the German occupiers created significant deviation. The vast majority of them were incorporated by the Nazis into the German national community *(Deutsche Volksliste),* which was created with a view to maintaining the working-class group which they needed. It created a sort of stability because it protected the local community against evictions. The social characteristic of this area weakened the disintegrating impact of the war, which, however, was more and more clearly visible. Prisoners of war and forced labourers replaced the men mobilized for the army and for work in other areas. This percentage exceeded even 50% of the crew in the selected factories[86].

Migrations

The complicated economic, political and national situation of interwar Silesia fostered migration, which highly depleted the community of the region and partly disturbed their social cohesion. Given the scale of the problems compared to the period before the First World War, Silesian emigration to the west *(Ostflucht)* should

[84] See, among others, Karol Fiedor, *Walka z nazewnictwem polskim na Śląsku w okresie hitlerowskim (1933-1939)*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1966; Bernard Linek, *Zmiany nazw na Górnym Śląsku w XIX i XX w.*, [in:] *Nazwa dokumentem przeszłości regionu*, eds Joanna Nowosielska-Sobel, Grzegorz Strauchold, Wojciech Kucharski, Wrocław 2010, pp. 123-134.

[85] This can be illustrated by example of the noble families, see Arkadiusz Kuzio-Podrucki, *Śląski koniec arystokracji*, [in:] *Rodzina na Śląsku 1939-1945: dezintegracja, migracja, codzienność*, eds Adriana Dawid, Antoni Maziarz, Opole-Warszawa 2012, pp. 12-22.

[86] Cf. R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk,* pp. 131-215, 312-330; *Położenie ludności w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939-1945*, ed. Wacław Długoborski, Poznań 1983, pp. XLII, XLIV-XLV.

be seen as moderate. One of the major factors hindering the depopulation of Silesia was sought in an unusual attachment of the inhabitants to their homeland[87]. The balance of migration movements in the area of German Silesia was, however, negative. In the years 1910-1925 36.9 thousand residents disappeared, in the years 1925-1933 115.2 thousand, and from 1933 to 1939 – including Hlučín Region (Czech: Hlučínsko, German: Hultschiner Ländchen, Polish: Kraik Hulczyński) – 161.3 thousand[88]. With the exception of some cities, such as Głogów (Glogau, Hlohov) (+11.8%), Jelenia Góra (+11.7%) and Świdnica (Schweidnitz, Svídnice) (+9.3%), from 1933 to 1939 most of the region recorded losses, which included both agricultural districts (*Kreise*, *powiats*), such as the district of Kluczbork (Kreuzburg) (-9%), Grodków (Grottkau) (-8.5%) and Strzelin (Strehlen) (-8.2%), as well as crisis-stricken industrial centres, such as Zabrze (Hindenburg) (-9.8%), Racibórz (Ratibor, Ratiboř) (-9.4%) and Wałbrzych (-7.7%)[89]. The balance of Upper Silesia was particularly unfavourable, because already before that – with the exception of the industrial district – a significant decrease in population had been reported there[90]. The backward agricultural regions provided up to 20 thousand seasonal workers leaving the region in search of work[91]. The war interrupted this natural migration and the resettlements – including those performed within the dislocation of German industry threatened by allied air raids – had no significant meaning for the subject of this work. Still, similar to the presence of forced labourers and prisoners of war, they interfered with the social space of Silesia[92].

Within the region major shifts of population occurred[93], which were of both an economic and political nature. What should be mentioned are escapes from Upper Silesia during the plebiscite fighting, during the uprisings and after the division of the area in 1922. Polish and German Silesians were mostly looking for support in the Polish Silesian Voivoidship or in the German Opole Regency (*Regierungsbezierk Oppeln*), respectively[94]. Similar social space only partially alleviated their

[87] Andrzej Brożek, *Problematyka narodowościowa Ostfluchtu na Śląsku*, Wrocław 1969, p. 29; Adam Hrebenda, *Górnośląska klasa robotnicza w latach międzywojennych 1922-1939*, Warszawa-Katowice-Kraków 1979, p. 89.

[88] Andrzej Brożek, *Ostflucht na Śląsku*, Katowice 1966, p. 44.

[89] *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs,* vol. 552, issue 1: *Stand, Entwicklung und Siedlungsweise der Bevölkerung des Deutschen Reichs,* Berlin 1943, pp. 52-59.

[90] A. Brożek, *Ostflucht,* pp. 62-64.

[91] Karol Fiedor, *Polscy robotnicy rolni na Śląsku pod panowaniem niemieckim na tle wychodźstwa do Rzeszy 1918-1932*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1968, pp. 42-43, 67-68.

[92] See, among others, Alfred Konieczny, *Śląsk a wojna powietrzna lat 1940-1944, W*rocław 1998, pp. 35-55; *idem*, *Rozmiary zatrudnienia zagranicznych robotników przymusowych i jeńców wojennych w gospodarce Dolnego Śląska w latach II wojny światowej*, Opole 1968.

[93] A. Bożek, *Ostflucht*, pp. 119-120.

[94] A. Brożek, *Problematyka narodowościowa*, pp. 24-25, 96.

longing for their lost local community. Similar problems and emotions can also be found in the case of other communities divided by the new frontier (Cieszyn Silesia and 'Hlučín Region'), which favoured revisionist moods and was used for political purposes. German expansion in 1938 and 1939 brought another wave of escapes, expulsions and deportations, which resulted in further disorder. What is more, under Nazi rule, the Jewish community, which previously co-created the community of the region, especially in cities, was removed[95]. The above-mentioned events included every social group, with a more profiled outflow of population from the rural areas to urban and industrial agglomerations *(Landflucht).* It resulted in a depopulation of the agricultural and peripheral areas where a significant loss of population was registered[96]. It seemed especially dangerous to the Germans; the Polish-German borderland, a region which they defined as 'an area without a nation' *(Raum ohne Volk).* An expression such as this shows the exaggerated propaganda, nevertheless, the district of Namysłów (Namslau) was said to have lost 44% of its residents between 1871 and 1925[97].

The peasantry felt deeply rooted on their familial sides and – despite poverty – they usually left their land only when it was absolutely necessary. A conservative commitment to the property of their fathers and no will to change the existing situation was observed even in the areas struck by a structural crisis. This affected, among others, mountain areas, where the enclaves of hand-weaving were sustained up to the 1930s. At the same time it was a matter of not only simply reconciling with fate, but also of a belonging for a sustained period of time to a familiar and fixed microworld. While even this hermetic pattern of behaviour was partially affected, it nevertheless remained present. Add to this that *Landflucht,* the bonding of villages and towns with larger centres, was halted because of the great economic crisis of the early 1930s. What was even observed was the return of the people deprived of sources of income in their homeland. The mixing of the region's population within the migration movements certainly intensified. In general, therefore, it may be concluded that the highly unstable interwar period and the changes of wartime must have strengthened the erosion of the traditional isolation of local communities or else expanded local identity, which might have facilitated regional identification.

[95] For more on the Silesian Jews see Bernhard Brilling, *Die jüdische Gemeinde Mittelschlesiens. Entstehung und Geschichte*, Stuttgart 1973; Leszek Ziątkowski, *Dzieje Żydów we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2000, pp. 94-112; Wojciech Jaworski, *Ludność żydowska w województwie śląskim w latach 1922-1939*, Katowice 1997; Jan Dvořák, *Židé v Opavském Slezsku 1918-1945*, Opava 2009. Because of the advanced assimilation – basically within the circle of the German community – it is difficult to speak about people of Jewish origin as of a separate social group.

[96] T. Minczakiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-52.

[97] K. Fiedor, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

Conclusions

What should be noted in summary of the situation on interwar Silesia is the fact that the groups located lower in the social hierarchy played a smaller role in the construction of Silesia. They were active primarily on a local basis and in this indirect way they developed a regional bond. Silesia was understood in a wider sense by wealthier residents of cities and industrial centres, whose overall mobility and education allowed them to go beyond the local horizons of the peasant and small-town population. The circles of the great estate owners operated simultaneously on several levels, including the regional. The gentry were a much more stable carrier of the region, as they were more closely tied to tradition and land than the industrialists. The representatives of the great landed property were at the same time a point of reference for the rest of the population. It should be noted that the peasant and noble conservatism favoured maintaining the historical boundaries of the region, which in the case of the workers and the capitalists blurred, especially when they had to operate within the borderland industrial districts (Cieszyn Silesia). On the whole, industrialization did not violate the regional identity, but it changed its range. The proletarian character of Upper Silesia, including the Polish Silesian Voivodeship contributed, after all, to a separation of the Upper Silesian identity. From the perspective of Wrocław, the plebeian character of Upper Silesians proved destructive to the unity of Silesia, from the perspective of Katowice or Opole its meaning was entirely different.

Social tensions, which were natural during the crisis, can definitely be considered as a disintegrating factor for the region, but – as far as we ignore the fact of Silesian Uprisings – they were not very dangerous in Silesia. After all, the background of the tragic Polish-German conflict over Upper Silesia, even though it stemmed from the social impairment of the Upper Silesians, was far more complex. The Polish-Czechoslovak dispute over Cieszyn Silesia was influenced by social issues to a far lesser extent because the two national groups generally did not differ in their social structures. The activity of class labour or peasant parties fitted into the existing regional framework, and sometimes extended to the nearest neighbourhood. Not only did they not undermine the social perceptions of the region, but even strengthened them. It should generally be emphasized that it is impossible to clearly identify the impact of social groups on the regional context for the discussed time span. Those groups showed an internal vertical and horizontal heterogeneity, and their attitudes were determined by individual attachment to the nation, the state, the party or religion. Deep civilisation changes on the one hand, and flourishing

nationalism on the other hand, impaired the existing regional identity, which was losing its importance or else took on a national shade. Nevertheless, the issues addressed in this text provide a chance for a new perspective on the complex reality of interwar Silesia. It also makes it possible to notice that the reflection on the Silesian social groups is still incomplete and in the case of Lower Silesia, virtually absent.

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Ethnic issues and the functioning of Silesia as a region in the years 1918-1945

Abstract:

The 20th century was among the most dramatic in the history of Silesia. At the turn of the 20th century, Prussia and the German Reich as a whole saw the emergence of a modern German nation. As a result, the German nation, dominant in Silesia, was to become a paragon for all ethnically non-German populations. Social changes resulting from World War I cemented the formation of the German nation and also hastened the formation of Polish national sentiment in Upper Silesia. At the same time, a group of Upper Silesians not possessed of the idea of belonging to a nation while feeling strongly connected to their region was always in existence, and this group does not lend itself readily to easy analysis. Attention must also be paid to the activities of Silesian nationals (the so called Schlonsaken).

The partition of Silesia (primarily Upper Silesia) between Germany and a reconstituted Poland had a chaotic influence on the worldview of many of the inhabitants of this land. Many Germans found themselves within the borders of the new Polish state, which they did not accept, while many Upper Silesians felt dissatisfied and unappreciated within the Polish Republic. During World War II, Upper Silesia, which previously captured both German and Polish identities, was subjected to an intensive policy of Germanization following its unlawful incorporation into the Reich in 1939. This policy also attracted many to the ideas of National Socialism. These factors were undoubtedly both cohesive and disruptive to the inhabitants of this land.

Keywords:

Czechisation, Germanisation, Polonisation, Silesianess

The ethnic situation in Silesia prior to the outbreak of the Great War[1]

The inhabitants of German Silesia in the period before the Great War showed remarkable differences in their views regarding affiliation to national communities. The territory was populated by indigenous Germans, descendants of settlers who

[1] On the subject of the history of Silesia and its inhabitants see the following recently published papers: Michał Lis, *Górny Śląsk. Zarys dziejów do połowy XX wieku*, Opole 2001; Joachim Bahlcke et al., *Śląsk i Ślązacy*, transl. Michał Misiorny, Zofia Rybicka, Warszawa 2001 (original title: *Schlesien und die Schlesier*, München 1996); *Historia Śląska*, ed. Marek Czapliński, Wrocław 2002; Piotr Pregiel, Tomasz Przerwa, *Dzieje Śląska*, Wrocław 2005; *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*; Arno Herzig, Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Małgorzata Ruchniewicz, *Śląsk i jego dzieje*, Wrocław 2012 (original title: Arno Herzig, *Schlesien. Das Lan Und Seine Geschichte in Bildern, Texten und Dokumenten*, Hamburg 2008); *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka i kultura*; *Opole. Dzieje i tradycja*, eds Bernard Linek, Krzysztof Tarka, Urszula Zajączkowska, Opole 2011.

had come there as early as the Middle Ages. In Lower Silesia, indigenous Germans made up a predominate portion of the total population.

Throughout the late modern period they had a sense of national connection with their compatriots inhabiting historically German territories. These feelings had been intensifying throughout the 19th century alongside the formation of the modern German nation[2]. That is what led to integration between the Silesian Germans and the remaining German-speaking groups that were residing in the territory of the unifying Germany.

At the same time, when the German territories were unified 'by fire and sword' in 1871 by Prussia and 'little Germany' as it was known, was born, a several-decades-long process of rallying the German people around their new ideological homeland began, as personified by the Protestant Hohenzollerns. This process started from the moment of Habsburg Silesia's incorporation into the Prussian state in the mid-18th century and was virtually completed in the closing decades of the 19th century in Protestant Lower Silesia[3].

The situation in Upper Silesia where the majority of the population was Catholic was quite different. This group was largely influenced by the Centre Party, which did not act against the state of the Hohenzollerns, as a political subject, but which nonetheless frequently remained in long-term opposition to Prussian political elites. Upper Silesian Catholics, who were devoid of a sense of German nationality, began to consolidate around this party. What is more, they were seeking the Party's support against Berlin's pro-Germanisation policy to develop a uniform German nation within the boundaries of the Reich. This therefore continued at least up until the close of the 19th century a process of disintegration, which was in addition, destructive for the state's unification policy.

At the same time the inhabitants of both parts of Silesia who were German by conviction included Germans who were of Slavonic origin but who underwent a centuries-long process of voluntary assimilation. Their attitude mirrored that of the direct descendants of German settlers.

At the outset of the 19th century it was hard to estimate the number of people of Slavonic descent who had only recently developed their sense of German nationality. Several reasons lay at the root of them doing so. This was the result of a conscious

[2] Cf. the extensive chapter entitled 'Problem tożsamości narodowej na ziemiach niemieckich w XIX w. i pierwszym trzydziestoleciu XX w.', in: Joanna Nowosielska-Sobel, *Od ziemi rodzinnej ku ojczyźnie ideologicznej. Ruch ochrony stron ojczystych (Heimatschutz) ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Śląska (1871-1933)*, Wrocław 2013, pp. 35-131.

[3] Cf. Heinrich August Winkler, *Długa droga na Zachód*, vol. 1: *Dzieje Niemiec 1806-1933*, Wrocław 2007 (orig.: *Der Lange Weg nach Westen*, Band 1: *Deutsche Geschichte vom Ende des Alten Reiches bis zum Untergang der Weimarer Republik*, München 2005), chapters 5. and 6., pp. 205-353.

and intensive Germanisation policy conducted by the Prussian (and German) state, as well as conscious, opportunistic decisions made with the intention of secure for oneself an easier career. This was the result of independent processes of assimilation, where the attractiveness of the German culture and civilisation made part of Slavonic Silesians draw closer to the German nation. Nonetheless, independently of the aforementioned reasons (which naturally occurred in various combinations) these people identified themselves-when it came both to words and deeds (i.e. election choices) with the German nation. Therefore from the German point of view the aforementioned intentions were a factor which both attracted people to 'Germanness' and at the same time drew them away from their indigenous, Slavonic 'Silesianness'.

Just prior to the First World War a relatively large group of newly-arrived immigrant German specialists, officials, industrial managers, bank officials etc. lived in the Silesian territories – which was particularly conspicuous in Upper Silesia. This community constituted another component of the German Silesian ethnic group and their conduct was typical for other German inhabitants of this territory. What is more, they fully identified themselves with their German ideological homeland as personified by the dynasty of Hohenzollerns that ruled both in Prussia and in the German Reich.

In (mostly Upper) Silesia these were the Slavs that constituted the majority of the population[4]. Nonetheless, I would like to highlight that such an ethnic origin cannot be automatically regarded as tantamount to Polish nationality. Silesia (mainly Upper) provides us with an excellent example to support the aforementioned statement. The majority of Silesians of Slavonic origin who inhabited this region were characterized by wavering views on the subject of their nationality. Moreover the boundaries of their affiliation to one or another nationality were fuzzy and are difficult to precisely define. When it comes to this particularly large group – whose actual size is hard to estimate – it is even difficult to determine the shape of their views connected with the issue of national affiliation; these people, throughout their history, particularly for reasons of their plebeian background and the fact that they resided on the outskirts of the Habsburg state, and later the Kingdom of Prussia, had no opportunity whatsoever to form an opinion in this respect. Connected by a local, small-scale rural culture (transplanted to the industrial cities they migrated to in search of work) they were first and foremost characterized by their sense of being Silesian. And this quality – with the exception of certain groups – was at the

[4] A great deal of literature has been devoted to this issue. Cf.: *Śląsk – etniczno-kulturowa wspólnota i różnorodność*, ed. Barbara Bazielich, Wrocław 1995. Papers included in this study refer also to ethnic aspects.

time not yet coupled with a sense of being part of a Silesian nation in the modern sense of this expression. Both this ethnic and ethnographic majority was no doubt ready to be endowed with nationality. Its attitude towards the German nation, which reigned in Silesia up until 1919 were dependent on the nation-building taking place at that time and industrialization-related processes, as well as on the force of Prussian (and also German) statehood. Hence, in the case of these people, it would be difficult to determine the principal processes which attracted or drew them away from 'Germanness'. At the same time it is important to notice that the adoption of certain national attitudes constituted a disintegrating factor for the local, deeply-rooted communities. Yet, what needs to be underscored here is that there, in fact, hardly existed only one local Silesian community. People focused on their Catholic faith, which they regarded as a universal, traditional system of moral values. In their everyday life however they focused on their immediate surroundings. They cultivated local occupations, customs and dialects. Very many of them saw the region of their residence as their most important point of reference. When it comes to Upper Silesia the situation of the people of the region was very complex[5].

What should, however, be pointed out once more is that this was – excluding a small group of Slavonic Protestants from nearby Namysłów (Namslau) – an entirely Catholic population. Religious affiliation determined the behaviour of the indigenous Silesians even much later and came to the surface even in the early years of Nazi rule in Germany.

The territory of Upper Silesia was also inhabited by a small group (difficult to precisely define), which was characterized by a sense of belonging to the Polish nation[6]. Over time such attitudes were adopted by successive members of the local Silesian community. These phenomena were connected with the national revival in the period of the Spring of Nations (1848/49). In the Russian, Prussian and Austrian Partition, which at the close of the 18th century extended to the territories of the former Commonwealth of Poland, in the second half of the 19th century concepts of 'rebuilding' Polish independence emerged. They aimed not only to regain at least part of the late Commonwealth territories but also to extend the newly reborn state by territories which were not included in the partitions but inhabited by ethnically

[5] Cf. on the subject of the region's role: Heidi Hein, *Region jako punkt wyjścia do badań nad kwestiami narodowymi. Znaczenie mitów, symboli, rytuałów i kultów*, [in:] *Górny Śląsk wyobrażony*, pp. 36-51. When it comes to discourse on the subject of factors which integrated and disintegrated regional communities in this territory cf. also: Piotr Madajczyk, *Obcość jako wyznacznik*, pp. 109-122 and previous chapter in this book written by Tomasz Przerwa, *Social structure and social groups in the processes of integration and disintegration of Silesia as a region (1918-1945)*.

[6] Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Ludzie – stosunki demograficzne, struktura społeczna, podziały wyznaniowe, etniczne i narodowościowe*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, pp. 39-56.

Polish communities. It was Prussian Upper Silesia that was basically considered to be such a territory[7]. And it was on this territory that the Polonisation campaign, as it became known, was conducted by Józef Lompa and Karol Miarka. The native Upper Silesian activist[8] Wojciech Korfanty was increasingly more successful[9].

This task was not easy especially because Poles had, for decades, been deprived of their own, independent state and they could appeal to the Silesian community only by means of religious arguments (where Catholicism could indeed be associated with 'Polishness') and historical/sentimental arguments. This was all the more so difficult because Silesia had been part of the Polish state only stretching back to the Middle Ages, and no representatives of the Silesian-Polish nobility, which would evidence this fact, had managed to survive until the period of history under discussion. Hence, it was particularly difficult for the Silesian, Slavonic masses to identify themselves with a state that they were actually unfamiliar with. The group of Silesians whom the Polonisation campaign was targeting was only slowly beginning to consider arguments emphasizing the old, glorious history of the Polish state.

A phenomenon which exerted a substantial influence on the history of the German East was the *Ostflucht* as it was known. Western Germany, richer and securing better labour conditions, received an immense influx of immigrants. Upper Silesia was being deserted by both indigenous peasants and industrial labourers. Because of this the local communities were deprived of their most energetic and resourceful members. The Silesians who migrated and settled there were more often than not exposed to overwhelming multi-ethnic influences. German culture and civilisation was omnipresent and its influence was clearly a force that attracted these individuals towards the German nation. At the same time they were coming across migrants from Poland, i.e. from Greater Poland, who, being most frequently conscious Poles, cultivated their nationality in their new places of residency as well. Undoubtedly, in this confrontation 'Germanness' had got off to a better start and enjoyed a far better position as an emanation of the nation who in fact reigned in the country. There is

[7] When it comes to the latest works on the subject cf.: Marian Mroczko, *U źródeł polskiej myśli zachodniej*, [in:] *Nad Odrą i Bałtykiem. Myśl zachodnia: ludzie – koncepcje – realizacja do 1989 r.*, eds Magdalena Semczyszyn, Tomasz Sikorski, Adam Wątor, Szczecin 2013, pp. 15-27. Also: Teresa Kulak, *Śląsk w polskiej myśli politycznej do 1918 roku*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 roku*, pp. 51-62.

[8] The term 'Upper Silesian', which was seemingly easy to define, raised a great deal of controversy almost a century ago. Cf.: Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, *Wieloznaczność pojęcia „Górnoślązak" w latach walki o przynależność polityczną Górnego śląska po I wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Wokół historii i polityki. Studia z dziejów XIX i XX wieku dedykowane Profesorowi Wojciechowi Wrzesińskiemu w siedemdziesiąta rocznicę urodzin*, eds Stanisław Ciesielski, Teresa Kulak, Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Toruń 2004, pp. 903-915.

[9] Mieczysław Pater, *Polskie dążenia narodowe na Górnym Śląsku (1891-1914)*, Wrocław 1998.

also no doubt about the fact that the issues of the economic status of hired labourers were not without significance in all the processes that took place among the ethnically Polish Silesians. Higher standards of living in the Ruhr region to a large extent fed into these people's attitude towards the German nationality and state. These numerous factors in turn had their unique influence on the electoral choices of Silesians during the plebiscite of 1921.

Prussian Silesia was also inhabited by Jews, who were most numerous in Wrocław (and who actually deserve all the credit for the great prosperity of the metropolis, one of the greatest in contemporary Germany), but who were also present in the Upper Silesian industrial region. The group was not very large, but some of its members were very influential, connected to the governmental and industrial establishment. Many-while not abandoning their Jewish origin or religion that most practiced-fully identified themselves with the German nation and state. Therefore, they constituted part of the modern German nation[10].

It would be difficult to classify the territorial section of Upper Lusatia as part of historical Silesia only because as a component of the contemporary Kingdom of Saxony it was incorporated into Prussia. Not long after the Congress of Vienna this area was incorporated into Silesia as part of its administrative territory. Next to the Germans, Slavs and Lusatian Sorbs also resided there. These groups are, however, outside the scope of this paper.

Whereas, Austrian Silesia was undoubtedly the part of the historical territory of the region. In its western stretch whose principal centre was Opava (Troppau, Opawa), Czechs resided (who originated from the region of Moravia), Germans (Austrian Germans) and a small group of Jews. The local Czech community to some extent responded positively to the pro-national slogans which in opposition to the Habsburg state called them to rebuild their native state. At the same time this group – who was generally indifferent to religion – was becoming subject to the process of assimilation by the German nation. Subjection to German assimilation was a serious problem for the residents of the newly developed Czechoslovakian state, namely, Silesian Moravians, who, instead of identifying themselves with the Czech nation, considered themselves to be part of the German nation. The local indigenous Germans, mostly Catholics, had a sense of connection with the Empire of the German and Catholic Habsburgs. In the middle of Austrian Silesia there lay an important industrial centre called Ostrava (Ostrau, Ostrawa), a Moravian enclave in Silesia.

[10] Maciej Borkowski, Andrzej Kirmiel, Tamara Włodarczyk, *Śladami Żydów. Dolny Śląsk. Opolszczyzna. Ziemia Lubuska*, Warszawa 2008. The work, whose publication was financed by the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, is a compendium of the history of Jewish presence in the formerly German and now Polish territories.

The town was predominantly German, however it was also home to Czechs, Jews and Poles-Silesians. Already in the 19th century the town was referred to as the Polish Ostrava. This was due to the ethnic composition of the population of the eastern part of Austrian Silesia at the outset of the 19th century. The territory witnessed the clash of three nations: state-ruling and Vienna-oriented Germans, who outnumbered the representatives of other nations in the management boards of local industrial companies. The Czechs who, to a large extent, aspired for independence remained in opposition to both Austrian Germans and local Poles. And eventually, Poles, who were the most numerous on both sides of the river Olše (Olsa, Olza), which cut through this former territory of the Duchy of Cieszyn (Teschen, Těšín). It was there that from the close of the 19th century until the Great War interesting nation-building processes were taking place. The local community of Silesians was Protestant, ambivalent towards Catholicism, which was promoted by the Habsburgs. At the same time at the turn of the 20th century Cieszyn Silesia (Czech: Těšínské Slezsko, Polish: Śląsk Cieszyński, German: Teschener Schlesien) became the cradle of two national orientations. One of them was focused on 'Polishness'. The city of Cieszyn (Teschen, Těšín), situated by the Olše river at the heart of the Duchy, became the heart of the Polish national movement. But one more ideology came to life in this territory. Its thesis – put forward by Józef Kożdoń – put stress on the existence of a separate Silesian nation (the so-called *Ślązakowcy*). The intention of people who promoted this view was the creation of a separate Silesian state. Its boundaries were to extend also to the territory of Prussian Silesia.[11] It was this circle that at the close of the First World War gave birth to slogans promoting the creation of the separate Silesian state, which was to be inhabited and ruled by the Silesian nation. This industrialized territory saw the arrival of a group of migrant Poles-Catholics who were attracted there by opportunities of starting a career in the developing local coal mining and steel industry. They originated from Austrian Galicia, the territory which until the First Partition of Poland (1772) was part of the Polish Commonwealth. Despite being Catholic, they objectively strengthened the Protestant, local Polish society. This phenomenon met with resistance from the members of the local Czech community, who claimed that Cieszyn Silesia was undergoing Polonisation. Therefore it is possible for us to conclude that within this small territory, among quite small group of people various nation-building phenomena occurred, both integrating and disintegrating Silesians; mutually contradictory.

[11] Extensive information on Silesian separatism is contained in the study by: Dariusz Jerczyński, *Historia narodu śląskiego*, Zabrze 2003. Cf also: Elżbieta Anna Sekuła, *Po co Ślązakom potrzebny jest naród? Niebezpieczne związki między autonomią i nacjonalizmem*, Warszawa 2009.

These processes continued later on and found their – sometimes even violent – outlet in the first years following the First World War.

The Great War (1914–1918) and its immediate consequences for Silesia and its inhabitants up until the year 1922

The unexpected – even at the brink of the summer of 1914 – outbreak of the First World War brought about considerable changes regarding various groups of population residing in Silesian territories situated within the boundaries of Prussia-Germany. Mass enlistment into the army, which more often than not hindered and later on even disorganized the regular industrial production processes, removed great masses of people from their previous environments. Silesians from rural areas, who cultivated their local and religious customs, often showed a sense of being 'locally' Silesian, just as their fellow countrymen (often members of the same families) while in the trenches were coming in touch with native Germans who originated from various corners of the Reich. It was at that time, during the tragic war events, in authentic conditions of brotherhood in arms, established in the trenches that marked the formation within the Hohenzollern Empire of a uniform – though still regionally fragmented – German nation. In the second half of the 19th century and in the first years of the 20th century among Austrian Germans a sense of belonging to a uniform nation expanded. A nation, which extended to all Germans also those who resided in the territories outside the Habsburg Empire[12]. The process of uniting the German nation had already been initiated in the Romantic era and continued throughout the Springtime of the Peoples and during the unification of Germany under Hohenzollern reign.

Participation in bloody battles, waged by citizens of all nationalities residing in the Empire, consolidated among the many subjects of Wilhelm II Hohenzollern who were not German, a sense of being part of a German nation. This was therefore a crucial factor that united Silesians, especially Silesian recruits of both German and Polish origin into one, German nation. At the same time soldiers from Silesia were meeting in the aforementioned trenches with many Polish recruits from the annexed by Prussians territories of Greater Poland, Gdańsk Pomerania (Danzig Pomerania, at that time part of Western Prussia) or Powiśle (klein Westpreussen)and Warmia (Ermland, at that time part of Eastern Prussia). These were those that-quite opposite to the soldiers of German nationality-influenced Silesians in a completely different way.

[12] Piotr M. Majewski, *„Niemcy Sudeccy" 1848-1949. Historia pewnego nacjonalizmu*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 115-141.

They were drawing them closer to 'Polishness'. But it is very difficult to determine the number of Silesians who returned from war as nationally conscious Poles.

The prolonged war brought about a gradual growth of social radicalism. The situation in Upper Silesia – just as in the entirety of Germany – was highly unstable. Here however, the ever-strengthening tensions were coupled with organically connected national and state elements. Next to the revolutionary slogans – internationalist by principle – also slogans of national, or rather nationalist overtones were increasingly vocalized. The process was controlled by three opinion-forming centres: German, Polish and Czech (Czechoslovakian)[13]. This activity was classified as – at least by the Polish and Czech fractions – a strongly disintegrating factor in Upper Silesia.

It was unimaginable for the elites of the German Reich that the consequences of the war – which was obviously lost – would include territorial losses. Claims addressed to the Berlin authorities by their counterparts in Warsaw and Prague[14] were considered unjustified whims. There were no prospects whatsoever for any voluntary cessions in the territories of Upper Silesia. They were all the more so valuable for German government as they constituted the second greatest industrial region of the German Reich[15]. Also this territory, in the eastern outskirts of the country, became the hub of opposing German propaganda. It met with the enthusiastic reception of the local Germans but also of people who were ethnically Slavonic-Silesian, and viewed the German state as a predictable guarantor of lawfulness, administrative efficiency and a moderately stable labour market.

At the same time we should not fail to notice that the local community of Silesians included a group which actually during this particular war, and especially towards its conclusion, stood in clear opposition to the German pro-national proposal, especially when battles ended up in spectacular defeat. Within the ethnic, local Upper Silesian group – whose size has not yet been determined – ideas emerged that pointed to a sense of belonging to the Polish nation among the inhabitants of this territory. These impulses whose strength – I would like to emphasis – was unspecified were consolidated by the news of the revival of an independent Polish state. These were in fact the factors which excluded part of the local population from the influential range of German nationality and pushed it towards affilia-

[13] On the situation of Silesia in the 'triangle' of geopolitical expectations cf. for example: Przemysław Hauser, *Śląsk między Polską, Czechosłowacją a separatyzmem. Walka Niemiec o utrzymanie prowincji śląskiej w latach 1918-1919*, Poznań 1991.

[14] Jaroslav Valenta, *Górny Śląsk w czeskiej myśli politycznej do 1918 roku*, [in:] *Podział Śląska*, pp. 51-62.

[a15] For such was still – contrary to its common name of the Weimar Republic – the official name of the German state.

tion with its Polish counterpart. These were, however, by no means 'easy' decisions. We must not forget that in the territories of Upper Silesia aside from the national issue there was also the issue of identification with a particular state. Formerly, the state as it was known consisted for the local population of nothing more than the Prussian Kingdom (broadly understood as the German Reich). This fact, however, was not necessarily – at least up until the close of 1918 – tantamount to an unconditional sense of belonging to the German nationality. Still, even in the face of the downfall of 'their' state, in Silesia – mostly Upper Silesia – and predominantly among Slavonic Silesians, there was an extensive group of people whose national belonging remained unspecified. Attempts to exploit this phenomenon were made by the advocates of the thesis on the existence of a Silesian nationality. The factor of regionality (localness) was to make it easier for them to convince the Silesians to adopt the idea of a separate Silesian state[16].

The situation was complex and increasingly tense in the then contemporary Austrian Silesia where, already much earlier than in German Reich, in a territory that was to a large extent Evangelical, a phenomena emerged that I have decided to analyse.[17] One of them was the Polish-national circle. Its centre was the small town of Cieszyn (as the population of the larger and more eastern-situated industrial town of Bielsko (Bielitz, Bílsko) was predominantly German). Silesian Evangelicals from this territory, objectively supported by the incoming Polish Catholic migrants from Austrian Galicia, made efforts to unite this part of Silesia with Poland whose process of regaining independence was in progress. For them this was a natural process, all the more so that October 1918 saw the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. And so, the territory – unlike in Upper Silesia – was still lacking a national organisation which would guarantee its continuation of power and which could serve as a potential point of reference. The Habsburg Empire was replaced by an ostensible geopolitical void, ready to be 'redeveloped'. The close of 1918 saw the rise of an independent Czechoslovakian state, which included the territories of historical Bohemia, Moravia and – according to Prague's ambition – also the entirety of contemporary Austrian Silesia. Austrian Germans made efforts to reach another goal. As they were increasingly often, though imprecisely, referred to as Sudeten Germans, they came up with the idea to establish their own, separate state, one unconnected with the German Reich but also not to be included in Czechoslovakia. Territories

[16] For a map illustrating the proposed boundaries of an awaited, separate Silesian state see D. Jerczyński, *Historia*, p. 90.

[17] Marek Czapliński, *Dzieje Śląska od 1806 do 1945 roku*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, ed. M. Czapliński, pp. 349-351; Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, *Historia społeczno-polityczna Górnego Śląska i Śląska Cieszyńskiego w latach 1918-1945*, Katowice 1994, pp. 14-22.

that were to become part of this new organism were to extend also to the territories of Silesia,

The collapse of the Habsburg monarchy did not put an end to the Silesian national circle in Cieszyn Silesia (the eastern part of contemporary Austrian Silesia) – nor to its other units. The advocates of Silesian nationality became actively engaged in propaganda all the more so that calls emerged to establish 'the Free State of Upper Silesia'. This issue – only recently more widely present in academic literature – deserves particular attention. The Prussian Upper Silesia Silesian national movement was animated by activists of the local Catholic Centre party. Later, in the autumn of 1918, Rybnik saw the formation of the so-called Upper Silesian Committee (*Komitet Górnośląski*), where a significant role was played by the brothers John (Johann) and Thomas Regink. Their manifesto included a brochure, issued in December, entitled 'Upper Silesia as a separate state'. There, serious fears were expressed regarding the incorporation of Silesian territories to the newly reborn Polish state, which was actually regarded as an 'offender' responsible for the future ruination of Silesia by the Poles. On the other hand, Priest Prelate Carl Ulitzka of Racibórz (Ratibor, Ratiboř) advocated the formation of a separate Silesian Province, one detached from Prussia, which was to function within the republic of Germany as a new land with an internal autonomy that could be compared with that of say, for instance, Bavaria. The efforts centred on achieving the complete independence or at least autonomy of Upper Silesia and also of the former Austrian Silesia were continued for some time. Yet, they nonetheless brought no notable results. In the fierce battle for this state, all action took place within the German-Czech-Polish triangle. And what is remarkable is that soon there was only Berlin and Warsaw left on the battlefield. The pro-Silesian movement was considered by world powers to be a rather exotic fantasy[18].

The creation of an independent Czechoslovakia was used both by the government in Prague and the local – in former Austrian Silesia – Czech activists to achieve their private territorial ambitions. Prague together with its supporters, namely, Silesian-Czech activists, was planning not only to take over the entire former Austrian Silesia but also to annex extensive Silesian territories, which were at that time included in Prussia (and the German Empire). Their greatest ambition was to take control of at least part of the wealthy Upper Silesian industrial zone. Their most basic prerogative was to incorporate ('to regain') lands, where – in the opinion of Prague governing bodies and their local supporters – Moravian-Silesian people still

[18] Dariusz Jerczyński, *Historia*, pp. 87-95. See also in this book the article by Tomasz Kruszewski, *Silesian Administrative Authorities and Territorial Transformations of Silesia (1918-1945)*.

lived. These calculations also related to the territories which were German at the time: Silesian sections of Racibórz, Głubczyce (Leobschütz, Hlubčice) and Hlučín (Hultschin/Hulczyn). This was a small territory where opposing political-national fractions resided. As I have already mentioned, a significant role in this territory was played by the Polish seasonal industrial labourers of Galicia (Catholics). Some of them settled down in this territory and gave rise to quite significant Polish-national strongholds (Catholic). Their presence met with the permanent disapproval of Czech national circles, who remained in ideological confrontation both with the local Germans and local Silesians-Poles and the 'Ślązakowcy' (supporters of the idea of a free Silesian state) as they were known. Such was the situation of the country facing the modified geopolitical situation following the Great War- a territory where three and even four forces clashed aiming to transform it into a sphere of domination of one particular national group. What needs to be underscored once more is that these tensions were fuelled and consolidated by the sharp rivalry over these territories between Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Territorial claims regarding Upper Silesia put forward by Prague and Warsaw were characterized by – theoretical and hard to be precisely estimated – the force of attraction towards 'Czechness' targeted at the southern territories inhabited by people who belonged to the regional Moravian group. They are made all the more difficult to be precisely judge-and this has been confirmed by the latest Czech findings-because most of them did not feel a part of the Czech nation, even as members of the regional Moravian group. These Moravians were surprised, when – as inhabitants of the former Austrian Silesia – by decision of the powers at the Paris Peace Conference, they were incorporated into Czechoslovakia. Also for members of this group, at the time residing in Germany, it was no less surprising to witness themselves being placed under the jurisdiction of Prague. This is the Hlučín Region (Czech: Hlučínsko, German: Hultschiner Ländchen, Polish: Kraik Hulczyński) we are referring to, which was situated between Ostrava and Opava[19]. The decisions taken in Paris, instead of enlarging the population of Czechs residing in Czechoslovakia, extended the number of Germans of regional, ethnically Moravian origin. Not much later, this group, which felt like part of the German nation, strengthened the ranks of the Sudetes Germans and alongside them and because of their emancipation ambitions, became an ever-growing source of problems for the Prague authorities.

Far more drastic, but also not lacking in consequences that would reach several years into the future, turned out to be the rivalry between Prague and Warsaw, whose subject was the Duchy of Cieszyn, part of former Austrian Silesia. The moment

[19] Krzysztof Nowak, *Kraik Hulczyński (1920-1938)*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, p. 250.

when the Polish and Czechoslovakian states were just in the phase of formation and both Warsaw and Prague were first and foremost focused on consolidating the very existence of these two entities, political centres were not actively engaged in the events taking place in both of their-mutually desired borderlands. Local communities – Silesian-Polish and Silesian-Czech – residing in this 'eye of the cyclone' reached a local agreement regarding the distribution of temporary territorial borders, based on the criterion of nationality and language. Had the provisions been accepted and become the basis for the outline in this location of the Polish-Czechoslovakian border it would most probably have been possible to prevent the continuous streak of rocky relations between the two Slavonic countries in the interwar period. This agreement was then not only an attempt to solve the issue of the Habsburg legacy but also an integrating factor with the potential to contain the local nationality-related conflicts through the integration of Czechs-Moravians with the national centre in Prague and Poles with the centre in Warsaw. What needs to be emphasised is that the Polish side in its efforts to gain the largest possible part of the historical Silesian region (which up until that time had changed hands between Germany and Austria) did not come up with any subsequent demands which would exceed the criterion of ethnicity. The local agreement was for the Poles all the more so beneficial because based on its provisions the boundaries of the late Polish Commonwealth were to extend to the industrial region, rich in mineral ores with its centre in Karviná (Karvin, Karwina). Nonetheless, Prague decided to achieve the objectives of its territorial programme in the former Silesia by military force. The primary plan was to annex the entire Duchy of Cieszyn, which would extend the population of the already multi-national Czechoslovakian state – according to estimates – by over 100000 ethnic Poles. The short-lasting war fought in January 1919 between the invading Czech regular armies and infrequent Polish units, mostly thanks to local actions of self-defence, concluded in a truce which was unsatisfactory for both sides of the conflict. It resulted in a temporary separation of interests, mostly along the nearby line of the Olše river, which cut Cieszyn Silesia into two almost equal halves. Such a solution had already at the time forced a large number of local inhabitants who considered themselves to be Poles to remain outside the territory of Polish Commonwealth[20]. The situation of Cieszyn Silesia was growing ever more complicated due to the on-going Polish-Russian war. The military conflict between the clearly anti-Russian Poland and the generally (which was to a large extent historically determined) pro-Russian Czechs was a serious setback for plans

[20] As stated by Marek Czapliński, based on the relevant Polish literature, among 293 inhabitants residing on the Czech side, there were ca. 75-100 thousand Poles, cf.: *idem*, *Dzieje Śląska*, p. 351.

to defend the West from revolutionary Russia. In this situation, the issue of the boundary outlines of Cieszyn Silesia was to be determined by the Allies. In September of 1919 they took a decision to resolve the issue of the territory by means of a plebiscite. Nonetheless, this project never saw the light of day due to the Bolshevik threat to Europe. In July 1920 during the ally conference in Spaa (Belgium) Polish delegates in exchange for a strengthening of Western aid for Warsaw in its conflict with Russia agreed to revoke the plebiscite. Decisions that were made during the conference in Spaa led to a division of the Cieszyn Silesia territories which became the subject of a conflict along the lines of a suspension of military actions. The externally imposed decisions led to a serious, continuous national crisis in this section of Silesia. On the Polish side, where the Silesian Germans remained – whose largest group was focused on the industrial town of Bielsko – a policy of integration was introduced. In principle, it was to have two dimensions. This included attracting and convincing the members of local communities to develop a positive attitude towards Poland. For the Germans it did not turn out to be attractive enough. They still had fresh memories of the Habsburg period, when they belonged to the ruling nation. However, what could be considered a success were actions undertaken by the Polish state authorities towards the local Silesians-Poles in spite of the fact that they were predominantly Protestant.

The Silesian-Polish population remained on the Czechoslovakian side, in the quite narrow strip on the western bank of the river Olše which constituted a majority in this territory. In this multi-national state, which throughout its entire history maintained a rather stable, democratic character, a policy of integration was also conducted. And the Poles were, too, among its targets. Usually the policy was unsuccessful. Polish activists considered it to be damaging for 'Polishness'. What is more, it was conducted by the state, which was not only considered nationally alien and acquisitive, but also religiously neutral. Czechoslovakia was densely populated by a group of at least several thousand Poles who considered themselves – also under formally democratic Czech rules – to be underprivileged[21]. Not much later such feelings were to be exploited by the expansive policy of Warsaw (in the ultimatum of 1938). What is more, the local community of Poles had a chance to continuously observe the so-called 'scheme' against the republic which was concocted by the Sudetes Germans. And that could have consolidated not only the Poles' sense of satisfaction from the trouble of the ruling Czech nation but also the conviction that the imposed changes of boundaries were not necessarily permanent.

[21] Krzysztof Nowak, *Śląsk Cieszyński (1920-1938)*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, pp. 250-254.

The situation in the German part of Silesia unfolded with no less drama and with much greater engagement of propaganda tools and political and military measures. Polish and Czech territorial claims gave rise to a threatened sense among the local inhabitants who identified themselves with the German nation, but also supported the building and tightening of unity among the community of Silesian Germans. In the context of the disintegration of the territory of Silesia this was no doubt a factor that brought the German population closer to one another.

What needs to be remembered here is that the Polish delegation who attended the Paris Peace Conference, headed by the eminent politician Roman Dmowski, presented Warsaw's rather extensive territorial demands. The Poles decided to call for the enlargement of their newly introduced country by including the entirety of Upper Silesia. At the root of such a claim lay the fact that this territory was mostly inhabited by a Silesian-Polish population, much larger than that of the local Germans. The desire to include the largest possible Polish population in the Polish territory was motivated also by purely economic calculations. The aim was to take over Upper Silesian industry, the great region full of natural resources and coal mining and metallurgical facilities. To this and to the initially favourable stance of the Allies – most importantly France – the Germans reacted with desperate resistance. Therefore the Allies decided to conduct a plebiscite in the territory – which was still formally part of the German Reich – whose date was agreed to March 1921. What needs to be pointed out here is that Silesian Germans neither ceased to be the ruling nation – be it because of their control over the local administration – nor were they ready to renounce this status. This made the situation of the local Polish activists all the more difficult and dangerous, for even their lives were in danger.

As I have earlier highlighted, among the members of part of the ethnically Polish-Slavonic Upper Silesian population feelings emerged which were drawing them closer to 'Polishness'. This process was much more similar to that which drew their fellow countrymen – whose population size was difficult to determine – towards 'Germannness'. The pro-Polish attitudes – which were clearly illustrated by the plebiscite results – were surely much weaker in more urbanized territories where the labourers quite often resided in cities originally from the first generation or continued to reside in the nearby villages. At the same time in rural areas and especially in industrialized zones the German administration and bodies of civil order continued to maintain their strong position. Silesian labourers were strongly dependent on their German principals and German management. What is more, in line with the local, regional tradition it was not common to strive for a higher level of education than that of vocational. In cases when individuals nonetheless decided

to do so, they had to 'pay' for it by accepting German nationality. Therefore, ethnically Polish Silesians were almost entirely deprived of their own, Polish (Silesian) elites. These were only just in the process of formation, also as a result of the Polish press and Polish organizations' activities. Even in Upper Silesia, which was incorporated into Poland in 1922 the continuous lack of well-educated local Silesians was still an issue. Even in spite of the efforts of the Voivode Michał Grażyński, who since 1926 conducted active pro-Polish policy and an equally strong anti-German policy.

As far as in the urbanized and industrialized zones the local Silesian population continued to lean towards the German nationality, the situation in the countryside was different. More often than not in the rural communities so-called 'Polish kings' emerged. These were peasants who were particularly rich and self-sufficient farmers. In the context of the lawful, stable and predictable German state they were not dependent on any direct pressure from the German establishment. However, as at least some of these people felt unsatisfied with not being members of the ruling nation, – and this was illustrated by the plebiscite results from part of the examined territories – this constituted the most fertile ground for the pro-Polish propaganda.

The decision to conduct the plebiscite led to a gradual national polarisation in the territory inhabited by its respondents. Nonetheless, in spite of this fact a large proportion of the local Silesians continued to present a neutral national attitude. Their bond with local or regional communities was much stronger than with the abstract notion of a nation.

Although the Polish-German conflict in the territories of Upper Silesia was conducted in the interest of two countries – Germany and Poland – the propaganda of both sides claimed that the conflict was 'in the interest' of the local, Silesian people. This latter term was to describe Silesians-Germans or Silesians-Poles. In the quest for selecting the supporters of these national fractions from among the great mass of people with no crystallized national identity that was nonetheless – paradoxically – overlooked was that such Silesians did in fact exist. They were offered a choice between two radically different options: 'Polishness' (and Poland) or 'Germanness' (and Germany). There was no way – also when it came to the ally policymakers – that Silesian nationality and national expectations would be acknowledged (the idea of 'the Free State of Silesia') by both competing states. The fight – both military and political – continued somewhat alongside the element of local Silesianness. What needs to be added is that the postulated Silesian nationality boundaries put forth by the supporters of the future independent country did not include all the territories of historic Silesia. That is why even the successful adoption of this plan would have result in the fragmentation of the region.

In the period prior to the plebiscite, in August 1919 and August 1920, Upper Silesia witnessed two Polish (pro-Polish) armed revolutions. In Polish historiography they are recorded as the First and Second Silesian Uprising. At the root of the initial conflict, alongside the national issues, lay economic aspects. The increasingly impoverished masses of labourers, mostly local Silesians, rebelled against acts of repression they came to suffer under the German public order units. Several days of prolonged fighting concluded with a defeat of the insurgents and an exodus of soldiers and activists from Poland. This brought bloody German acts of repression which further weakened the perspectives for further pro-Polish activity.

In July 1920 the Polish Legislative Sejm (Parliament) in Warsaw, (under threat from the victorious Red Army approaching from the east), and in order to make the Polish 'state and national offer' more attractive, passed a legal act called 'the organic statute of the Silesian Voivodeship' which was to apply to all the citizens of the plebiscite territories, which were to be eventually included in Poland. This signalled a realist approach by the Warsaw government, which in spite of all the chaos, to some extent seemed to take into account the complexity of the current ethnic situation. The Polish proposal to introduce autonomy (including the creation of an independent Silesian Sejm) was coupled with similar attempts on the German side. Berlin was promising – in the event of retaining control over the plebiscite area – to create a completely new Upper Silesian province. These actions were taking place during the worst crisis of the Polish state since it had regained its independence, as Poland was under threat of being annihilated by Bolshevik Russia. This state – skilfully publicized by German propaganda – no doubt motivated all the undecided to make up their minds.

Meanwhile, the terror used by the Germans following their suppression of the First Silesian Uprising was making it extremely difficult to conduct the Polish plebiscite activity under the leadership of Wojciech Korfanty. In order to protest against these difficult conditions the Polish side made a decision to prompt another revolution in August 1920. In August, the Second Silesian Uprising had a far wider scope than the first one. Nonetheless it also ended in military defeat and another exodus of the insurgents, politicians and activists. During their stay in Poland they were awaiting an opportunity to actively participate in the fight for the national identity of Upper Silesia. Such a chance emerged in the spring of 1921.

The events of the years 1919-1920 undoubtedly, both in terms of words and (military) actions contributed violently to a progressing national polarization which bore fruit in the changes within the two local ethnic groups. There took place in 'the acceleration' of local history, which explained the ethnic situation in Upper Silesia.

Subsequent individuals from the volatile native Silesian group were making their choice between Polish and German nationality. Yet, there was still a large group which continued to maintain a neutral stance on nationality.

In the pre-plebiscite period propaganda/political/national efforts were increased with support from Berlin and Warsaw respectively. The German side was producing sentimental-national arguments and drew attention to Upper Silesia's inhabitants' functioning as part of the Reich. The Polish side centred its arguments on national issues associated with the social sphere. Silesians were to be convinced that as part of the German state they were being subject to absolute national discrimination. It is hard to determine to what extent the minds of the addressees could be moved by arguments which brought up memories of a Silesian connection with the medieval Polish state.

Poland lost the plebiscite by a ratio of 40.35% (ca. 479,000 votes) to 59.65% (ca. 706,000 votes). It has been estimated that ca. 90% of the respondents who originated from the plebiscite territory but who resided outside it were in favour of the Germans. This internal group of migrants, eligible to vote, was estimated at 192,000 people. There is also no doubt that the Germans were also supported by the majority of city residents[22].

This fact may not be undermined by the justification that towns were populated by a number of indigenous, often formerly immigrant Germans.

The Allies were forced in this situation to divide the territory up. They chose the proposal of Italian Alberto de Marinis and Englishman Harold Percival – based on the percent of votes in favour for Poland in districts (*Kreise*, *powiats*) which bordered on the Republic – to award Warsaw with many arable and forested areas to the north and south of the industrialized area[23]. Moreover, Germany was to keep the lands situated to the west from the agglomeration of the great coal mining-metallurgical urban centres. Yet, no doubt even such serious damage inflicted upon Poland did not satisfy the German party, which kept bemoaning the destruction of the unity of the historic Upper Silesian territory. For the Polish side the loss came as a shock, which was soon after further deepened by the Allies' proposals to divide the plebiscite area. As a result, the plebiscite commissioner, Wojciech Korfanty, decided to launch another pro-Polish uprising and appointed himself as its dictator. His decision was in line with the intentions of Warsaw, not only devoid of several

[22] Alicja Galas, Artur Galas, *Dzieje Śląska w datach*, Wrocław 2001, p. 224.

[23] According to this concept Poland was to receive the districts (*powiats*) of Rybnik, Pszczyna and several communes (*gminas*) of the district of Katowice.

thousand people of ethnic Polish origin, but also devoid of the life-giving local industrial region.

May of 1921 saw the outbreak of the Third Silesian Uprising. It was the greatest armed conflict in the entire history of the land. It's character was seemingly that of 'a small-scale, local war', which even – also seemingly – resembled a civil war, as the opposing forces were to a large extent composed of native Upper Silesians of Polish origin. At the same time both 'absent' sides of the conflict did their best to provide the opponents with notable military-logistic aid. The German side offered the help of a voluntary *Freikorps* (whose members included Viennese academics), which were in fact regular German army units only masked under different names. When it comes to Poland, great efforts to support 'their' cause were made by the commanders of the Polish Army, providing the insurgents with food, officers, and soldiers. The uprising was then 'a silent' Polish-German war which took place with the considerable engagement of the Silesian people.

The military events led to a further polarisation of the national attitudes of the ethnically Polish Upper Silesians. Some groups were clearly in favour of 'Germanness', others chose 'Polishness'. It is invariably difficult to precisely determine how large the perpetually undecided group was. A situation such as this – which was surely subject to change – continued across the Upper Silesian territory at least up until 1945 when the entire disputed territory as well as an almost entire historical Silesia came to be part of the Polish state. Wojciech Korfanty claimed that the group, whose members considered themselves to be neither 'Polish' nor German, constituted 1/3 of the entire population of Upper Silesia.

The battles, often bloody and fierce (like for instance the one that took place at Góra Św. Anny (St. Anna's Berg) near Opole, did not result in an ultimate victory for any of the sides. Though, the withdrawal of the army from the neighbourhood of the aforementioned hill caused the Poles to lose their strategic initiative. Following battles that lasted several days, Wojciech Korfanty proclaimed a truce. The Poles again submitted themselves to the disposition of the Allies. The extensive territorial claims of the Polish state led to armed demonstrations (which were further supplemented by the aspirations – which were as a matter of fact authentic – expressed by part of the Upper Silesian population), resulted in the Allies introducing a new division of the state plebiscite territory. This time Poland received, additionally, the greatest share of the industrial section of the plebiscite territory (in total: 1/3 of the entire plebiscite territory). The Germans retained only three larger cities: Bytom (Beuthen), Gliwice (Gleiwitz, Hlivice) and Zabrze (Hindenburg). Berlin and the local community of Germans considered this decision to be an overt

injustice brought about by the Allies. During the following two decades the multi-course German propaganda consolidated the myth of a fragmented homeland and a nation torn-apart. In fact, on Polish territory a large number of indigenous Germans continued to reside[24]. Unfortunately, due to the volatility of national attitudes in this territory it is impossible to determine their precise number. This was caused by the considerable demographic change which came as a result of another territorial division of this land. The territory which was retained by Germany was left by a large group of Silesians-Poles who migrated to Poland, and territories incorporated into Poland were left by a group of indigenous Germans (or indigenous Silesians who considered themselves to be Germans). The ethnic situation in this territory was to a certain extent balanced by the Polish-German Upper Silesian convention signed in 1922, which also provided aid for the ethnic minorities who inhabited the fragmented plebiscite territory[25]. Berlin was rather willingly getting rid of Silesians who declared themselves to be Polish. So did the government in Warsaw – as a matter of fact not only in this territory – which exerted pressures on the Silesian Germans by means of an action to force Silesians to confirm their chosen nationality. Those who declared to be German were under a pressure to emigrate across the nearby western border.

A divided Silesia 1922-1939

The division of the plebiscite territory between Germany and Poland weakened the ranks of the aforementioned Polish nationalists who mainly resided in the rural areas of Upper Silesia, which were retained by Germany. This territory was often increasingly referred to in Poland – after its largest city – as Opole Silesia. The loss of a large group of Polish activists, as well as a sense of failure in the efforts to join the land to Poland was not without significance for in hampering the process of establishing bonds with the Polish nation by the local Silesians. This was not however tantamount to widespread support for 'Germanness'. There was still a large group whose national attitude was either volatile or simply neutral, who were focused on cultivating familiarity, localness and regionalism. As a result, the Silesian-German society was not visibly consolidated in this territory. What is more, both the local Germans and the state establishment felt threatened by the potential peril of the Polish, demographic. In recognition of this perceived hazard to the region being

[24] Cf. the latest in terms of volume absolutely pioneering study, on both the Polish and German publishing market, by J. Nowosielska-Sobel, *Od ziemi rodzinnej*, pp. 375-411.

[25] For more information on the subject cf., footnote no. 1 and: Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, *Historia społeczno-polityczna*, pp. 22-40.

flooded by Slavonic influence – in a territory which had remained German for centuries – a plan was put into action (following the outbreak of the Great war and intensified during the Nazi regime which involved replacing names of Slavonic origin with completely new, 'pure' German names. In places where a threat was not identified – for instance in Mecklenburg – the old Slavonic names were retained throughout the entire period of the Third Reich. In the Germans' view this practice was to lead to a consolidation of the German character of Upper Silesia and strengthen its integration with the rest of Germany. This most probably also strengthened the sense of a threat among the population of local Germans and could also build up their sense of connectedness with the region where they resided. For the native Silesian population the Germanisation of towns' names seemed to be clear evidence of at least the reluctance of the German state to acknowledge Slavonic historical otherness. It would be hard to say to what extent this policy could have – for one thing – 'convinced' any group of Silesians to a national integration with the local Germans and to what extent – for another-it could have strengthened any group's sense of belonging to the Slavonic or even Polish community.

In the territory incorporated into Poland, in the autonomous Silesian Voivodeship – especially in the period when the Upper Silesian convention (1922–1937) was effective, and provided bilateral protection for ethnic minorities – nationally conscious Germans did not experience effective a Polonisation – integration policy up until 1926. It happened in spite of the fact that individuals connected to the nationalist ideology of Roman Dmowski – the former leader of the Polish delegation at the Paris Peace Conference – continued to stand at the helm of the state. Nationalists and their co-allies were focusing on raising Polish community in line with the national spirit, even at the expense of national ideology. They however failed to gain support for their ideas both among part of the ethnically Polish Silesians and – especially – the local nationally conscious Germans. As we see, there were no noticeable examples of support for Polish nationality. Both natively Silesian groups – the German and the ethnically Polish – remained in a seeming stagnation. The Germans were undoubtedly awaiting their return under the power of Berlin's government. Both groups were apt observers of the doings and effectiveness or helplessness of the newly introduced Polish state. The territories of the new Voivodeship, devoid of a native Silesian office and management personnel, saw the influx – official and unofficial – of a mass of migrants of various sort from the lands former belonged to Russia and Habsburg Empire together with their various customs, habits and lifestyles, as well as various attitudes towards work and customers. What became noticeable in the streets of Silesian cities was the presence of numerous immigrant

Jewish communities seeking to quickly improve their material status. The local Silesian community was treated in a manner that was far beyond their expectations. Silesian Germans en bloc were openly treated as enemies of everything that was Polish. The native Silesians were commonly perceived as secondary citizens, for whom 'the leaseholders' from the former Russian Kingdom of Poland and Galicia attempted to civilize. Silesians (often the veterans of the Silesian Uprisings), were treated on their own land as secondary citizens and thus they perceived the Polish rules with growing criticism. Their initial enthusiasm towards the potentially attractive Polish nation and state which they had awaited both with curiosity and anxiety quickly waned. Similar feelings were becoming more and more common not only in circles with no crystalized national views, but also among the locally nation-conscious Poles. The march to 'Polishness' was rapidly suppressed. Paradoxically this had a unifying effect on the local, Silesian community that was confining itself – in opposition to the Polish state – to its own regional group[26].

In German Upper Silesia a mixture of a German and native Silesian community resided. The latter was divided into a group which was conscious of its being part of the Polish nation and a much larger group of Silesians who identified themselves with the region or locality itself. This situation did not favour the unification of the inhabitants of the country. All of them were influenced by the policy conducted by the German state, which invariably highlighted the injustice of the division of Upper Silesia and the sense of being threatened by the Polish state approaching from beyond the 'burning border' as it was known. The intention of Berlin was that the policy would lead to the integration of local people and to their identification with 'Germanness'. The German state was also trying to influence the German people who came to reside in Poland and to strengthen the sense of their unity with the German state but also their sense of unity with the remaining Upper Silesian Germans who resided in the territory of the German Reich. The illusion of the region's existence as a uniform organism inhabited by people unfairly divided by territorial borders was persistently maintained.

In the Polish section of Upper Silesia, the local community was also divided, just as on the German side. This fact favoured neither of their senses of regional unity. However, the policy of the Polish state was slightly different than that of

[26] There are plenty of literary sources on the subject, many of which have been published only recently. Cf. footnote no 1. and the older publication of Maria Wanda Wanatowicz, *Historia społeczno-polityczna*, pp. 41-144. It is also worth becoming familiar with the almost quarter of a century-old study where the relations in interwar Polish Upper Silesia are very adequately illustrated. Cf.: Mirosława Błaszczak-Wacławik, Wojciech Błasiak, Tomasz Nawrocki, *Górny Śląsk. Szczególny przypadek kulturowy*, Warszawa 1990, pp. 7-41.

Berlin. Warsaw's policy towards the Polish minority residing on the German side was not particularly active. If any attempts were made to strengthen the nation-building processes focused on improving identification with the Polish nation, they were not accompanied by any territorial claims towards Germany. Poland, battling with many internal problems, in reference to the territories of Silesian Voivodeship attempted to conduct the policy that would integrate the local people with the remaining part of the Polish nation. At the same time, attempts were made to minimize the role played in this territory by the numerous and economically strong German minority. Under the pretext of democracy, efforts were undertaken to exclude the German national element from social life of Silesian Voivodeship. These actions, motivated by the Polish national interest did not favour integration within the local community. Neither did the Polonisation policy. In the all-Polish context, in principle it was to serve as an integrating factor. In reality, however, for the locally-residing native community it performed the role more of a potentially disintegrating factor by 'removing' part of its representatives from their local groups and incorporating them into the Polish nationality.

At the same time the issues of nationality were inseparably intertwined with purely political ones. After all the measure of successfulness of the Polish state in the Silesian Voivodeship was the ability (or inability) to solve painful issues regarding everyday existence and the social security of multi-member Silesian families.

The day-to-day reality of the Weimar Republic was characterised by economic problems. But even during these materially difficult times, in a country to a large extent impoverished by the Great War, German Upper Silesia was treated with exceptional care. As part of 'the torn-apart country', resting on the Polish-German 'burning border', even in the largely anarchy-dominated Germany, the region was offered continuous ideological care by the state and German patriots who emphasized the injustice that had been done not only to Germany, but also to the local communities through the fragmentation of the region[27]. In propaganda-related campaigns German elements of local 'Silesianess' were highlighted for instance through the practice of placing schools under the patronage of the eminent German and Silesian poet Joseph von Eichendorff. Also regional Silesian dialects were tolerated – in contrast to the strategy that had been implemented prior to the Great War. The importance of traditional, local, family, and religious values was emphasized. This strategy was also adopted in East Prussia at the time. The purpose of these actions – whose strategic aim was the re-unification of the

[27] J. Nowosielska-Sobel, *Od ziemi rodzinnej*, pp. 375-411.

country within the German borders – was to develop a possibly widespread sense of affiliation of Silesians with 'Germanness' and of Silesia with Germany.

At the same time heated polemics were taking place within the Polish national minority, as well as a rivalry in the childhood education field. For the German government it was important that the role of the local, minority Polish education be minimized. This sort of activity took place continuously up until the outbreak of the Second World War, and yet was accompanied by a specific, apparent pacification connected with the Polish-German declaration of non-aggression of 1934[28].

The Jews continued to exert a considerable influence in GermanSilesia, also Lower Silesia. It was Wrocław in Lower Silesia that continued to be the greatest concentration of Jews in Silesia. Their community – as I have already pointed out – was steadily drawing closer to self-identification with the German nation. This tendency prevailed even in spite of the unfavourable feelings towards the Jews manifested following the First World War, when they were being repeatedly accused of sharing-responsibility for the defeat and for the propagation of the communist ideas. This last charge was false particularly in reference to the Jews who were owners of mid to large-sized businesses and those who worked in the liberal professions.

The situation in Germany had become even more complicated at the turn of the 1930s when Germany saw the rise of the national extremist but also the socially radical, and at that moment, left-wing Nazi Party (the National Socialist German Workers' Party, abbreviated as NSDAP) under the leadership of Adolf Hitler. The party wanted to reach every group and class of the contemporary German society. Its ideologists focused their attention-alongside the workers and members of the urban middle class-on the peasants, whom the communists had nothing to offer. Therefore, efforts were undertaken to integrate at least a part of the Silesians, labourers or peasants (and independent of their national attitudes) around the totalitarian proposals put forward by NSDAP. Nonetheless, it was not an easy task for the Nazis to approach traditional, Upper Silesian communities that were much attached to Catholicism. The Catholic Centre Party continued to enjoy a very high position in the area. Local Catholics (with various national attitudes) were therefore focused around political religious parties. This was for sure-to a certain extent-a locally integrating factor. At the same time the expansive Nazis were doing their best to implement their vision of a uniform German nation. To accomplish this mission they were using-especially after coming to power-radical and repressive methods. This was no doubt a factor which consolidated the disintegration of local communities. The Nazis were extreme nationalists. What could

[28] It is worth mentioning here a study of a Wrocław historian, which is still relevant today: Wojciech Wrzesiński, *Polski ruch narodowy w Niemczech*, Poznań 1970.

not be therefore underestimated were their intentions to attract the so far undecided Upper Silesians to German nationalism. While not leaving behind the potential influence exerted on this segment of the population by the national socialists we need to highlight the integrating role of German-nationalist slogans such as *Deutschland erwache* ('Germany, wake up'). The ideas of Nazism were also directed towards the German segment of the population in the Polish Silesian Voivodeship[29].

In the Polish part of Upper Silesia the aforementioned unfavourable circumstances of the initial years of the Polish administration were multiplied by the country's difficult economic situation. The loss of the German market, intensified by the German-Polish customs war, were very difficult conditions for the newly created state – *nolens volens* – which exerted a negative impact (from the point of view of the purposes of the Polish state) on the attitudes of many Silesians. If it was normal that the local Germans did not feel naturally connected to the completely alien Polish state, native Silesians had to wrestle with the difficult conditions of material life, as well as with the difficult conditions of existence within a country for which they were nominally Poles. It was indeed so even though many of them identified themselves neither with the country nor with the nation. Silesians – even those converted to 'Polishness' – still had to struggle with the crisis of an internal conviction of accuracy – or inaccuracy – of choosing a Polish nationalist (national) option. They felt underestimated by the Polish government. As a matter of fact they were indeed often removed from administrative functions under the pretext of a lack of formal education and inadequate knowledge of Polish. The Upper Silesian dialect was commonly, publicly ridiculed by the immigrant, 'ordinary' Poles, but also by official factors. One of the results of this situation was the revival of the idea of Silesian separatism.

This situation in this territory was additionally complicated by the existence of a strong, in an organizational and economic sense (also thanks to considerable support from Berlin) German minority, who strongly criticised the fact they were being forced to reside in Poland. The aforementioned factors were responsible for the fact that the state of social and national disintegration was maintained in the formally autonomous Silesian Voivodeship.

The Polish policy towards the residents of Upper Silesia underwent radical changes following the May Coup d'Etat of 1926 carried out by Marshal Józef Piłsudski. The previous policy of Polonisation, conducted based on the ideology of National Democracy was rather unsuccessful. The rules of the so-called Sanation personified by the new Voivode, Michał Grażyński, abusing slogans of state policy,

[29] Ewa Waszkiewicz, *Doktryna hitlerowska wśród mniejszości niemieckiej w województwie śląskim w latach 1918-1939*, Wrocław 2001.

were tantamount to – as a matter of fact – severe anti-German and pro-Polish policy. Gradually this policy started to bring about success. Hard to define in terms of size and origin groups of the native, younger generations began to identify themselves with the state and with the Polish nation[30]. At the same time this often ruthless activity of Michał Grażyński simply prompted the hatred of large parts of the Silesian population, who were far from identifying with the despised Polish nation. This was the factor which could encourage these circles both to identify themselves with 'Germanness' but also to consolidate their sense of being part of the 'Regional Silesian Group'.

For a couple of years following the Nazis' rise to power in Germany in January 1933 – with no clear counteraction of the Polish government – there was a partial Nazification (although never total) of the German minority movement. It was toned down by the Polish-German declaration of 1934 but due to the opposite aims of Poland and Germany in Upper Silesia (in both halves of the population) local relations were gradually worsened as the conflict between Berlin and Warsaw at the close of the 1930s was increasing.

Following the legal, constitutional assumption of power over Germany, the Nazis moved on to the implementation of their new economic policy on a grand scale. The policy seemed to confirm their declarations on the building of social security. This had to be of much significance for the vast industrial territories of Upper Silesia, though the Nazis did not enjoy as much support from the local population as they did from that of Lower Silesia. At the same time the policy of attracting society to the new totalitarian power was supported by the excessive use of nationalist slogans and using them as the basis for shaping educational policy. Also the totalitarian policy of providing citizens with social care for their entire lives bore fruit in an effective plan to focus part of the Silesian (also native) youth and indoctrinated children around the person of Chancellor Adolf Hitler.

No doubt the 'high-sounding' and much more modestly implemented social policy of the Nazis consolidated among the most impoverished classes of society the looming sense of social justice, when the state would prevent an uncertain future and even create a stable foundation for prosperity. The growing integrity of the Nazi policy had to be coupled with the progressive erosion (the extent of which was difficult to estimate) of part of the historically Silesian circles. The policy bore fruit in the shrinking of the group of people who gravitated towards this 'Germanness' (mostly) or 'Polishness' at the expense of the ongoing (especially in the villages) regionalism.

[30] Cf.: M. Czapliński, *Dzieje Śląska*, pp. 394-406; M.W. Wanatowicz, *Historia społeczno-polityczna*, pp. 41-144.

At the end of the 1930s the growing and increasingly evident Polish-German conflict towards the close of the period of peace brought about a growing tensions in Opole Silesia, resulting in an almost total cessation of Polish activity in this territory (also because of acts of terror).

In their attacks, the German Nazis were in fact not striving to completely liquidate 'Polishness'. Their purpose was to attract native Silesians to the ideology and nationalist slogans of the NSDAP. The policy they implemented with the local Jewish population in mind was quite different. The Jews were classified, in principle, as the worst enemy of Germans and 'Germanness'. Their fate was identical to that of the Jews in the entirety of contemporary Germany. Only to some extent and to a certain moment (up until 1937) could the Upper Silesian Jews count on the protection of the expiring Upper Silesian convention. This 'besieged community' as it was defined in the literature was gradually being deprived of all its rights. Its living space was increasingly whittled away at, regulated by increasingly restrictive rules-starting from the renowned Nuremberg Laws of 1934. The 'Crystal Night' of 1938, as it became known, put an effective and drastic end to the Jews' 'normal' functioning in the policed, racist and extremely anti-Semitic Germany. During this pogrom Wrocław suffered an irretrievable loss, namely, the destruction of one of the greatest synagogues in Germany. During the Second World War, in the early 1940s, Silesian Jews were deported to mass extermination camps and slaughtered. Only a few survived[31].

Right after the First World War problems arose prompted by the unfulfilled territorial expectations of Prague and its stillborn dreams of rallying Poles from Zaolzie (the western part of Czech Cieszyn Silesia) around Czechoslovakia to which the Czech nation found their radical although temporary solution at the close of the 1930s. At the time of 'the disassembling' of the Czechoslovakian state, and beginning with the Munich agreement of the 30th September 1938, Warsaw decided to settle this 'old' score. The Polish party forced Prague-by means of an armed ultimatum-to perform a territorial cession to the benefit of Poland. At the beginning of October the disputed territory (in 1919 annexed by the Czechoslovakian soldiers as a result of an armed attack) was incorporated into Poland. The occupation process of these territories was accompanied by a large-scale propaganda campaign and described as the fair recovery of territories annexed by the Czechs.[32] It was also

[31] Cf. i.e.: Abraham Ascher, *The Jews of Breslau under Nazism*, Stanford 2007; Willy Cohn, *Żadnego prawa – nigdzie. Dziennik z Breslau 1933-1941*, selected fragments by Norbert Conrads, Wrocław 2010 (original title: *Kein Recht, nirgends. Breslauer Tagebücher 1933-1941*, Köln 2008).

[32] See a very interesting – Polish-Czech – work on the subject that has been published only recently: K. Nowak, *Między historiografią polską a czeską*; Mecislav Borak, *W czechosłowackiej i czeskiej historiografii*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, pp. 449-455.

meant to be an – as it later turned out a very much deceptive – expression of conviction of the superpower status of Poland at least in this region of Europe.

An undoubtedly large proportion of local Silesians (whose size is difficult to assess) derived a sense of satisfaction by becoming part of Poland. Neither did they hide their pro-Polish national feelings. The participation of Poland – even though it was justified by the fact of its formerly being treated unfairly – in the partition of the neighbouring country resulted in the two Slavonic countries being again divided by a chasm. The Poles from Zaolzie who were to pay for this in 1945 following the rebuilding – the shape of which took its borders from before the Munich conference – of the Czechoslovakian state.

During the war these territories became the administrative units of the German Reich and were subject to campaigns similar to that of the *Volkslist* in Upper Silesia. The effect of such a campaign was to lead to a complete 'Germanisation' of the local population, and on a short-term basis to bring them into the scope of German influence as well as forcing them to serve in the German army. Also these doings, undertaken immediately following the war, became a pretext for the Czech party to repress the Polish community of Zaolzie.

Silesia during the Second World War[33]

The war, initiated by the invasion of Poland, manifested itself in radical ethnic tensions in the Polish part of Upper Silesia (in the German part the possibilities to display pro-Polish attitudes had been previously almost totally prevented). The joyful welcoming of the German troops, 'liberators', in Silesian towns was not always a result of the German, Nazi propaganda. Following the annexation of the Polish parts of Upper Silesia, the German Nazis set about liquidating all forms of an organized Polish national movement. The strategic aim of the Germans from the very beginning was the complete Germanisation of the annexed Upper Silesian territories and the optimal elimination of pro-Polish national attitudes or expectations. The aim of the German nationalists was the administrative and forceful creation of a state of social unity in this territory, which was to become a fundamental condition by which all its inhabitants could identify themselves with the German nationality. This policy

[33] On the subject of issues connected with the participation of both parts of Silesia in the Second World War cf. – of older studies – for example: *Śląsk wobec wojny polsko-niemieckiej 1939 r.*, ed. Wojciech Wrzesiński, Wrocław-Warszawa 1990; Mirosława Błaszczak-Wacławik, *Zbiorowość śląska w okresie okupacji niemieckiej*, [in:] Mirosława Błaszczak-Wacławik, Wojciech Błasiak, Tomasz Nawrocki, *Górny Śląsk. Szczególny przypadek kulturowy*, p. 41-65; M.W. Wanatowicz, *Historia społeczno-polityczna*, pp. 41-65.

undoubtedly contributed to the deepening of divisions among the native people of Silesia and to the disintegration of this group.

The situation in both parts of Upper Silesia reunited within the actual territory of Germany was not identical[34]. Opole Silesia was treated by Berlin as German both in terms of ethnicity as well as territory;(the local population of Poles was marginalized; this was also the purpose of the Nazi People's List (*Volkslist*) of 1939). Indeed, all forms of Polish activity (such as education, publishing, self-organisation) and displaying a pro-Polish national attitude were suppressed. The residents of the region as German citizens were by definition, as were the inhabitants of Germany, obliged to serve in German military formations. At the same time the local people during the war were witnessing terrible atrocities inflicted upon great masses of foreign forced labourers and prisoners of the Nazi concentration camps working in local industrial and farming facilities. It would be nonetheless difficult-in the face of a lack of reliable sources-to assess what exactly the influence of these events and observations was on the potential variability and shaping of ethnic and ideological attitudes of native Silesians.

Inasmuch as pre-war Silesia was 'mute', the situation in Polish Silesia (at the time part of Germany) was all the more so dynamic. It was also there that efforts were undertaken for the quickest possible integration of both the territory and its citizens with the Germans. This integration consisted of a striving for the quickest possible Germanisation of the entire local population. As a matter of fact, it is beyond a doubt that in the face of such a radically changing situation, due to the repressions, but also because they were so impressed by the brilliant German victories in the first years of war, a hard to identify group of native Silesians consciously took the German side and started to identify themselves with the Nazi objectives. It was similar also when it comes to the local indigenous Germans and previously Germanised native inhabitants. For part of them this was made all the easier as their thoughts had already earlier gravitated towards accepting German nationality. This deepening state of fragmentation of the local communities did not however mean an increase in significance of the Germanised Silesians in the territory they inhabited. The Nazis were not going to leave too much power in the hands of the local people. They carried out a policy of relying on immigrants from outside Upper Silesia.

The Polish citizens (in accordance with the rules of international law they formally maintained this status, which was unacceptable for the Nazis) were included in the so-called German People's List. The idea to divide those listed into

[34] Cf.: M. Czapliński, *Dzieje Śląska*, pp.406-424; Ryszard Kaczmarek, *II wojna światowa (1939-1945)*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, pp. 255-266.

four groups was to facilitate the gradual liquidation of potential or active Polish pro-national attitudes. The list was also to enable a balanced calculation of the German demographical potential in this territory and to eliminate the potential activity of the Polish resistance movement as well as propaganda of Polish government in exile. Differently classified locals were also supposed to be entirely engaged in the military life of the German state. For this purpose German Nazi organizations were actively extended.

The locals were above all to serve as the source of recruits for the German armed forces. The omnipresent German propaganda was reaching to the local native communities and wreaking moral havoc among the members of the younger generations. The opposing Polish side both could and indeed did make attempts to influence the society, even by means of the Catholic Church's activity. These institutions – just as the Polish government in exile – discreetly encouraged people to sign the *Volkslist* in order to avoid 'biological losses of the population', which was to return to the territory of the Polish state following, as it was assumed, the quickly concluded war resulting in Hitler's defeat.

The failures of the Nazi-German integration were especially evident in the two last years of the war, and especially when, in 1944, several thousand German soldiers from the Polish section of Upper Silesia deserted the German army and, as if to verify their attitude, were included in the Polish army on the Italian front. This considerable number of deserters – produced not only in the last years of the global conflict – was composed both of individuals who were disappointed by Nazism, 'Germanness' and the German state (a drawing-away factor) as well as of a group that was very difficult to define, and whose choices had been made under fear of being forced to personally bear the consequences of the expected defeat of Germany. The German government were also noticing the growing – during the ongoing Second World War – practice of using the Silesian dialect and Polish.

At the outset of 1945 the Germans were forced out of Polish Upper Silesia, and soon later out of Opole Silesia by the Red Army which was approaching from the east. The German occupation was replaced by the horrifying and murderous yet temporary Soviet occupation.

Conclusions

Over a period of approximately half a century the inhabitants of Silesia had been subjected to the overwhelming pressure of these restless times. The Jewish people fewer in number who in the vast majority were Germans of Jewish origin,

and not infrequently functioned outside Judaism, in the 1940s found themselves on the verge of total physical annihilation. In the Second Reich and in the Prussian state they were responsible for the modernisation of Germany. They, too, often played important political roles; in the period prior to the Great War they were the driving force of urbanisation and industrialisation. The German Jews, in the number of ten thousand, fell fatal victims of the First World War military campaigns. Following the defeat and fall of the Empire these were the Jews who were accused of co-participation in the plot against the German state and they shared at least part of the responsibility for the alleged 'stab in the back' which resulted in defeat. These events had (but rather did not make use of) their potential to hamper the process of the gradual gravitation of consecutive citizens of the German Reich of Jewish origin towards absolute affiliation with the German nation, its culture and civilisation. This process was violently stopped, starting with the outset of 1939, which marked the assumption of power by the Nazis headed by Adolf Hitler. The NSDAP came to power by bandying around extremely racist anti-Semitic slogans. During the 1930s, beginning with the famous Nuremberg Laws of 1934 the Jews were gradually deprived of their civil rights. In spite of the fact that up until 1937 in the territory of German Upper Silesia they were still being protected by the Upper Silesian convention (1922-1937) this fact did not prevent them from falling victim to the all-German bloody pogrom of 1938 called 'the Crystal Night'. As a result of the 1940s deportations of the Jewish population from Silesia to mass extermination camps, their functioning in society was brought to a horrible and permanent end. Very few Silesian Jews managed to live through the Second World War. It is most probable that the Silesian-Jewish population residing in Silesia contributed to the integration of the local community. Yet, this was only in the dimension of its sense of a connection with the German population. So, the Jews could feel like 'locals' only inasmuch as the local Germans felt like locals as well.

The local Germans in the period prior to the First World War – originating both from the group which had been migrating to this territory for several hundred years and from the group of Germanised native Silesians – had a sense of residing in a specific, ethnically mixed area. Both these groups were subject to two, by no means unconnected processes. The first one was the growing sense of being part of a uniform community of all Germans focused on the German Reich. The second was-the ever-strengthening-sense of connection with the region of their residence[35]. What was then undoubtedly taking place was a process of mutual integration of part of the local community focused around the German national core. The German

[35] Cf. relevant chapters: Joanna Nowosielska-Sobel, *Od ziemi rodzinnej*.

academics have even recently mentioned the existence of 'a Silesian tribe' in order to illustrate the unity of this local community[36].

At the same time this three-sided processes were taking place among the local Upper Silesian population. The group showed a continuous sense of being part of the local community which was diametrically opposed to that of the Germans. Their sense of unity was consolidated by the conscious fact of their longstanding residence in their own territory among the same – both close and distant – neighbours spent communicating by means of a commonly understood dialect. From this segment of the population groups of people who confirmed their affiliation with the German of Polish nation started to break free which was viewed by locals as a disintegrating factor. What needs to be remembered here is support of the idea of politically independent Upper Silesian people and country by a separate activists. Ideologically they were headed towards a unification of the entire native Upper Silesian community within a uniform nation. This was therefore a factor whose clear objective was to integrate the Slavonic inhabitants of the region. Yet, contrary to the expectations of Silesian separatists they did not gain wider social support, and they were in fact eliminated from the political life by both Polish and German activists.

During the quarter of a century that followed the Great War, the Silesian Germans were growing generally, as a result of the continuous activity of the German nationalist circles within the community of nearly a million Silesians whose members were ethnically Polish. This process was alternatively slowing down and speeding up in the years immediately following the First World War. As a result of the plebiscite, Upper Silesia witnessed a polarization of national attitudes (towards a crystallized 'Germanness' or 'Polishness') among the nationally-neutral, ethnically Polish population of Silesia. This fragmentation of Silesia brought about important consequences for the existence – as a uniform group – of the local population. The local Germans, who prior to the war were largely focused on the ideal of localness, suddenly found themselves residing in two hostile countries. Similarly, the local Silesians found themselves divided by an unfriendly border. This was undoubtedly a factor which contributed to the disintegration of these communities.

The divided Upper Silesia continued to witness the progress of these nation-building processes. On the German side of the border, despite the Upper Silesian Convention which had been put into effect thereby protecting the Polish minority-which no doubt existed there officially represented by the legally-operating Association of Poles in Germany – some groups nonetheless seemed to gravitate towards

[36] This thesis appears several times in the deliberations contained in the book of Joachim Bahlcke. Cf.: Joachim Bahlcke et. al., *Śląsk i Ślązacy*.

German nationality. This process was radically sped up under the rule of the national socialists. In the context of the anti-Polish activities, which following the worsening of Polish-German national relations assumed the characteristics of pure terror, the Germanisation of Silesian children and youths, who were additionally lured with the slogans of National Socialism, progressed. The mixture of very complex issues connected with this phenomenon was to face the Polish state with the advent of the winter of 1945 when following the arrival of the Red Army both parts of Upper Silesia saw the introduction of a new Polish administration.

The aforementioned processes, most importantly those related to Germanisation (voluntary and involuntary), were significant disintegration factors of the local community. Nonetheless, even during the reign of the Nazis, and despite the progressing Germanisation and ideologisation of the children and youth, the Upper Silesian, regional core continued to last.

On the Polish side of the border the clash between the intentions of the generally anti-Polish, well organized and economically strong German minority and the representatives of the Polish state striving to Polonise the Upper Silesian territories that were controlled by them from 1922 continued. Poles also had some successes on their account. In 1927 the Priest Emil Szramek, a native Upper Silesian, became the head of the Upper Silesian Society of Friends of Science established at the close of the 19th century. This greatly contributed to the development of the local Silesian/Polish intelligentsia. The symbol of Polonisation and anti-German activity of the voivode Michał Grażyński was the foundation, in the 1930s, of the Silesian Institute in Katowice – an institution created by immigrant Poles. The Polonisation policy of Warsaw, whose prerogative was national raison d'etat, was targeted at the local communities including Silesian Germans, who were considered harmful, as well as ethnically Slavonic/Polish Silesians. When viewing this group as a regionally – although often passively – uniform community, the Polish state's actions against it were a significant factor in its disintegration. In spite of this fact, outside the group which was conscious of its 'Polishness' there was a large group whose members first and foremost identified themselves with their local, regional communities. The inevitable mistakes of the Polish administration whose members originated from outside the Silesian Voivodeship, namely from the lands of former Russian and Habsburg states, made it not in the least easier for the people to choose Polish nationality. But also on the German side, despite the seemingly utmost affiliation to 'Germanness' there were still a group of people who identified themselves first and foremost with 'Silesianness'.

The Second World War again remodelled the Silesian consciousness, views, evaluations. The initial years of the stunning military successes of the German army (up until the defeat in Stalingrad at the outset of 1943) undoubtedly had the potential to tip people towards taking the side of 'Germanness' on both sides of the pre-war border and shatter the permanence of regional community focused on its localness. What is worse, in Polish Upper Silesia annexed by the Wehrmacht (soon afterwards incorporated into the Reich as the so-called 'recovered' territories) the perverse policy of national divisions was conducted. In the conditions of a ruthless fight against all manifestations of 'Polishness' in the previous Silesian Voivodeship the German People's List (*Volkslist*) was introduced. The list constituted in fact 'an irrefutable offer' to the Silesian people, and especially to those of ethnically Polish origin. Performed at the time – under compulsion, in a calculated manner, with joy – national choices were difficult to verify precisely. A similar strategy was adopted by the German Nazis in the annexed and was soon to be later incorporated into the Reich territories of the former Duchy of Cieszyn. Also in this case – the local Silesian people were burdened with consequences – on the Polish and on the Czechoslovakian frontier. Later, as early as in the spring of 1945, the Polish-Czechoslovakian territorial conflict was again exacerbated.

The madness of the Second World War inflicted immense suffering on the community of Silesia. Throughout the period of this great conflict and directly afterwards a great number of Silesians died, and many more were forced to leave their place of origin. The Silesian Jews were slaughtered by the German Nazis, the vast majority of local Germans were forced by the Poles to migrate from Silesia to their country which was occupied by the victors of war and stripped of a number of territories. The native, ethnically Polish Silesians independently of their previous national choices or their lack thereof were confronted with the nationalist, ruthless policy of the pro-communist, not sovereign Polish state. The existence of their historically local community found itself greatly endangered.

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Silesian identity in the period of nation-states (1918-1945)

Abstract:

When addressing relations between the nation-state and the region, as well as national and regional identities, three categories of identities can be identified in the *topoi*: the land of the Bohemian Crown, Silesian regionalism and the Pan-Silesian approach. Within each nation-state there were some self-identified 'true' identities. These national identities attempted to subdue and engulf the regional identities which stemmed from modern Silesian patriotism, creating borderland identities. They took their final form at the turn of the 20th century and during its first decades. Three aspects are subjected to a detailed analysis: the concept of Silesia's territory and Silesia's 'own' borders, elements of 'true' Silesian identity, and the approach to outsiders. Thus, each 'National Silesia' had its own borders, different while overlapping. Their denizens could choose from many identities, similar in every 'National Silesia' in only the genetic and structural sense, since their essence was the exclusion of those foreign in the national sense. In the second part, these offers are elaborated in three areas: regional and national symbolism (basing on the naming structure adopted in Czechoslovakian Silesia), places of distinct identity in leading cultural institutions (The Upper Silesian National Museum in Bytom) and the implementation of Silesian regionalism within the Polish educational system.

Keywords:

gesamtschlesischer Raum, land of the Bohemian Crown, Silesian regionalism, magazines

Introductory comments. The objective and the subject matter of the study

The division of Silesia, as a result of the Silesian Wars in the 18th century, among two supra-national monarchies had manifold political, social and cultural ramifications. Most importantly, the region lost its independent status and began to function within both the states as a marginal territory. This political change was internally connected with Silesia being deprived of its 'country (autonomous) status', in other words: Silesia ceased to be a crown land of the Habsburgs. From a social perspective the consequence of this breakthrough was – vividly speaking – a geometrical change: the regional society started to lose its vertical, estate character, which was gradually replaced by a horizontal, civic character with plenty of space for new social groups and new bonds.

From that moment onward the Silesian identity (or rather identities, for many, often even exclusive sets of identities started to aspire to this name), with its deep roots and complex character, but at the time mostly determined by religion, positioned itself next to broader concepts, which came from outside and settled both above, and in opposition to, all kinds of ideas of Silesian patriotism. Then Silesian patriotism was downgraded to the status of regional identity, and every now and then even that of local folklore.

This situation did not change either as a result of the fall of trans-national monarchies nor as a result of the First World War, which led to the incorporation of Silesia into the following three nation-states: Weimar Germany, whose alter-ego was to transform into the Third Reich, the bi-national Czechoslovakia and the newly reborn Polish Republic. In addition, at the time there was no single 'Silesia', and its subsequent divisions only further increased the number of its components. The existence of two Silesian sub-regions: Lower and Upper Silesia overlapped following the 1740-42 division of the region into two 'national' Silesias: Prussian and Austrian. Both the Prussian and Austrian Silesias were again divided in the wake of the First World War, the former between Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia (Prussian) and the latter between Poland and Czechoslovakia (Austrian)[1].

In each of these – *de facto* – regions clearly separate communities existed. Their character was much broader than that of local communities, which makes it particularly difficult to analyse them at the macro level. In this brief overview it is impossible to cover all these areas. As a result, we will concentrate on the areas of where there was contact between groups and conflicts between the nations. Which should facilitate a proper presentation of the Silesian national identities and the basic differences between them.

Focus on the national aspect of identity follows from its status in the interwar period, when it was the fundamental subject of attention of governmental authorities and a point of reference for various identities, regional as well. Already at this point it needs to be noted that studies which attempt to present the chosen aspects of a national or regional identity influenced by various sources and produced mostly by governmental administration, certain attitudes, usually political ones, are presented somewhat by default at the expense of more permanent elements of communities[2].

[1] Each of these sub-regions has been the subject of a relatively new historical synthesis. For Upper Silesia see: *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka i kultura*; for Lower: *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*; and of the numerous papers for Czech Silesia see for instance: Dan Gawrecki (et al.), *Dějiny Českého Slezska 1740-2000,* vols. 1-2, Opava 2003.

[2] This is also illustrated in the recent attempt to present the relations that are within our interest here: *Die Grenzen der Nationen. Identitätenwandel in Oberschlesien in der Neuzeit,* eds Kai Struve, Philipp Ther, Marburg 2002.

What is more, as a result of disputes among members of the national movement, the term 'national/regional identity' is first and foremost understood as a group's language and attitude (again, mostly the members of political elites) towards the language[3]. Therefore, too, though this paper covers a relatively short period of time between 1918 and 1945, it is at the same time an attempt to reach back to the roots of these identities, or rather evolution of their sets.

The detailed aims of this study include – for one thing – the analysis of the formation of identities and their components, and – for another – the analysis of how they functioned and on which scale they were propagated. Three of them would eventually be dominant, considered by the state to be 'authentic'. These sets of identity emerged in the interwar period in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Germany in the shape of theses of: 'the land of the Bohemian Crown', 'Silesian regionalism' and *gesamtschlesicher Raum* (all-Silesian space) and their relations with other, particularly regional/local/Silesian identities. In consequence, other, sub-regional, local identities whose presentation would exceed the scope of our discussion we decided to treat marginally, while establishing that it would be possible to include them into the discussion with the use of the skills of historians.

The introduction to these substantive deliberations will provide a description and a basic definition of the analytical categories and their modern genesis in Silesia. The article, in its main part, follows an analysis of the development and features of individual identities and their relation to other ways of identification within the region. Examples of these 'offers' are examined based on the following three levels: that of regional and national symbolism (which is done on the basis of the preferred names of the region. By way of example we will use Czechoslovakian Silesia); that of the status of individual identities in leading cultural institutions (this issue will be presented using the example of the Upper Silesian State Museum in Bytom (Beuthen); and that of the identity's social implementation through education in school (this issue will be discussed with reference to the issue of school education in the Silesian Voivodeship and regionalism's role in it).

In summary, we will attempt to determine the effectiveness of these offers and the influence of individual 'offers of identity' on the disappearance/development of the inhabitants' identification with the region and the nation-state.

[3] Cf. the comments of Dan Gawrecki and the analysis of literature regarding the usage of linguistic criterion in defining identity: *idem*, *Regionale und nationale Identitäten in Östereichisch-Schlesien im langen 19. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Die Grenzen der Nationen,* p. 116.

Nation-state – region – modern identity

The nation-state is a unique product of European and American history. It hasn't been around long. It was only during the period of the Enlightenment, with its ideas of human equality and individual liberty, that an ideological foundation was formed for the concept of an estate-country, as a hierarchical and isolated entity. Eventually it was industrialisation and urbanization that forced the transformation of the state into a nation-state, bringing together a community of citizens who occupy a single territory and are called a 'nation'.

As a matter of fact, two definitions of nation-state emerged. On the one hand, the term was used to describe all the residents of a given state. On the other, which manifested itself mostly in the territories of the Eastern European empires where throughout the centuries ethnic communities, national groups and conquered nations have existed, the ideologists of these groups came up with the idea of an ethnic nation – a pre-political entity – through an absolutisation of common origin and on this basis demanded such groups be granted their own territory and government[4].

These aforementioned statements may also be treated as a potential source of conflict between the region and the nation-state and between regional and national identities.

Both of these territory-restricting constructs featured similar components. Yet, in the case of the region these were for various reasons much 'weaker' compared to the phenomenon of the nation-state, which in every way exceeded the region in terms of its 'age' and the permanence of its constituent features. Already the very attempt to outline the region's area is problematic, for throughout history many various approaches to this issue have been noted, and equating a region with a chosen unit of administrative division is more often than not, and to a large extent, a matter of one's choice.

When this issue is viewed from the perspective of identity, we see that here the case is similar. All people possess identities, namely, features which cannot be defined by any other attributes. However, this only seems to be an individual quality, for its constituents are imposed by the group. This concerns not only anthropologic/physical features such as sex, and skin colour, which are generally not subject to change. In other areas an array of qualities acquired during the process of socialisation/culturalisation, which, due to the way they are acquired, are also referred to as

[4] On the state and its attributes see: Grażyna Skąpska, *Państwo,* In: *Encyklopedia Socjologii,* vol. 3, Warszawa 2000, pp. 56-63. The author marginalizes the significance of the state-nation. That is why it is also worth examining the issue from the perspective of studies of nationalism, for instance: H. Schulze, *Staat und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte,* München 1994.

identification or awareness. It is these, that is, language and religion, habits and customs, norms and attitudes that are subject to smaller or greater modifications, even at relatively short intervals. It happens under the influence of political and economic changes, social interactions and individual perception. Identity itself is a dynamic and multi-level creation, as a result of which its constituents may in fact match various models[5].

Let us now return to territorial deliberations and to exemplifying the differences in the categories we are interested in: if a nation possesses a language, then the inhabitants of a region communicate – at most – by means of non-standardised dialects which are visibly influenced by other cultural codes. What is worse, on any cultural level, in the case of regions that feature unique traditions and customs, there was a level which was common for those inhabitants who differed ethnically/nationally from others in the area, which to some extent questioned the basic nationalist principle of striving to exclusivity and homogeneity[6].

When we relate these comments to Silesia, it appears to be a typically 'weak' region with a politically volatile history, religious diversification, complex linguistic relations and a culture to which claims were put forward by various groups and political creations.

Towards the borderlands: the emergence of modern national identities in Silesia

Modern narratives and identity have their roots in the Enlightenment, even in cases when they originated as a result of this cultural development. A belief in human beings served as a foundation for theses on the mutual equality of individual members of society and for the rejection of social and class-related divisions. It was behind this anthropology and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's admiration of primitive man and nature that lay modern historicism, reinforced by Herderian thought.

The ideology of the Enlightenment perfectly matched the situation in Silesia prior to its annexation by Prussia. It was formulated and promoted by the new Protestant Prussian officials, all of whom in fact originated from outside of Silesia and

[5] Cf. comments of P. Ther and K. Struve, *Einleitung*, [in:] *Die Grenzen der Nationen,* pp. 4-6.

[6] On the subject of relations state-region-identities see: *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen in europäischen Zwischenräume seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhundert,* eds Philipp Ther, Holm Sundhaussen, Marburg 2003, especially the introduction of the former: P. Ther, *Sprachliche, kulturelle und ethnische „Zwischenräume" als Zugang zu einer transnationalen Geschichte Europas,* [in:] *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen*, pp. IX-XIX.

who populated the regional *Kriegs-und Domainenkammers*[7]. For obvious reasons they juxtaposed 'the new', which was represented by themselves and by Prussia with 'the old', namely, Catholic Habsburgs. Based on accounts of travellers who provided descriptions of 'the wild' and backward region, plans were formulated to make up for the region's civil and cultural backwardness, which was already at the time associated with the lasting consequences of a Polish/Slavonic presence[8].

This description was in fact already in place at the turn of the 19th century. The conviction on the part of the elites of the necessity of modernizing the state was consolidated by the defeat of Napoleon. This period of the 'wars of liberation' was also the moment of a German national breakthrough in Silesia, to which both groups of the German nation referred both to that of the civic and the 'Borussian'. It was there that one of the first German language departments was created and where Catholic monasteries were secularised. It was also there that Frederic William III introduced the Iron Cross in March 1813 and issued the appeal entitled 'To my People' (*An Mein Volk*), in reaction to which the French were attacked by the first *Freikorps* (volunteer force) under the command of General Adolf v. Lützow[9].

Up until 1848 these enjoyed the status of fundamental places of German remembrance. The national narrative – taken over by liberalism – dominated and marked out the linear road of the region's development: a release from the centuries-long backwardness was only possible for natural, good-natured and diligent Silesians under the leadership of the German bourgeoisie.

This breakdown of faith followed a linear progression up until the last decades of the 19th century alongside the reception of social Darwinism and the emergence of political forces which questioned German ideas and demands. In Prussian Silesia this was mostly the Polish national movement which was viewed by the Prussian authorities as an aggressive and uncivilized group. The German reaction to this subsequent cultural breakthrough was a growth in pessimism and a culture dominated by fear as well as the birth of a defensive ideology, on which *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil), as it was known, was founded. Already at the turn of the century a synthesis of liberal narration with modern nationalism progressed. Now all the elements of civilised development were associated with peaceful labour – which had taken place

7 Jerzy Maroń, *Dolny Śląsk w czasach habsburskich i pruskich*, [in:] *Dzieje Dolnego Śląska*, pp. 258-260.

8 Due to the specific identity of the authors of this narrative, it is not surprising that the connection between the destruction of Silesia as a result of wars conducted by Frederic II and the civilizational backwardness of the last decades of the 18th century was left unnoticed. See: Karin Friedrich, *Nationsbewußtsein im Schlesien der frühen Neuzeit*, [in:] *Die Grenzen der Nationen*, pp. 36-38.

9 Teresa Kulak, *Dolny Śląsk w latach 1806-1918*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia*, pp. 388-391.

at least since the times of the 'German colonisation' – of subsequent generations of Germans, who were transferring various values to the wild 'East'[10].

For Poles this entire concept and the doings of the Germans were tantamount to a multi-century, forceful denationalization of the continuous (from as early as the 11th century) Polish nation. From their perspective, it was the Polish nation that was conducting a centuries-long defensive battle for the preservation of its language, religion and customs. This was the ethnic basis on which Slavonic Upper Silesians were incorporated in the mid-19th century into Poland as it had been postulated.

The basis of the battle for the preservation of the national boundaries was related also to the situation in Austrian Silesia where the indigenous Polish resisted immigrant Germans and Czechs[11]. Whereas the Polish-Czech conflict was in fact initiated in the 20th century and was stimulated by the rapid economic development of Cieszyn Silesia (Czech: Těšínské Slezsko, Polish: Śląsk Cieszyński, German: Teschener Schlesien), at the time the most territorially and culturally remote state of 'the Crown of Saint Wenceslaus', which – viewed from the Czech perspective – was quickly promoted to the status of the most populous and richest region of Austrian Silesia. A few decades earlier the Czech-German conflict flared up, which mostly took place in Opava Silesia (Czech: Opavské Slezsko, German: Troppauer Schlesien, Polish: Śląsk Opawski)[12].

The geographical-cultural marginality of Austrian Silesia, in contrast to Prague, resulted from the long-term necessity to tackle the fundamental problem of the Czech national movement which was a rejection of the political definition of a nation which included various linguistic groups. The disintegration of the supra-linguistic Bohemia begun also around the close of the 18th century. In Austrian Silesia the Czech movement emerged practically together with the rise of the association *Matice Opavske* (1877), which started to make efforts in the cultural sphere, whose aim was the region's incorporation into the Czech state. Prague high society and intelligentsia became aware of the existence of Silesia only thanks to the poetry of Petr Bezruč, and most importantly his 'Silesian Songs' (1909)[13].

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[10] The analysis was developed mostly based on W. Kunicki, *Śląsk. Rzeczywistości wyobrażone*, pp. 7-68.

[11] It is aptly shown when discussing the role of Zofia Kossak in the transfer of Polish borderland ideology from the east to the west by Christian Prunitsch, '(…) *błędem jest każda emigracja*. Zum Transfer der Kresy-Ideologie aus Ostpolen nach Schlesien bei Zofia Kossak', In: *Teschen. Eine geteilte Stadt im 20 Jahrhundert,* eds Ludger Udolph, Christian Prunitsch, Dresden 2009, pp. 69-91.

[12] For more information see: Robert Luft, *Das Teschener Schlesien als national und regionale Geschichtslandschaft,* [in:] *Teschen. Eine geteilte Stadt*, pp. 11-22.

[13] For more information on the inclusion of Silesia in the sphere of Czech history see: Joachim Bahlcke, *Die tschechische Geschichtsschreibung über Schlesien. Von Palacký bis zum Zusammenbruch des kommunistischen Systems,* 'Berichte und Forschungen. Jahrbuch des Bundesinstituts für ostdeutsche Kultur und Geschichte', 3 (1995), pp. 189-213.

Another, also crucially important source of Czech narrative of the entire state and Silesia, was the history of the law of the Bohemian Crown, based on which Opava Silesia and Cieszyn Silesia were incorporated into the Czech state and which served as a basis for the claim to federalize the Austrian monarchy, and later for the demand for Czech independence.

The scope of identity constructs

These mentioned discourses, which were formalised at the very latest at the turn of the century, were founded on deeply rooted interwar sets of dominant, national identities of the inhabitants of various parts of Silesia.

Let us now take a closer look at the structure and components of these three sets, starting with the one which – viewed from the perspective of the interwar period – is chronologically the oldest and whose structure is most stable. Somewhat paradoxically, the road leads us from 'the land of the Bohemian Crown', through 'Silesian regionalism', up to the *gesamtschlesischer Raum*, which turned out to be the most revolutionary and most offensive concept, with well-known consequences. We will focus on three aspects only: the ideas of the territory and borders of 'one's own Silesia', the elements of a 'real' Silesian identity and their attitude towards strangers and their identity.

The land of the Bohemian Crown

When it comes to the Bohemian example, we will try to address the aforementioned questions on the basis of the analysis of the role and content of the 'Věstník Matice Opavske' magazine (1878-1935).

The magazine was first published in 1878. At the time, in line with its title, this was a bulletin which provided information on the creation of the *Matice opavske* association and its objectives[14]. Its principal role was to fill the social void and, by means of the joint effort of its members, to look after the spiritual development of the Czech and Slovakian nation. This was to be performed through the promotion of education and knowledge.

Already the opening address of Priest Ludvik Ochrana outlined the programme of this cultural revival and the scope of this particular offer of identity. The speaker – one of the local Catholic clergymen – emphasized that 'one cannot be ashamed of

[14] *Správe jednatelská o činnosti „Matice Opavské" od jehího založení až do 15 března 1878 r.,* 'Věstník Matice Opavske' (hereafter referred to as VMO), 1878, issue 1, p. 3.

the language of one's own fathers and mothers, the language in which the Saints Cyril and Methodius prayed and which is nowadays spoken by millions of Slavs'[15].

Also during this opening meeting of the association the role of representatives of intelligentsia for modern nations was revealed in the person of Vinzenco Praska, a gymnasium teacher from Opava[16]. Also he repeated the historical argumentation on the downfall of the Czech nation and the need for its rebuilding through proper schooling and self-education. In his speech he pointed out the German successes achieved thanks to the development of schooling and the cultivation of their native language as well as to similar constitutionally granted opportunities for other national groups in Austria[17].

A dozen or so years had passed between the publications of two subsequent issues of 'Věstník' magazine, for the second one appeared only in 1892. During this time the Czech movement in Opava and in Austrian Silesia had consolidated and developed a firm structural basis.

The fundamental problem of the Czech movement was the delineation of the borders of Czech Silesia. And we are not talking about territorial borders, which were of no particular interest to anyone, but the borders of awareness related to German Silesians, who up until the close of the First World War dominated in the national awareness debate and were becoming an increasingly negative point of reference. It would be reasonable to note that when it comes to the question of the territorial boundaries of Silesia, besides mentioning both parts of Austrian Silesia, which was increasingly often referred to in the periodical as Czech Silesia, it was rather occasionally that literary reviews referred to publications on the Duchy of Nysa (Neisse) and the land of Oświęcim-Zator (Auschwitz-Zathor), while the articles presenting the history of the Czech language in Silesia did not fail to mention the Duchy of Opole-Racibórz (Oppeln, Opolí-Ratibor, Ratiboř)[18].

This was however not an issue that would catch much of the authors' interest. The magazine devoted much more attention to demonstrations of the Czech character of the region, which was part of the Habsburg monarchy and the crucial input of this group (understood narrowly as the Slavonic group) in its civil development. This was achieved by means of historical arguments, mostly those of a linguistic-ethnic bent. The term Czech Silesia started to dominate towards the close of the 19th

[15] *Ibidem*, pp. 6-7.

[16] For more extensive information on this period in the history of cities and their internal national relations see: Dan Gawrecki, *Opava znowa v čele Rakouskeho Slezska,* [in:] Karl Müller, Rudolf Žaček, *Opava*, Praha 2006, pp. 249-256.

[17] *Správe jednatelská*, pp. 8-10.

[18] Cf. for instance: *Přehledy kulturní ze Slezska,* VMO, 2 (1892), pp. 30-39; *K dějinam Češtiny na Slezsku,* VMO, 1895, pp. 34-35.

century also in historical disquisitions, which was a clear example of 'presentism' and reached back into the past desires of the Czech national elite[19].

This expression stemmed from the thesis that it was the Slavonic people that initiated the civil development of the region, for which the Germans wanted to take credit. These were the Slavs who were to build tribal strongholds (gords) and to create numerous fortifications[20]. The vein of comments by other authors was similar. They mentioned the names of various towns and claimed that these towns had been founded on *ius teutonicum* (German code) when in fact they had been built on a Slavonic basis – either Polish or Czech[21].

Much attention was devoted to the descriptions of the functioning of the Czech municipal communities in the history of Czech cities, and this period was extended practically to the 17th century. In this case the linguistic argument prevailed and references were made to entries in Czech found in municipal and parish records. Also guild records were presented, with an emphasis on the fact that the guilds were Czech organizations. The authors also supported their theses by providing the analyses, surnames and forenames of the residents of municipal estates, which yielded conclusions that up to the battle of White Mountain (1620), the presence of the Czech national element was at least important[22].

From the close of the 19th century the attempt to prove that the Czech, and at times even Slavonic character was the real identity of the territorially limited Silesia was extended by new elements, resulting from a cultural turn towards the populace and a broadly understood folk character, streaked with naturalism and Darwinist social thought, especially one related to natural conflict.

The texts on Slavonic ethnic groups and Silesian as well as Beskidian folklore can already be found in the first issues of the reinvented 'Věstník' magazine. They, for instance, cover the issue of the origin and cultural contributions of the tribes of Wallachs, Lachs and Moravecsi and their traditional dresses and sub-dialects of various regions of Austrian Silesia[23]. Just as often they contained descriptions of the

[19] Cf. for instance Josef Stypa, *Slezští rodaci v českém písemnictvi. Pokračování,* VMO, 13 (1905), p. 23.

[20] Josef Pospíšil, *Krátký přehled předhistorických památek slezských*, VMO, 8 (1899), pp. 9-11.

[21] *Stará města česká a polská ve Slezsku*, VMO, 2 (1892), p. 12.

[22] Cf. for instance articles from one issue: Vaclav Hauer, *Křestní jména na Paskovcu mezi l. 1633-1745*, VMO, 7 (1897), pp. 1-3; Josef Zukal, *Z najstarších metrik opavských,* VMO 7 (1897), pp. 5-17; *Z dávnovékosti Tešina,* VMO 7 (1897), pp. 25-26.

[23] Cf. for instance: Vincenc Prasek, *Valaši na Frýdecku,* VMO, 5 (1895), pp. 1-8; Jan Vyhlidal, *O kroji na Tešinsku,* VMO, 5 (1895), p. 19-22; František Myslivec, *Národní kroj slezský na Klimkovsku,* VMO 6 (1896), pp. 18-19; Jan Vyhlídal, *Z pověr a zvyků lidu Slezského,* VMO, 7 (1897), p. 21; *idem*, *O povaze lidu slezského,* VMO, 11 (1903), pp. 23-25; Věnčeslav Hruby, *Nečo o podřeči bezkydském,* VMO 11 (1903), pp. 69-70.

customs of the Silesian people, which from the outset of the 20th century was becoming, to say the least, moralizing. The people were presented as, in fact, mistrustful and often employed stereotypical thinking, yet it is emphasized that owing to their hardness and tenacity they were always 'a healthy social element', and that thanks to their straightforwardness, when having once trusted a stranger, they showed him their utmost generosity[24]. It was the Silesian countryside and the Beskid Mountains that were the mainstay of piety and the preservation of ancestral customs and the Slavonic character of language and Czech songs. This description also contained a clear cultural demand: it was on these foundations that it was possible to rebuild the identity of Czechs, negatively influenced by the Germans; it was there the dormant power of the nation lay.

This idyllic picture, relating not only to customs but also to dress, was typical of the contemporary European-wide trend. What was particular about the Czechs was the support of national pride and political postulates with the idea of revitalising the Bohemian Crown. This concept in the case of Silesia is in fact connected with only one person: the lawyer Jan Kapras[25]. He was mentioned for the first time by 'Věstník' magazine in 1906, following the positive reception of his paper on the remains of the code of Opava and Karniów (Jägerndorf, Krnov)[26]. From that moment on, he appeared in the magazine virtually every year, either presenting his own papers or as the author of reviewed publications. With his focus on the presentation of the formal role of the Czech language in the late medieval and modern period as the language of officials and diplomacy, he supplemented the largely similar views of the authors of Opava[27]. The unique feature of his publications was that he pointed to the organic historical-political connections of Silesia, especially Opava Silesia, with Moravia[28]. These views led Kapras, in 1919, to Paris where during the peace conference, he was appointed as an expert on Silesian affairs to the Czech delegation.

The pre-war period saw the creation by Czech intellectuals of ann image of 'strangers', which was valid for several following decades. Also in this area it is

[24] For instance J. Vyhlidal, [*Spod Lysej Hory*], VMO, 14 (1906), p. 22.

[25] For more information on Kapras see: Joachim Bahlcke, *Geschichte als Argument. Der Prager Rechsthistoriker Jan Kapras (1880-1947) und die tschechische Schlesienforchung am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Silesiographia. Stand und Perspektiven der historischen Schlesienforschung. Festschrift für Norbert Conrads zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds Matthias Weber, Carsten Rabe, Würzburg 1998, pp. 69-81.

[26] Jan Kapras, *Z nasi literackiej domacnosti*, VMO, 14 (1906), p. 79.

[27] Cf. also: D. Gawrecki, *Regionale und nationale*, p. 122.

[28] Jan Kapras, *Testament knížete Přemka Opavského a jeho providení*, VMO 15 (1907), pp. 1-8; *idem*, *O státoprávnich poměrach Opavska*, VMO, 16 (1908), pp. 35-49 (continued in the following issue); *idem*, *Srovnání sporů stavu opavských roku 1534*, VMO, 18 (1910), pp. 1 and following.

possible to notice an evolution and considerable changes. The Germans were initially treated with admiration, mostly due to their economic successes. Also their cultural input in the development of Silesia gained much recognition[29]. Nonetheless, from the very outset this was coupled with tough insistence on Czech historical and political rights. With reference to these rights, Germans in medieval towns constituted at most the base around which the Slavonic population functioned and to whom the region actually owed its development. The growing national antagonisms found their way to the pages of 'Věstník' magazine. In the 1890s it was still discussing German historic papers on Silesia, at the outset of the new century these suddenly ceased to be noticed. The picture of social relations in Silesia was more and more streaked with conflict and the Germans were viewed as enemies. They became the hated owners of coalmines and steelworks, and high state officials. The only role that was left for the Czechs was that of their servants, and that role made them easily surrender to Germanisation[30].

Crucial modifications were also taking place inside the Polish community. Undoubtedly, up until the outbreak of war on the Czech side a belief in Slavonic brotherhood and unity prevailed, which was further consolidated by the ideas of commonly working towards the success of the region and the linguistic fluidity of regional dialects positive assessments of recent talks between the two sides[31]. The 'Věstník' magazine's attitude towards the Polish historical papers on Silesia was for a long time positive. A small degree of envy surfaced only when addressing the issue of better organising Polish national life and the more rapid cultural development of this group[32].

The first frictions came about when the Poles started to demand exclusive s to the history of the Duchy of Cieszyn (Teschen, Těšín). The reaction to this fact was, for instance, very conspicuous in the negative review of history of Silesia written by Feliks Koneczny, who described the region as indigenously Polish and Germanised by Germans and... Czechs[33].

As we have already mentioned, the Czech-Polish relations and the picture of this group started to evolve very rapidly along with the Czechs stating their opinion on the national processes taking place in the industrial region of Ostrava. 'Věstník'

[29] *Správe jednatelská*, p.10; *Z dávnovékosti Tešina,* VMO, 7 (1897), p. 26. The evidence of the narrow distance between the two groups may be the obituary of the priest Augustin Weltzl of 1897 where his contributions for the Czech historiography are emphasised. See: [Obituary of Augustin Weltzl], VMO, 7 (1897), p. 49.

[30] *O domorodém lidu ve farnosti Orlovské,* VMO, 9 (1901), p. 26-27.

[31] *Stare mesta ceske.*

[32] *Přehledy kulturní ze Slezska*, p. 21.

[33] *Zprávy o došlých nás spisech*, VMO, 7 (1897), p. 92-93.

published a statement that Ostrava had witnessed a surge of foreigners from Galicia who were slowly outnumbering the locals and due to the similarity of both languages was becoming Polonised[34].

As a matter of fact at the same time the magazine continued to publish statements on Slavonic unity and point towards the German threat to both of the groups[35], but this political rivalry even entered the pages of 'Věstník'. One could even say that both groups were becoming increasingly alienated from one other in proportion to the slump of the magazine's interest in Polish academic papers.

In the interwar period the progress of professionalisation at 'Věstník' was still ongoing and the magazine was assuming an increasingly academic character. From 1932 the subtitle 'Slezsky Sbornik' was added, which four years later was to become its title. The magazine concluded its pre-Second World War existence in 1937 with the publication of a monographic collection on the role of Petr Bezruč (properly: Vladimír Vašek). This does not change the fact that, the magazine's spheres of interest and basic categories of analysis of the region and its inhabitants were contained within a framework that was defined at the turn of the century and that a greater exception was made for one sub-region only: the Hlučín Region, which by decision of the Treaty of Versailles was incorporated into Czechoslovakia. The presentation of these territories and their (Czech) inhabitants was treated as a research priority, which was carried out in the first years following the regaining of independence[36].

Silesian regionalism

Silesian regionalism owes its intellectual genesis to the Cieszyn circle of the 'Zaranie Śląskie' magazine, whose ideas of the region's history and the true identity of its inhabitants were taken over by the ideological-political community focused around the Silesian voivode Michał Grażyński (1926-1939)[37]. Prior to this fact – symbolically and realistically this took place in 1935 when the Silesian Institute became its co-publisher and took over its financing – the quarterly had already

[34] *O domorodlim lidu,* p. 26-27.

[35] Cf. the posthumous tribute to Priest A. Gruda: Op. Tyd., *Dr. Antonín Gruda*, VMO, 11 (1903), p. 1 and the evaluation of the political situation at the outset of the second decade of the 20th century in: Vaclav Hauer, *Přehled důležitějšich událostí ve Slezsku ve minulém roce*, VMO, 19 (1911), p. 60.

[36] Cf. for instance: Antonin Glos, *Přispevek ku poznani narodnostnich pomeru na Hlučinsku,* 28, VMO, 28 (1922), pp. 50-59.

[37] For more extensive information on the genesis and intellectual atmosphere in the interwar Polish Upper Silesia see: Marian Dyba, *Kształtowanie się polskiego środowiska historycznego na Śląsku w latach 1918-1939, K*atowice 1993; Bernard Linek, *Kilka uwag o stosunku ks. Emila Szramka i Romana Lutmana do niemieckiej humanistyki*, 'Rocznik Łubowicki', 8 (2010), pp. 104-125.

completed two phases of its Cieszyn existence: the years 1907-1912 and the period between 1929 and 1934[38].

Its beginnings and initial character were in many ways similar to those of 'Věstník' which we've already looked at here. Its conception came about at the outset of the 20th century in the circle of the Cieszyn intelligentsia, the teachers of a local Polish middle school. This was another Polish national association, which emphasized the affiliation of Cieszyn Silesia to Poland and the need to defend it against foreign influences.

The name of the magazine, published with the subtitle 'literary quarterly' heralded the beginning of a new era. This emotional call, its Art Noveau design and its content was more oriented towards the artistic Young Poland movement of Cracow and even further towards Podhale. It was there that Edmund Farnik, the periodical's founder and driving force, drew his inspiration from the activity of Władysław Orkan and Stanisław Witkiewicz and their successful attempts to include the *zakopiańszczyzna* (style in art characteristic for the Polish Tatra Mountains region with a main town of Zakopane) in the national culture[39].

In 'Zaranie' Farnik wanted combine two elements. He wanted to create an opportunity for young regional writers to make their literary debut and to develop their talents, as well as to publish the 'nameless works of the Silesian people'. Though both these objectives had an ideological-political foundation, what seems to be more crucial to our deliberations is the second – 'documentary' – aspect. Let us cite from 'A Word from the Editor' what role Farnik attributed to himself with regards to the periodical: 'By publishing works written in the folk dialect, 'Zaranie' wants to show to these very same folk that their language is still alive and that there is no need to be ashamed of it, that they should nurture it and protect it from foreign influence – for this language may only bring them closer to the treasures of the Polish language, enchanted by the words of our Poets – and, too, it is no less important for the periodical to prove it a false view that the Silesian dialect was a somewhat degenerated dialect'[40].

The inclusion of Silesia in the Polish culture at large was to be attained by means of the publication of fairy tales and songs, descriptions of Silesian customs and traditional garments. As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to call this regionalism, for

[38] More information on the 'Zaranie Śląskie' magazine see: Krystyna M. Heska-Kwaśniewicz, *Zaranie Śląskie (1907-1939). Zarys monograficzny, K*atowice 1979; Ludwik Brożek, *Z dziejów „Zarania Śląskiego" (1907-1957),'* Zaranie Śląskie', 1957, issues 1-2, pp. 3-25 and an anniversary issue no. 2 of 1967 devoted entirely to its history, that contains alongside the studies of Heska and Brożek also those of Antoni Gładysz and Danuta Meyza.

[39] For more information see: K.M. Heska-Kwaśniewicz, *op. cit.,* pp. 7-25.

[40] *Słowo od Wydawcy,* 'Zaranie Śląskie' (hereafter referred to as ZŚ), 1929, issue. 1, p. 1.

it was more about raising the status of a certain 'familiarity' to that of art and national values. The folk element was to be the foundation of this relation. We do not know much about the broader horizons of the Cieszyn intelligentsia. They were undoubtedly trying to establish and uphold connections with the Poles from Prussian Silesia. 'Zaranie' published the works of Konstanty Prus, Jan Przybyła and the poems of Jan Nikodem Jaroń[41]. In terms of literary analysis, the cultural contributions of Józef Lompa, Konstanty Damroth and Norbert Bonczyk stand out[42], but these subjects as well as historical texts never settled on this version of the quarterly.

The leading element was the ethnographic legacy of Cieszyn Silesia, which dominated both in frequent naively didactic, dramatic and poetic works, as well as in ethnographic materials. All this was clearly nationally engaged and treated as Polish. What was already meaningful was the approach of E. Farnik to Czechisms and Germanisms presented in 'A Word from the Editor', where he announced that the Editorial Board did the following to the folk works: '[they] purify the language from foreign influences, while acknowledging them only exceptionally in cases when they are particularly characteristic or may not be removed without damage to the content'[43]. The attitude towards the Germans is clearly reflected for instance in a passage taken from the drama by Józef Lebiedzik entitled 'Brzaski Odrodzenia' (The Dawning of Revival), where the following passage is delivered by Paweł Stalmach:

'Ludność niemiecka to obcy przybysze,
Którzy się żywią naszych włościan pracą;
Lecz w hardej dumie i nadmiernej pysze,
Nasz lud ciemiężą i zeń się bogacę'

(Germans are alien to our land,
Those Who Feed on the Labour of Our Peasants;
Yet impertinently proud and excessively arrogant,
They grow rich by tyrannizing our people)[44].

Already this vision shows that they were treated in Silesia not in the least as positive people, partners or individuals considered worth referring to. What seems nonetheless puzzling is the similar fate of the Czechs, who were silently omitted. In the four issues of the magazine they were mentioned much less frequently than the

[41] Cf. Jan Jaroń, *Z pobojowiska*; *idem*, *Modlitwa chorążego*, ZŚ, 1912, issues 2-4, pp. 87-88.
[42] E. Grim, *O poetach górnośląskich,* ZŚ, 1910, issue 2, pp. 49-52.
[43] *Słowo od Wydawcy*, ZŚ, 1929, issue 1, p. 2.
[44] Józef Lebiedzik, 'Brzaski Odrodzenia', ZŚ, 1911, issue 1, p. 10.

Slovaks, and if it were not for the poem by Jan Neruda[45], none of the Czech authors whatsoever would be mentioned in the bibliography of the quarterly!

The profile of the magazine, as it was clearly manifested, triggered various critical reactions. Those most distanced were coming from nearby Cracow and its circle of Cieszyn students, who were members of a student society called 'Znicz'. In the context of our interest, what seems particularly important are negative opinions about 'parochial patriotism'. These were provided by individuals who were at the time already connected with the nationalist all-Polish movement, and whom evaluated the attitude of the Cieszyn professors as excessively passive and hesitant. This environment was also negatively predisposed towards the quarterly's confinement to Silesian authors and towards showing off the Silesian dialect, for this was in line with '(…) the separatist principle promoted by the Ślązakowcy: "Silesia for Silesia", for we should always remember that Silesia is to Poland as Poland is to Silesia and that even creating the appearance of this separatist rule is fatal for us'[46].

Similar problems were faced by the magazine following its re-launch in 1929 and whose title was extended by the subtitle 'regional quarterly'. Also in this version the revival initiative came from E. Farnik. Not long after another generation of the Cieszyn intelligentsia came to the forefront. The most significant members of this group were Paweł Musioł (a member of the editorial board of the publication beginning with the second issue), Alojzy Targ and Roman Dyboski, a professor at Jagiellonian University and a formal patron of the society. An intellectual imprint on the periodical's profile was also left by Gustaw Morcinek, who from 1930 was the director of its editorial council and Roman Lutman, head of the Silesian Institute.

Whereas in the first period, Silesian regionalism had an 'intuitive' character (it was K. Heska-Kwaśniewicz who came up with this epithet), at that time it acquired a theoretical dimension – more often than not – and to a large extent, abstract. The fundamental task, however, remained the same. It was formulated by Farnik, who was inspired by Kazimierz Nitsche, and it was in the form of a question: 'Why then (…) has Silesia failed to produce such literary works as in Podhale?'[47].

The breakthrough and realization of these objectives was to take place through a (re)definition of the idea of Silesian regionalism, which was most frequently

[45] Jan Neruda, *Ballada górska*, ZŚ, 1908, issue, 3, p. 113.

[46] Lud-ka, *Czytelnictwo na Śląsku*, 'Dziennik Cieszyński', 1911, issue 72. Quotation from: Danuta Meyza, *„Kwiaty z łąk naszych" czy „zaścianek literacki"? Z recepcji pierwszych roczników Zarania Śląskiego,* ZŚ, 1967, issue 2. pp. 214-214. There is also more extensive argumentation of the magazine's opponents.

[47] E. Farnik, *Szkice z Niwy polskiej Śląska,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 1., p. 6. Envious comments on the 'zakopiańszczyzna' appeared frequently in the magazine. See also for instance: L. Kobiela, *Talent pisarski i znaczenie Karola Miarki,* ZŚ, 1929, issue. 2, p. 83.

addresssed by literature in 1929, although Paweł Musioł revisited the subject again later[48]. The fundamental difference lay in the attitude towards native heritage, which was to be transformed from a conservative one to an active one; from one of preserving heritage to one of using it to transcend beyond localness and regionalism towards building new national bonds. So was the idea expressed by Musioł himself: '(…) regionalism must be something much more than an embalmed folk character, than admiration for a warped, though at the same time, original highland cottage. Regionalist ideas are in our understanding nothing more than a social movement, encompassing the variety of life; a new movement, which has originated from society's striving to develop faster and more completely. (…) If we dissect the method of this movement, it will present itself to us as: 1. The exploitation of the psychological and cultural values of a given region for the sake of new creations, which are only based on these values, and their subsequent incorporation into the vascular system of the all-Polish social life; 2. A quicker and more complete implementation of progress (…)'[49].

Let us stress that these recipes were to be the cure for the marginalization of Silesia and were to place it in the public consciousness of the national culture. Alojzy Targ wrote that it was necessary that more vital fluids flowed into 'the basin of Polish culture'[50]. At the same time there were numerous reassuring voices claiming that 'the building of culture on customs and local foundations' does not constitute an obstacle for 'the civic unification of the Polish nation'[51]. Such suspicions were nonetheless frequently formulated. This seems to be illustrated for instance by the reprimand of Alfred Jesionowski a year-later, who on the occasion of the introduction of Silesian regionalism in secondary schools warned that: 'what only needs to be seen to is that the issue of Silesian independence from Poland (as a whole) was not emphasized, but rather its being its own constituent part, of the general Polish spiritual and material culture, in the context of its being of a higher value'[52].

Already in these dilemmas concerning definitions of region and regionalism, principal problems of an 'identity' so formulated for Polish Silesians surface. Both identity and problems with it were not connected with the recent, international borders of Polish Silesia. For cited above authors Silesia was still contained according to will of superpowers within the area of the pre-war *Regierungsbezirk* of Opole

[48] The views formulated at the time were repeated by him in a virtually identical form in 1935. See: Paweł Musioł, *Zagadnienie regjonalizmu na Śląsku,* ZŚ, 1935, issue 2, pp. 87-90.
[49] Paweł Musioł, *Śląska Młodzież Akademicka wobec Śląska,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 3, p. 117.
[50] Alojzy Targ, *O jednolity typ Ślązaka,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 4, p. 190.
[51] Roman Dyboski, *Młodzież akademicka śląska a położenie międzynarodowe Polski,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 4, pp. 172-173.
[52] Alfred Jesionowski, *Regjonalizm w szkołach średnich na Śląsku,* ZŚ, 1930, issue. 4, p. 217.

and within the former Duchy of Cieszyn. The controversies were of a multi-faceted borderland character, but took place on a consciousness-related level. And it was not only about the borders drawn between what was Polish and German or Polish and Czech, but also about the removal of the double internal borders: between the pre-war states territories – stretching between Prussian Silesia and Austrian Silesia and between the regions inside the reborn Poland – stretching between Silesia and rest of the country. What is more, this operation was undertaken after it had been signalled that the measures employed in this process could be easily utilized to reinforce the existing borders or to build a barrier between the Silesian and Polish national movements. The reason for undertaking this action can be seen in the emerging claims put forward by hostile elites towards these elements of identity.

For these reasons the practices of publishing and discussing literary works authored by Poles from the German province of Upper Silesia were undertaken without much hesitation, yet the reports on the situation in the territory were rather lacking and schematic[53]. Even the writings of Musioł show his rather passive attitude towards these territories, for although when referring to Czech and German Silesia he puts the names in quotation marks, he nonetheless calls the reader to maintain a mental unity with these territories and does not formulate any broader positive programme[54].

On the opening of his campaign for the removal of internal borders Paweł Musioł simply claimed that Polish Silesia was 'a vast expanse of uncultivated fallow land' and offhandedly pointed out the lack of ideological life of Silesian university students[55]. He then stated that this negligence and historical reasons were the source of the conflict. And that Poland could only gain superiority by conquering the region and incorporating it into its territory[56].

Musioł was supported by his mentor, Roman Dyboski, who in his article: 'Młodzież akademicka śląska a położenie międzynarodowe Polski' (Silesian academic youth and the international situation of Poland) – where he quite aptly heralded the looming reconstruction of Germany's political power – while supporting regionalism and the building of a society based on a foundation of local tradition, he at the same time cautioned the readers: 'solid and real evidence is needed to prove that Silesia is in fact spiritually and culturally unified with Poland and that it

[53] Cf. for instance the review of the volume of *Wiersze śląskie* by Jakub Kania written by Erwin Niemiec, ZŚ, 1932, issue 3, pp. 191-192or a description of the German tyranny inflicted upon the Polish people by Jacek Koraszewski in the article entitled 'Kilka słów o młodzieży akademickiej Śląska Opolskiego', ZŚ, 1930, issue 1, pp. 21-22.

[54] P. Musioł, *Śląska Młodzież Akademicka,* p. 118.

[55] *Ibidem*, pp. 113-114.

[56] P. Musioł, *Słowo wstępne,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 4, p. 169.

has really returned to its homeland in the spiritual sense, and that this is not *natio Silesiaca,* whose culture is mostly German, and who has been incorporated into Poland by a somewhat political coincidence'[57].

In the deliberations on the target character and place of Silesians he partnered with Alojzy Targ, who wrote about 'the ever-growing unification' of both the region and the country and about the elimination of the significant differences between the groups, and eventually the development of 'a uniform mental character of the residents'[58]. The anonymous author of the review of the Znicz association's *Księga o Śląsku* (Book of Silesia) expressed the same thought with the following words: '(...) so that by merging Cieszyn Silesia and Upper Silesia into one it would be possible to bring forth from this stretch of land an appropriate light for the all-Polish culture'[59].

This debate was waged by means of military language, which raised the region's status to that of a borderland, as it was becoming both the bastion and frontier and whose residents were presented as a unified group and on closer examination described as a mass. Yet, what particular features of identity were attributed to Silesians?

Most importantly, what was continuously brought up was the distinctive role of their dialect, which was treated as unequivocally Polish. Farnik had already defended this approach two decades earlier and claimed that 'this dialect is capable of expressing even more complex feelings'[60]. This claim was supported by texts written in the dialect, which were published together with Silesian-Polish dictionaries[61]. Even more important was the practice to clear the texts from Germanisms and Czechisms, which were treated as 'weeds' and foreign borrowings. A similar strategy was applied to names and only those preserved in the dialect were considered 'real'[62].

The conservative vision of the world was upheld and it was stressed that the strength of Upper Silesian Poles lies in their traditional culture and cultivation of old customs[63]. What is more, over time this view was updated and enriched by new central figures, for more often than not it was pointed out that the true Silesian group were the labourers. This community was also referred to by Dr. Wiktor Ormicki of Jagiellon University ('(…) everything that was done in Silesia was in fact

[57] R. Dyboski, *op. cit*., p. 171.
[58] A. Targ, *O jednolity typ*, p. 190.
[59] M.A.J., *Księga o Śląsku,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 3., p. 162.
[60] E. Farnik, *Szkice z Niwy*, p. 6.
[61] See for instance Józef Kaleta, *Wiyrba,* ZŚ, 1930, issue 1, pp. 13-15.
[62] Paweł Musioł, *Odrodzenie narodowe Śląska,* ZŚ, 1930, issue 2, p. 63.
[63] Emanuel Imiela, *Zwyczaje weselne na Górnym Śląsku,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 1, p. 30.

done with by the hands of the Polish labourer'[64]) and Professor Roman Pollak of Poznań ('higher classes of society in Silesia had become Germanized and 'Czechized', and lower ones continue to live in line with their traditional culture which is both Piast and folk at the same time'[65]), and, most notably, Gustaw Morcinek ('(…) the entire quest of Silesians to maintain their national assets was merely based on social foundations, especially in industrial regions (…) the most nationally conscious in Silesia and the most capable of devoted fighting were the Silesian labourers'[66]).

This vision was convergent with that of the left-wing 'Naprawa', political movement headed by voivode M. Grażyński. It would be hard not to mention here that its total triumph fell in the period following 1945, when it was the People's Republic of Poland that became the dominant feature in the life of Upper Silesia and Silesians.

All this followed from a principle that the groups' national nature was exchangeable and the continuation of the Polish nation on an individual level. Stanisław Kot described this widespread view as follows: 'throughout the centuries a mass of Polish people lived there, though they were politically detached from their homeland, they continued to preserve their native speech, customs and traditions'[67]. What's important, and what explains their attitude towards 'strangers' and their input in the history of Silesia, these centuries were treated as a time of ordeals and partitions, against which the Silesians also fought[68]. And here G. Morcinek placed himself ahead of his time, by putting forward a claim that the Polish labourer was fought by German and Czech capitalists.

In this context the role of 'others/strangers' was more than marginal. Literature in German and Czech was indeed noticed, but only when it brought up Polish themes or when it was to serve as material for polemics[69].

It paradoxically follows from the contents of 'Zaranie' magazine, and from a number of references, that it was the Silesian national/separatist movement that was a much more serious enemy for the group connected with the magazine and for this reason all these reassurances emerged, as in for instance: 'We do not consider Silesia to be a somewhat 'taboo' for non-Silesians! And a strange scare tactic has

[64] Wiktor Ormicki, *Co każdy Polak o Śląsku wiedzieć powinien,* ZŚ, 1931, issue. 2, p. 76.
[65] Roman Pollak, *Przemówienie,* ZŚ, 1931, issue 3-4, p. 138.
[66] Gustaw Morcinek, *Człowiek*, ZŚ, 1931, issue 3-4, p. 173.
[67] Stanisław Kot, *Zaniedbania polskie wobec kulturalnej przeszłości Śląska*, ZŚ, 1929, issue 4, p. 216.
[68] Paweł Pampuch, *Jan Nikodem Jaroń,* ZŚ, 1929, issue 1, p. 23; W. Ormicki, *op.cit.*, p. 74.
[69] Cf: E. Wadowski, Udział Śląska w literaturze czeskiej, ZŚ, 1932, issue 2, pp. 122-128.

been going around recently that a Silesian is a 'different-Pole' or a 'super-Pole', but, anyway, someone who should be particularly privileged and revered'[70].

In spite of everything – to conclude this theme – it is worth noting one particular dimension of influence of these traditional enemies. This is, namely, the influence of historical policy and expansionist approaches to the region's heritage favoured by the Germans, which following 1935, served as a model for R. Lutman. This, in another echo of 'the policy of reciprocation', was promoted by M. Grażyński and resulted in the fact that other places emerged – alongside Cieszyn and Katowice (Kattowitz, Katovice) – where the magazine was published, namely, Bytom (Beuthen) and Orlova (Orlau, Orłowa) – both located outside the territory of Poland. Lutman justified this fact with the need to emphasise both 'Polish' Silesia in its entirety as well as the Polish rights to its heritage[71].

Gesamtschlesicher Raum

As we have already mentioned, the German narrative about Silesia that was introduced following the fall of trans-national monarchies postulated the most radical redevelopment of socio-political reality. As a matter of fact the number of existing studies on the leading cultural role of the Germans in Silesia were not in the least insufficient even much earlier. The entire historiography written in Wrocław has illustrated this fact. But the unique character of interwar approach lay in the renouncement or even negation of the role of the factor that earlier was considered as prime mover in the history of the German nation: the state, which up until 1918 was eulogized and praised to the skies. Now – in the face of being deprived of numerous territories inhabited by the German community, which continued to suffer discrimination elsewhere – it was considered to be a historical necessity to rebuild German thinking in the categories of the allegedly forgotten national community rather than historically changing states' borders[72].

Thus liberation from the statist dogma resulted in the fact that at the time it was the German nation that was considered the prime mover of history, its subject and the actual driving force of civil advancement. The final consequence of this reasoning was the claim that, where there are Germans (understood as a group) there should be Germany (in an institutional sense; as a state). Before arriving at

[70] P. Musioł, *Śląska Młodzież Akademicka,* p. 117.
[71] Roman. Lutman, *Śląsk – jeden, niepodzielny,* ZŚ, 1935, issue 3, p. 147.
[72] Markus Krzoska, *Nation und Volk als höchste Werte: die deutsche und polnische Geschichtsschreibung als Antagonisten zwischen den Weltkriegen,* [in:] *Nacjonalizm a tożsamość narodowa w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX i XX w.,* eds Bernard Linek, Kai Struve, Opole-Marburg 2000, pp. 301-302.

this conclusion, an attempt was made to answer the question as to what constitutes a national community? And in the case of Silesia the answer was the same as in the entire volkist paradigm: a common dialect, which was quickly complemented with common blood, and a continuity of settlement in a particular territory which was always connected with German cultural input[73].

Let us examine the details of this way of thinking taking as an example a group focused around the idea of an 'all-Silesian tribal space' and their periodical entitled 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch' published between 1928-1941[74].

Let us once again repeat: this was generally a return to the origins of the German national movement but at the time the core of the non-falsified 'Germanity' was exclusively considered to be the people. The firmly established function of this view seems to be illustrated also by the character of public debate in the 1919-1921 plebiscite areas. Whereas in the contemporary German press the greatest emphasis was put on the centuries-long harm and maltreatment of this region by the Prussian state, these claims were immediately followed by disquisitions on the subject of the ethnogenesis of the Upper Silesians, which in principle led to the emphasis on the leading role of the Germans and German culture in the civilising advance of the region.

When referring back to the debate conducted at the very outset of the republic on the pages of 'Der Oberschlesier' magazine, which was to play the role of supra-political and supra-national forum for discussion of the region, curiously enough, according to almost all representatives of the German circle, historical time had started along with the period of German settlement[75]. If they decided to reach further back into the past, then, having mentioned the Celts, extensive passages were devoted to the German/Silingi tribe and the discovery of their treasures, which were to be the evidence for at least their far-reaching connection with the Romans. In fact, they were succeeded by the Slavs, yet there were only a few wooden ploughs and clay vessels left after their several-centuries-long presence. Two hundred years of Piast reign brought no modifications in the layout of marshes and woodland, and the Piasts' most significant historical decision was to invite German settlers, as a consequence of which 'the German return' took place. History again moved on,

[73] See also Eduard Mühle, *Obraz historii i polityka historyczna. O historiograficznej konstrukcji „ogólnośląskiego obszaru plemiennego" i jego politycznej instrumentalizacji,* [in:] *Górny Śląsk wyobrażony*, pp. 60-62.

[74] Sound analysis of assumptions and basic fields of action of this movement was carried out by Maria Gawrecka, *Idea Velkého Slezska mezi světovými válkami,* 'Acta Historica et Museologica', 6 (2003), pp. 317-324.

[75] Cf. for instance.: B. Nehlert, *Zur oberschlesische Frage,* 'Der Oberschlesier',1919, issue no. 3 of 17 X.

and the behaviour of Slavs during the Hussite period failed to prevent the formation of a new German tribe (*Volksstamm*) – Silesians[76].

It is this thesis on the uniqueness of the Silesian tribe, that had already come into existence in the period of the Middle Ages that served as a foundation for the ideological circle of the 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch'. Silesians, who had been shaped in the Middle Ages had not altered their national character, their dialect was evidence of this, along with their social origin and blood, in spite of the territorial changes following the 1740 and 1918. It was only necessary to rebuild the consciousness of this community for it was this group that raised the hopes of reinstating German greatness or at least of stopping Slavonic expansion[77].

From the 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch' we learn more about the structure of Great Silesia and the identity of Silesians. What was particularly surprising was that we find there that the Silesian territory lay open in almost every direction. In the south and in the south-west it reached Austria and included (due to its language) the so-called Sudetenland. In the east it naturally included Polish Silesia, but the magazine also mentioned the role of Silesians in the foundation and flourish of such cities as Cracow and Sandomierz. Its southern border ran along the river Warta (Warthe), but experts claimed that the Silesian islands were mentioned also in Eastern Prussia. Even the western border of 'the Great Silesia' was blurred, for it had been emphasized that Upper Lusatia was similar to Silesia in terms of national character and history[78].

Silesia was divided into three sub-regions: Lower, Central and Upper. In the case of the latter, one of the three other units were distinguished, namely, Prussian Silesia, Sudetenschlesien (Czech Silesia and the Sudetenland of 1918, but different from the Sudetenland of the 1938 Munich Agreement) and 'Polish' Silesia, and as a matter of fact the incorrectness of the latter name was intentionally emphasized. This was one of the three new German cultural regions, which were formed in the medieval period. Besides this region (namely, Central-Eastern Germany) Richard Patscheider, initially the main ideologist of the movement, mentioned the

[76] See: W., *Gedanken zur oberschlesischen Kultur,* 'Der Oberschlesier', 1919, issue no. 8 of 21 XI, p. 6-7; dr Malisch, *Das Volk in Not,* ' Der Oberschlesier', 1919, issue no. 11 of 13 XII, p. 1. Authors of statements such as these were in agreement that as a result of peaceful infiltration the region had seen the formation of a mixed nation (*Mischvolk*), and that this was owing to the insufficient proportion of 'German blood'. Yet, they quickly added that the fundamental changes to the identity of Upper Silesians were introduced by free German peasants. If what dominated formerly was the mentality of Polish serfs, distrustful and unwilling to take the initiative, these were the former ones who had introduced courage and self-consciousness, which shaped the character of all Silesians. See also: Rudolf Urbanek, *Zur Lösung der Oberschlesische Frage,* ' Der Oberschlesier', 1919, issue no. 9 of 28 XI, p. 1-2.

[77] M. Gawrecka, *Idea,* pp. 317-318.

[78] Based on the disquisitions of Ernst Schwarz, *Schlesische Sprachgemeinschaft,* 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch für deutsche Kulturarbeit im gesamtschlesischen Raume'', 1 (1928), pp. 17-28.

North-Eastern Margraviate (that is East and West Prussia) as well as South-Eastern Germany (namely Austria). These joined the six historical German cultural regions, namely: Lower Franconia, Lower Saxony, Central Franconia, Thuringia-Saxony, Great Swabia and Bavaria[79].

These deliberations were largely devoted to the Silesian German dialect. As a matter of fact it evolved from a synthesis and exchange of various old German dialects and a small Slavonic admixture, but what was crucial was that its supra-territorial connection – thanks to Silesians – with both sides of the Sudetes and small differences within its range, were smaller than in the west, in older dialects. This was surely the argument that was raised in favour of the tribal cohesion of Silesians. This cohesion followed from their centuries-long resistance to the Slavonic surge (and this argument was only a step away from the thesis that Silesians were a unique group within the German community, which would initiate the revival of a national community)[80].

One of the basic objectives of modern academic research was considered to be the study of regions (*Landeskunde*), whose purpose was to recreate the natural condition of a given territory and actions that would contribute to the creation of a cultural region. If we apply this to Silesia, its fundamental task would be the demonstration of the German input in the development of the province[81].

The breakthrough took place when this academic community was joined by Herman Aubin – or rather when he took over its ideological basis – the most prominent representative of the Wrocław humanist community, who was 30 years old at the time, and who provided intellectual stimuli for German studies of the region working towards the end of the 'cold war'. He not only took over the folk and spatial-historical interpretation of the history of East-Central Europe with a special emphasis on the German contribution to this history. He also accepted the postulate on the absolute necessity of engaging academic elites in the actual promotional activity[82].

An important element of this structure was its attitude towards the Slavonic population and tradition that was other than German and to which it was difficult to put an end to with the arrival of German settlers. In the historical perspective various layers of the region's culture were noticed, but it was emphasized that the whole of it was actually German. If the Slavonic nation was mentioned, it was its

[79] [Rudolf] Patscheider, *Das schlesische Stammland als Kulturlandschaft,* 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch für deutsche Kulturarbeit im gesamtschlesischen Raume'', 1 (1928), pp. 75-77.

[80] E. Schwarz, *op. cit*.

[81] Konrad Olbricht, *Der Entwicklung der schlesischen Kulturlandschaft*, 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch für deutsche Kulturarbeit im gesamtschlesischen Raume', 1 (1928), pp. 80-83.

[82] M. Krzoska, *op. cit.*, p. 301, E. Mühle, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-59.

difference from Poles that was emphasised and it was considered part of the German cultural circle. On this basis the supporters of Jozef Kozdoń were included in the group of Germans, and he himself was honoured on the occasion of the Second Week of Silesian Culture (1926)[83]. The academic exegesis of this movement was most extensively presented by Walter Kuhn, who proved that what was important in the East was the group's orientation, and that the *Schlonsaken's* national orientation was German[84].

Implementation

At the same time each of the national-Silesias possessed its own borders – they were all different, but they overlapped. Their inhabitants had access to the complete range of identity offers, which were in fact similar for all the Silesias, but only genetically and structurally, for their main objective was to exclude individuals who were 'alien' in terms of nationality. Let us now take a closer look at the functioning of these sets in the discussed nation-states on three levels: that of symbolism, that of cultural institutions and that of school education.

Symbolic sphere: from Tešinsko and Opavsko (Cieszyn and Opava (Silesia) regions) to the conclusion of the independent Czech Silesia

We will analyse this first element by looking at the Czech example, but what needs to be noted at the very outset – and this may be also applied to the remaining examples – for each of the sides attempted to present its claims also on the symbolic level. It bears mentioning that, suspiciousness in this respect was so far-fetched that when in 1925 the Vatican signed a concordat with Poland, where the foundation of 'the Silesian diocese' was announced, which was most probably the Vaticans' *lapsus lingue*, the German consulate in Katowice alerted '*Unter den Linden*' on the implied revisionist meaning of this act[85]. Political pilgrimages and pressures on the Catholic hierarchy whose intention was to establish 'their own' bishopric became a permanent element of debate among the political elites of Silesias, also in the case of Austrian Silesia and later Czechoslovakian Silesia[86].

[83] [R.] Patscheider, *op. cit*., pp. 76-77; Wilhelm Mak, *Das slavische Volkslied in Oberschlesien,* 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch für deutsche Kulturarbeit im gesamtschlesischen Raume", 1 (1928), pp. 129-133.

[84] E. Mühle, *op. cit*., p. 75.

[85] Maik Schmerbauch, *Die Seelsorge für die deutschen Katholiken in der polnischen Diözese Kattowitz und das Diözesanblatt „Der Sonntagsbote" in den Jahren 1925-1939/41*, Münster 2012, p. 179.

[86] Maria Gawrecka, *Československé Slezsko mezi světovymi válkami. 1918-1938,* Opava 2004, p. 10.

The name that has been used so far to refer to the part of Silesia which was retained by the Habsburgs is Austrian Silesia. It was given this territory relatively late in history, namely at the turn of the 19th century, as earlier terminological revisionism reigned and Habsburg diplomacy claimed the right to the whole of Silesia[87]. For a considerable part of the 19th century the territory functioned in the collective consciousness as a crown country of the Habsburgs, populated by a supra-linguistic nation similar to that of the Czech state where in 1848 all eyes were turned to Frankfurt am Main not to Prague, to the German parliament not to the Slavonic congress[88]. In the course of 19th-century history Austrian Silesia gradually gained validity, although it is perhaps worth pointing out that this term in fact also carried a certain degree of nationalisation of this notion, and even the embers of nationalism, if we look at the inter-war debate when it was applied to with nostalgia by the Silesian nationalists from the Silesian People's Party, headed by J. Kożdoń.

The official name of the territory separated by the Ostravica river was slightly different, and this was: 'Krönland Ober- und Nieder-Schlesien, das Herzogtum Schlesien österreichisches Anteils', rendered in English as, the 'Crownland of Upper and Lower Silesia, Duchy of Silesia, the Austrian share'[89]. Hence, this was a relic of the social class system and in reference to quite a remote past.

Yet, towards the end of 1918, when the monarchy of Austria-Hungary was bursting at the 'national seams' none of these names was used, and numerous epithets emerged referring to various territorial aspirations of particular ethnic groups. Looking to the west, in the territory of Opava Silesia the final word was left up to the Germans, who on 30 October 1918 proclaimed the creation of the Sudetenland. This territory was to become part of German Austria. It was populated mostly by Germans whose representatives had no difficulties whatsoever with assuming control over the area and organizing the administration and even their own military forces[90].

Yet, under pressure from the Czechs and following the December consultations with Vienna its leaders submitted their power to the Czechs and following a wave of protest at the declaration of President Wilson – emigrated. From then on the territory was officially called Opava Silesia or simply Opavsko, which made it sound Czech.

Immediately before the Germans, claims to Opavsko were put forward by the Cieszyn Poles. 19 October 1918 saw the appointment of the National Council for the Duchy of Cieszyn, whose task was to coordinate Polish activity in this territory,

87 See: D. Gawrecki, *Regionale und nationale*, pp. 112-113.
88 *Ibidem*, pp. 117-118.
89 D. Gawrecki a kol., *Dejiny,* vol. 1, Opava 2003, p. 13.
90 On this event: *ibidem*, pp. 296-298.

which was restricted only to the eastern part of Austrian Silesia. Their objective was to incorporate the territory to the 'reborn' Poland[91]. Such a declaration was made on 29 October during a council meeting in Orlova. This triggered the Czech reaction and already the next day saw the establishment, in the (still) Polish Ostrava, of the *Česky Zemsky Narodni Vybor pro Slezsko* (The Czech Territorial National Committee for Silesia), which claimed the entire Austrian Silesia. As we know, at the outset of October a temporary agreement had been signed and the disputed area was divided, but both sides ignored these changes. Firstly, the Poles announced their plan to conduct elections to the Sejm in the disputed territory in January, which met with the Czechs' reaction in the form of a military campaign on the day before the election[92].

The eventually divided territory was called by many names in the interwar period. Both sides were readily using the term Cieszyn Silesia (the Czech version was Tešinsko), which was associated by the Czechs only with their own territories of the former Duchy of Cieszyn. In addition the Poles came up with their own name for the Czech part of the divided territory, namely Zaolzie, Polish *Śląsk Zaolziański*, which was a clear signal of their opposition to this decision and raised the threat of them demanding its revision, which actually happened in the shadow of the Munich Agreement of 1938 and as a result of which Zaolzie 'was returned' to Poland[93].

Prior to this fact, both parts of Czech Silesia had become reunited with the Hlučín Region (this district was formally subject to Prague), which up until that moment had been part of the county (*Landkreis*) of Racibórz (Ratibor, Ratiboř). It was incorporated into Czechoslovakia following its separation from Prussian Silesia, and this decision took place at the Versailles Treaty. The Czechoslovak Silesia – it would be suitable to call it this due to the country's Unitarian character, though the name Czech Silesia was still used – maintained the character of a separate land, a second-level administrative unit with its capital city in Opava, although this did not put an end to the former problems and conflicts[94].

These were felt for the first time in June 1924 when President Tomas G. Masaryk visited Opava and was deeply affronted by its German authorities. It was on their behalf that County Head (*Landrat*) Ernst Franz welcomed him to 'the principal German city', which was emphasized by banners displayed on the city town hall, among which there were no Czechoslovakian ones. The Czech politicians considered this to

[91] Artificially about this issue: *ibidem*, pp. 298-303.
[92] More on the Czech-Polish conflict see in articles by Tomasz Kruszewski and Grzegorz Strauchold in this volume.
[93] An extensive historical-identity analysis of particular names is performed by: R. Luft, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-35.
[94] Dan Gawrecki a kol., *Dejiny,* vol. 1, Opava 2003, pp. 306-309.

be a sign of disloyalty, as a result of which the power of first instance was transferred to the county of Opava[95].

This was only a prelude to the administrative reform undertaken in 1927, whose effect was the joining of the land of Silesia with that of Moravia and the introduction of the Moravian-Silesian land with the capital city in Brno (Brünn). This act met with widespread protests from all of the local population independent of their nationality. In the arguments presented by the authorities historically-economic points dominated. When it comes to the first aspect, what was mostly emphasized was a return to the situation which mirrored that of the Middle Ages, that of the 18th century and that of the mid-19th century. To support this thesis even the example of Moravians of Hlučín was brought up. In the economic arguments the difficulties connected with the functioning of such a small unit of self-government was emphasized as well as the expected savings[96]. Also political arguments were produced, and it was brought up that the land of Silesia was to have already been divided in 1920. At the time it was only the press that highlighted the fact that the Czechs were a minority in this territory, and the intended – alongside the new administrative divisions – introduction of self-government on the second level of administration would lead to the dominance of Germans contesting the alliance of the Czech government with the Poles.

The argumentation of objectors of the reform was presented by J. Kożdoń in the brochure entitled: 'Das Recht unserer schlesischen Heimat auf die verwaltungsmässige Selbständigkeit'[97]. He was also the one to bring up historical, economic and political arguments which favoured the on-going existence of the independent land of Silesia. In his extensive disquisition he repeated that Silesian princes joined the Crown of Bohemia on a voluntary basis, and that the province had always maintained its independence. He recalled the frequent and long-term Silesian protests of the 18th and 19th centuries against the merge with Moravia. He intended to prove that despite its small size the region was well-governed and free from economic crises.

He devoted much of his attention to political issues. Arguments were concocted for internal use that the citizens of Silesia would be forced from then on to settle all their matters in remote Brno. And that in Brno decisions would also be made regarding their life, on which they would have no influence whatsoever, for they would constitute a minority in this administrative entity. He also mentioned his

95 M. Gawrecka, *Československé Slezsko*, pp. 94-95.
96 *Ibidem*, pp. 95-99.
97 Jozef Kożdoń, *Das Recht unserer schlesischen Heimat auf die verwaltungsmässige Selbständigkeit*, Troppau 1927.

talks with the Czech political elite which took place between the end of 1919 and the beginning of 1920 in Prague, during which all the elite's representatives allegedly promised him that the region would be independent.

This well-thought-out argument brought little result and on 1 December 1928 both lands were joined, in reaction to which almost all Czech periodicals published black, obituary-like frames on their front pages. However, the protests quickly fell silent and – as it would seem – unlike Kożdoń, the remaining formations were motivated by objectives other than the defence of Silesian identity. For the Opava Germans this was a favourable opportunity for launching an attack on German activist factions – co-creators of the government – with the objective of trading the Sudetenland for posts. Also the Poles treated the protests as an occasion to consolidate their own circle. Opava was to them as equally remote as Brno, and what was most important were 'the Polish affairs' and looking toward what was looming from beyond the Olše river[98]. These desires came to fruition in the autumn of 1938.

Cultural institutions – the Upper Silesian State Museum in Bytom

The beginnings of the Bytom Museum are similar to the history of other such facilities in Upper Silesia. It was founded thanks to the efforts of a circle of local enthusiasts of the city and the region who, having in 1910 previously established an association named, Beuthener Geschichts- und Museumsverein (The Historical and Museum Society of Bytom), that very same year also opened the Bytom museum. It became the fourth museum in the region, next to the ones in Nysa (1897), Opole (1900) and the Upper Silesian Museum in nearby Gliwice (Gleiwitz, Hlivice) (1905)[99].

The organizers had two objectives in mind. To raise the interest of the locals in the city's history through publishing works on local history and collecting relics and documents related to this history. Just as the remaining *Heimatmuseums,* in the initial period of its activity the Bytom Museum faced various housing and financial problems, and the content of its collections was largely random and dependent on donors' generosity. The museum also housed precious municipal and guild documents as well as family heirlooms from Bytom and the neighbouring area. There were even collections brought from very remote countries, such as Japan[100].

[98] M. Gawrecka, *Československé Slezsko,* pp. 98-99.

[99] For more information on the beginnings of Upper Silesian museums see articles in the magazine 'Rocznik Muzeum Górnośląskiego w Bytomiu', 1963, issue. 1, where Gliwice and Zabrze are described but with the exception of Bytom.

[100] On the beginnings see also: [K.] Bimler, *Die Entwicklung des Beuthener Museums,* 'Mitteilungen des Beuthener Geschichts- u. Museumsvereins', 1913, issue 3, pp. 35-46. The history of the Museum is

The foundation of the Weimar Republic changed little in this respect and it continued to be part of the sphere dominated by amateurs who were willing to dedicate warm summer afternoons to making their collections available to viewers. Already in the 1920s this practice received much criticism from professionals who emphasized that the Upper Silesian Museums were lacking a central, leading theme and did not answer the question as to who was their target audience. It was also emphasised that they were not specialised enough. Hubert Kotzias, having presented these charges, answered them and pointed out that the Upper Silesian museums should assume the role of the non-existing universities and educate the entire society as well as to present the province as a homeland. When it comes to Bytom, he wanted the town to specialize in mining, that is, to present the German cultural contributions in this field[101].

A decisive impulse to perform a makeover of the museum's profile actually came from Katowice and was connected with the activity of Tadeusz Dobrowolski who, on the order of M. Grażyński from 1927 set about organizing the Silesian Museum, which was to present the entire history of the region from an exclusively Polish perspective. In this case it was first the municipal authorities and then its provincial counterparts that, having reconsidered the idea, decided to finance both the construction of the new headquarters and the activity of the new *Oberschlesisches Landesmuseum* (Upper Silesian State Museum)[102].

The purpose of the reorganisation was unequivocally political and in line with the German idea of Upper Silesia. The region was to be presented as exclusively German, and the museum – by means of academic methodology and its exhibitions – was to counter Polish claims on the primacy of pre-Slavs and the pro-Polish character of Silesia. At the same time much emphasis was placed on the archaeological collection the museum had already boasted of much earlier, and to whose extension there were many opportunities at the time. An equally important element was the collection on the town's beginnings. The 1930s was also the time when its ethnographic collection was extended. It was only in 1935 that the Upper Silesian labourers were chosen to be the theme of one of the museum's exhibitions, but this theme was later modified and the exhibition eventually focused on a display of the miners' social class and its input into the civil development of the entire region.

most comprehensively presented in: *Muzeum Górnośląskie w Bytomiu*, eds Mieczysław Dobkowski, Jan Drabina, Bytom 2011, where this period is described by J. Drabina, *Muzeum w Bytomiu 1910-1932,* pp. 11-30.

[101] [Hubert] Kotzias, *Zur Ausgestaltung des Beuthener Museums,* 'Mitteilungen des Beuthener Geschichts- u. Museumsvereins', 1929, issues 11-12, pp. 191-197.

[102] See Przemysław Nadolski, *Górnośląskie Muzeum Krajowe w Bytomiu. 1932-1945,* [in:] *Muzeum Górnośląskie w Bytomiu,* pp. 31-44.

An important piece of information on the museum's mission was the motto located near its entrance: 'Help us to study, help us to teach, to nurture all that is ours, to defend ourselves from all that is alien, to venerate our town and our region'[103]. Together with the change of political system in 1933, changes were also introduced to the character of the institution's activity, which made itself accessible to visitors as much as possible. This was attained by such practices as the distribution of free tickets to the poor, inviting organized groups of schoolchildren and adult visitors, also outside of opening hours, as well as providing an opportunity for children and youth to spend time in the museum without the adult supervision. As a result, the museum was visited by 80-90,000 people every year.

Whereas the main activity of the museum was more of a cultural character and only to some degree presented the region as a German bastion in the East, in the 1930s exhibitions were frequently engaged in the sphere of pure politics and propaganda and they referred to the injustice inflicted upon the Germans during the plebiscite and the unhealed wound of the divided region. Most meaningful was the exhibition from 1939 entitled 'Think about it'. Next to the plebiscite posters it also presented a bust of Bismarck from his destroyed tower in Katowice and Reden's head sculpture from his recently destroyed monument in Chorzów (Königshütte, Chořov).

Regionalism in the education programmes of schools of the Silesian Voivodeship

In June and July of 1922, during the final division of the plebiscite area, the elites of Upper Silesia were very enthusiastic and convinced that a change would result in the merger of various regional groups and the constitution of a united Polish nation communicating by means of literary Polish. This change was promised by the immigrant representatives of the intelligentsia, mostly teachers, but also Catholic priests, who in fact were the only native group with similar linguistic skills, but were more for it than against it. They owed their skills to the excellent Slavonic language department of Wrocław University and the Wrocław Curia's emphasis on their bilingual education.

The divergences between these elites were already at the time manifesting themselves at the suggested pace for the spread of the nationwide language. The priests suggested its gradual emergence and at least a few dozen years of the Upper Silesian dialect functioning as a legitimate variation of Polish. Only in 1919, did Priest Jan Kapica write: 'The only thing the *wasserpolnish* language lacks is a school.

[103] *Ibidem*, p. 35.

Provide the Upper Silesians with a good Polish school, and ten years from now they will speak Polish as well as the Poles from Congress Poland (former Russian Kingdom of Poland – P.W.)'[104]. This granting of equal rights to various linguistic varieties is illustrated in the pages of for example 'Gość Niedzielny' magazine, which frequently published tales, dialogues and even articles written in the dialect[105].

The attitude of immigrant teachers was quite different. What we notice besides the doctrinal reasons is the reflection of the customs and etiquette of the gentry and the consequent aversion to the folk-related features of this language as well as to this environment. The immigrant teachers initially treated the Silesian dialect with contempt, and they considered its characteristics to be the result of centuries-long bondage[106]. For this reason, they insisted that only literary Polish language be used in schools. In the annually published (up until 1928) by the Wydział Oświecenia Publicznego (Division for the Public Enlightenment of Silesia) at the Silesian Voivodeship Office (Urząd Województwa Śląskiego)[107] 'the programme of education' this view was described as follows 'children need to have explained to them that at school they will be taught the language that will serve them to communicate with all their compatriots and in which Polish literature is written, and that mastering this language is the obligation of every Pole, and at the same time a vital necessity'[108]. The result of such an approach towards the Silesian dialect was the clearing of regional history textbooks. In the most popular school textbook by Jan Żebrok

[104] This statement appeared in the famous address of Priest Kapica published by 'Der Oberschlesier' magazine during the pre-plebiscite debate of the region's future and constituted the argument supporting the incorporation of the region into Poland. It was also evidence for the priest's unexpected turn towards nationalism. See: [Johann] Kapitza, *Was wollen denn eigentlich die Polen?,* 'Der Oberschlesier', 1919, issue 6 of 7 XI, p. 1-2.

[105] Of symbolic character was the publication by the magazine of a work entitled 'Stary Kościół Miechowicki' in the years 1923-1924 by Priest Norbert Bonczyk, which was widely considered to be the most important poetic work for the Polish-speaking Upper Silesians. Cf. also: *Gawęda Stacha Kropiciela,* 'Gość Niedzielny', 1924, issue 7 of 17 II, p. 8, where the following statement is contained: 'Nie byda sie tam wysiloł pisać jak to padają językiem literackim – jakby kto językiem pisać umioł – jo już nie, bo pisza piórem, ale też nie byda naszego górnośląskiego języka naciągoł i koślawił, jeno byda pisoł jak gawędzą, bo za to ręczy dawne pochodzenie moje z dziada i pradziada jako gawędziarz (…)' (I will not try to write as they do with a literary tongue – as if anyone could write with a tongue – I will not, for I write with a pen, but I will not strain and distort our Upper Silesian language, I will only put down what people are saying, for this is justified by my origin: a storyteller just like my grandfather and great grandfather).

[106] Cf. Eugeniusz Kopeć, *Z zagadnień integracji językowej śląskich kresów Rzeczpospolitej (1918-1939)*, [in:] *Z problemów integracji II Rzeczpospolitej,* ed. Józef Chlebowczyk, Katowice 1980, p. 20.

[107] In the autonomous Silesian voivodeship this was a counterpart of the all-Polish board of education. On behalf of the Sejm of Silesia it was directed by the governor of Silesia. See: Maria W. Wanatowicz, *Województwo śląskie na tle Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, [in:] *Województwo śląskie (1922-1939). Zarys monograficzny,* ed. Franciszek Serafin, Katowice 1996, p. 24.

[108] Based on: Anna Glimos-Nadgórska, *Regionalizm czynnikiem integrującym czy dezintegrującym w pracy szkoły powszechnej województwa śląskiego*, [in:] *Regionalizm a separatyzm – historia i współczesność. Śląsk na tle innych obszarów*, ed. Maria W. Wanatowicz, Katowice 1995, p. 81.

– who was otherwise an active member of the Polish Teachers' Union – entitled 'Nasze czytanki' (Our reader) and written in literary Polish, there were hardly any mention of 'the wakers of the nation' from the Polish national movement in Upper Silesia[109].

The only thing that was awoken by this question in Polish cultural elites was some tension (at most)[110]. The 'Gość Niedzielny' magazine indeed criticised Żebrok's textbook, but mostly for the omission of religious issues and not for promoting literary Polish. Yet, from the very outset it met with the negative reactions of the Upper Silesians themselves, and especially their older representatives, whose standards of life were often no worse than those of the teachers. They considered literary language to be 'lordly' language and criticised such behaviours displayed by the teachers – even when it came to their way of dressing. The first one to engage in this conflict was Jan Kustos, the leader of the independent Silesian movement in Polish Silesia, who was accused by his opponents of separatism and who referred to the teachers from Galicia as 'Kulturträgers from the land of illiterates'[111]. Children from Silesian families scolded at home for using literaty Polish picked it up at home and when reprimended for using Silesian dialect by the teachers would, by way of answer, tell them that they were going to tell their 'fater'[112].

The significance of these relations started to grow along with the growing politicisation of the regional heritage status following the May revolt of 1926. First the Christian Democracy of Wojciech Korfanty, which up until then was the principal force behind the integration of various sections of society – but, let us add, on the basis of Upper Silesian values and 'in the presence of the prime minister from Katowice' – took a turn and passed on to a one-sided valorisation of the regional heritage. In a reaction to this, voivode Grażyński did an even more significant about-turn and making use of the Cieszyn intelligentsia, he started to promote Silesian regionalism but with a positive attitude towards the fabricated dialect and regional culture makers.

In 1935 this programme of cultural engineering was explained to the teachers by Grażyński: 'The obligation of teachers is to raise a citizen who would think in the categories of the entire country, to raise an individual of a new kind, connected

[109] *Ibidem*.

[110] Żebrok's book was as a matter of fact written on commission by the Voivodeship authorities, which – as it would seem – were initially in favour of a quick integration, or at least could not imagine the consequences of publishing such work. Anna Glimos-Nadgórska, *Szkolnictwo i oświata pozaszkolna*, in:] *Województwo śląskie (1922-1939)*, pp. 497-498.

[111] Maria W. Wanatowicz, *Inteligencja na Śląsku w okresie międzywojennym, K*atowice 1986, p. 89.

[112] Anna Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo powszechne województwa śląskiego, K*atowice 2000, p. 159.

with regional values, which need to be translated into all-Polish values'[113], this was a clear borrowing from the former publicist publications in 'Zaranie' magazine. In a school context this expression was also justified by Józef Witczak, who was a member of the Silesian parliament on behalf of the Silesian Sanation and a member of the Association of Silesian Insurgents: '(…) we are declared supporters of the preservation of regional values but a uniform system of education is the most crucial foundation of the collective spiritual unity of the nation[114].

This was ideologically supported by G. Morcinek who claimed that 'the dialect is a variety of Polish language which lies at the foundation of literary language', which found its expression in his works, enthusiastically promoted by the voivodeship authorities. In education programmes this thesis was illustrated in the recommendations of 1931 to 'accustom children gradually and very slowly to replacing the dialect'[115].

Therefore, this was nothing else than the acceptance of views that were initially promoted by the Upper Silesian priests. And moreover, what should be in fact the least surprising is that these recommendations were boycotted by immigrant teachers who, in fact, having no appropriate textbooks whatsoever at their disposal were actually unable to fulfil the orders of the educational authorities.

Conclusion

Modern nations were developing in Central Europe mostly on the foundations of nationality. In politics, this was the decisive element of identity, around which, from the 19th century onwards at the very latest, there other elements started to focus. This also led to a questioning of the cultural values and the former direction in which they were transferred, (re)building of other connections and an emergence of new areas of conflict.

As a result of these phenomena at the turn of the 20th century Prussian and Austrian Silesia were practically already 'promoted' to the status of national 'borderlands', where former religious conflicts (between Protestantism and Catholicism) and related national conflicts (between the Habsburg and Borussian tradition and loyalty) frequently had fierce battles between competitive national subjects, who promoted identities which increasingly eliminated 'those others'. What is more, the nationalising supra-national monarchies met with resistance and the

[113] *XIII zjazd delegatów Związku Nauczycielstwa Polskiego, okręg śląski,* 'Ogniskowiec', 1935, no. 5.
[114] After: Mieczysław Grzyb, *Walka Związku Nauczycielstwa Polskiego w województwie śląskim o jednolity ustrój szkolnictwa w latach 1922-1939,* 'Zaranie Śląskie', 36 (1974), issue 1, p. 17.
[115] A. Glimos-Nadgórska, *Regionalizm czynnikiem integrującym,* p. 86.

counteractions of Slavonic national movements, whose primary objective was to gain/regain their own countries.

Before the aforementioned 'offers' were finally formulated multiple socio-political revolutions occurred, two out of which were particularly crucial for the interwar identities. Most importantly Germany, with the exception of German Silesia, had lost the status of state-nation and their offer could no longer make use of the aid provided by this institution. In spite of this fact they aspired to retain the dominate group position in other territories as well and their vast majority gave an enthusiastic welcome to the carrying out of their postulates by the Third Reich.

Secondly, the strictly regional Silesian movements, which had earlier frequently emphasised their independence from German culture and gravitated towards Slavonic national movements, were fully confronted with the offer and identity of the new nation-states, which did not always happen smoothly, for they also aspired to carry out their own plans on the overlapping political and cultural entities. However, as the canon of their cultural system was formed outside Silesia, various varieties of regionalism were frequently interpreted as separatism and eradication.

A new factor which dynamised the situation and eventually led to a 'hot' phase in the conflict, was the competition between nation-states. It resulted in the fact that identities went through another phase of politicisation between 1918 and 1939, which means that the organs of individual nation-states were actively interested in their shape or structure and made efforts in this direction, trying to impose on Silesians those sets of identities that were considered to be 'real'. Let us add here that this was done in an atmosphere where militant attitudes were still very much alive in the minds of the representatives of elites, and that these attitudes were responsible for the fact that the character of the countries and groups' mutual relations resembled that of a cold war between nations, and the delineation of borders, beyond which there were only ruthless enemies, was among the priority issues.

This less conspicuous factor, namely, the permanent and persistent presence of a military past had a decisive impact on the character and scale of conflicts related to the identity of the inhabitants of Silesia in the interwar period. What is more, military heritage needs to be understood not only as the memory of the war trauma that was experienced but also hatred for the conflicts which took place immediately after the Great War: Polish-German and Polish-Czech military confilcts, which were very much alive, all the more so that the Polish-Czech conflict, with its armed episode from the outset of 1919 was concluded a year later, and that Polish-German, with three bloody uprisings, was continued up until the summer of 1922. They were as a matter of fact still present – if it was only in the shape of combatant

organisations, which for these very reasons demanded special treatment, which exceeded far beyond the democratic system. These were also the organizations which made the greatest efforts to transform their offers of identity – which was voluntary up until 1914 – into an obligatory one for all the inhabitants of respective Silesias.

In spite of the fragmentation of Silesia into national Silesias and in spite of the mutual antagonisms, attempts were continued to describe the region as a whole, although its constituent territories were largely different from one another, and what is worse, various nations claimed rights to single territories. Paradoxically, also the largely similar cultural background was exploited for these purposes, which yielded results in the shape of the progressing disintegration of the province and an ever-growing gap between individual Silesias. Also in the field of internal affairs we may distinguish similar actions undertaken for the sake of the entire country's unification and awarding its population with a uniform, national cultural code.

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Silesia in the years 1918-1945. Short conclusions

Abstract:

Summarizing conclusions from previous chapters, the author stresses the dynamic character of relations between nation-states and the region of Silesia. During the period under consideration, Silesia as it was built during the Middle Ages and early modern period disappeared. Traditional regional bonds weakened. The governments of all three states (Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland) focused on the incorporation of Silesians into their respective nations. As each pursued a different strategy, three – or even four – separate regions slowly started to emerge. Yet they never matured. The outbreak of the Second World War and the geopolitical upheaval after its conclusion demolished these new social structures. The future of the region after 1945 was unpredictable.

keywords:

Silesia, interwar period, nation-states, regiogenesis

The years 1918-1945 are unique for the fact that they mark a very brief period in history when the inhabitants of Silesia witnessed considerable changes in virtually every aspect of their lives. The Silesian Wars of the 18th century divided Silesia into two parts – a large Prussian area and a much smaller Austrian one. The entire province was downgraded to the status of a borderland between the two countries, both of which had aspirations to become superpowers. What is more, Prussia began to regard the conquered, formerly Austrian territories (and especially their eastern, Upper Silesian part) as culturally backward and in need of modernization. In the eyes of Prussian authorities, the multi-ethnic character of the Silesian people constituted an obstacle to this objective. One of the main objectives of the Polish national movement of the 19th century was to raise the status of Polish to that of a language of communication in the spheres of both culture and provincial administration, was considered by the German authorities to be an obstruction to the process of developing the province. Since this national movement treated Upper Silesia as a part of the territory of Poland, it was considered a threat to Prussia. The Prussian elites reacted to the emergence of the movement with fear – they were convinced of the necessity of Germanizing all of Silesia. The Polish national movement in Prussian Silesia, like its Czech counterpart in Austrian Silesia, often emphasized the achievements of non-German inhabitants of the region, their exemplary morality and religiosity and their

respect for the traditions of their ancestors. These were said to contrast with the immoral behaviour of German-speaking immigrants from outside of the region. The Germans were treated as enemies exploiting the Slavonic majority.

National political movements in the period of our interest led to the fragmentation of the region. As a result of the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles and the Silesian plebiscite and uprisings, the formerly uniform Prussian province of Silesia was divided into not only the Polish part including part of former Austrian Silesia (Silesian Voivodeship), but also two German provinces (*Provinz Niederschlesien* and *Provinz Oberschlesien*), not to mention the small areas incorporated into Czechoslovakia (*Hlučinsko*). Upper Silesia had clearly already begun to differentiate itself from Lower Silesia in terms of its ethnic composition (a Slavonic majority speaking the Polish dialect). Now the introduction of new administrative units with different levels of autonomy – somewhat greater on the Polish side, but lower on the German side – accelerated the development of a separate, Upper Silesian identity. All this was accompanied by German, Polish and Czech (in Cieszyn Silesia) nationalist movements that aimed at the complete integration of acquired territories into the nation-state. We may add that the authorities of the Wrocław Bishopric (dominated by the Germans) supported the idea of a uniform, German Silesia, in spite of the fact that the clergy's views on the subject were divided. Although the majority of clergy shared the views of their superior, Adolf Bertram, there were also those who were ready to support the introduction of separate *Land* of Upper Silesia within the German Reich. There were also those who envisaged the division of Upper Silesia and the return of part of it to Poland. The decision of the superpowers to divide Silesia also led to the ecclesiastical separation of its Polish part (an apostolic administration, later the diocese of Katowice/Kattowitz).

As a result of the struggle with nationalist circles, separatist programmes (the idea of *Freistaat Oberschlesien* – Free State Upper Silesia) arose both in Upper Silesia and in Cieszyn Silesia (newly incorporated into Czechoslovakia), whose foundations lay in a regional identity that was particularly strong in the borderland areas. Separatist tendencies failed to prevail in contemporary international conditions, but one should also note the simultaneous consolidation of local or regional identity, an identity strongly opposed by the authorities of each of the three countries. Yet the German side gradually started to notice that regional identity and local culture may constitute an important factor strengthening the attachment of local people to the country. This observation was not made on the Polish side; what continued to be emphasized there was the way Silesians viewed their everyday lives in nationalist terms. For the cultural activists of the Silesian Voivodeship,

the Germans were treated as enemies and exploiters, and the representatives of Upper Silesian/Polish people were treated as *fellow countrymen.*

In turn, representatives of the German Silesian intelligentsia attempted to highlight in their publications the culture-building role of German *etnicum*, which – in their opinion – over the centuries would eventually lead to the development of a German-Silesian national community which could not be divided by national frontiers. One might wonder whether the reaction to the ever-greater fragmentation of Silesia became indeed the idea of Great Silesia (German: *gesamtschlesisches Raum*), so promoted by the editors of the 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch' magazine. The borders of Silesia were to stretch from the river Warta in the north almost to the borders of Austria. Naturally, one needs to be aware of the fact that the idea had in fact little in common with the sense of identity of the average Silesian.

What constitutes an interesting issue is the examination of the role of individual social groups and their meaning for the development of regional or national identity. The Silesian aristocracy, just as in previous years, attempted to highlight its connection with the *Heimat,* but this group was mostly in favour of Silesia being part of the German Reich. Business owners in German Silesia clearly began to adjust to the new administrative divisions by joining the Commercial-Industrial Chambers of individual provinces and by criticizing Berlin's economic policy towards the region. Still, many companies were conducting business – just as formerly – in both new Prussian provinces. What was most important for ordinary workers, however, was the standard of living in and a feeling of attachment towards local communities.

New political divisions and the emergence of new nation-states in Eastern Europe constituted a major setback for the economic life of the German part of Silesia by depriving it of its markets; the effect was even more pronounced given that the industry that developed there in the 19th century was technologically backward. Numerous industrial facilities (not to mention related technical and communication infrastructure) in Upper Silesia were separated by the Polish-German border. Having lost its target market, the coal mining industry of Upper Silesia was forced to compete with its Lower Silesian counterpart. A solution was sought in the consolidation of individual companies, initially only in Silesia, but quickly on a larger, state*)* scale. This facilitated the rationalization of production and its modernization. Simultaneously, however, in the latter case, the bonds between industrial facilities and the entire region were growing weaker. Nevetheless, regional cooperation in the other areas of economic life turned out to be still important. This was, for example, illustrated by the emergence of supra-local initiatives aiming at

providing Silesia with water, gas and electricity. Particularly interesting was the extension of pipelines transporting gas from Wałbrzych to many cities of Lower Silesia, including Goerlitz/Zgorzelec, Jelenia Góra, Legnica and Wrocław. Analogous tendencies are also observable in the Polish part of Silesia. Largely similar actions were undertaken in the sphere of the power industry, including the introduction of district power plants to supply electricity to a number of cities and villages, thereby extending the number of users. Investments in new railway lines and shipping canals (including the Adolf-Hitler Kanal) also constituted factors that clearly integrated the region. In general, efforts were centred mostly on achieving economic self-sufficiency within the new political borders, or even within the borders of individual provinces.

The behaviour of representatives of the intelligentsia who migrated to Silesian Voivodeship from other Polish territories consolidated the sense of identity of local Upper Silesians. Since Silesians were banned from having any actual influence on the governance of the voivodeship under the pretext of lack of qualifications, they had a sense of being sidelined. This did not favour the development of their Polish patriotism, in spite of the Polonization activity undertaken during the stewardship of voivode Michał Grażyński, which was treated as foreign interference in Silesian affairs. Undoubtedly, such phenomena hindered the development of all-Silesian consciousness. For the deeply settled rural or working class and peasant communities, their closest local circles were of primary importance.

The government of the Weimar Republic noticed that supporting Silesian regionalism may be beneficial to Germany. This gave rise to the emergence of periodicals written in regional dialect and the foundation of local museums. It was the spirit of these inhabitants of the land of Silesia who felt mostly connected to their *Heimat* that was the object of the battle between national activists, since a considerable proportion of them had no clearly defined national identity whatsoever.

Not only political but also economic conditions had disastrous consequences for traditional shape of identities of Silesians. Due to the worsening of economic conditions following the First World War and especially following the great crisis of 1929–1932, a large number of workers, peasants and even members of lower middle class, unable to support themselves in German Silesia, were forced to migrate to the west. They gradually lost contact with their native region, despite an ongoing sentimental attachment to it. Sooner or later they were more attached to their new local communities but above all – to the Germany seen as common country for all Germans.A separate issue is the role of the Jews. Actually, most of the representatives of this group who were members of upper classes of society of Silesia clearly

felt connected to both German culture and to the land of Silesia. Nonetheless, owing to numerous extra-Silesian connections it was much easier for them to express, when there was a need to do so, their loyalty to the nation (German) over the region.

Hitler's ascent to power brought a clear consolidation of unitarist tendencies, which were evident for instance in the reunification (1938) of Lower and Upper Silesian provinces into one organism of *Provinz Schlesien.* At the time the action of replacing geographical names which evoked the Slavonic or Polish past of Silesia with typically German ones was undertaken on a large scale. There was also pressure to change Polish-sounding surnames and first names. We may easily imagine the consequences this policy had on the consciousness of local inhabitants, whose names often stretched back many centuries.

Following the conquest of both Czech and Polish territories at the outset of the Second World War, the government of the Third Reich decided in 1940 to form a new, large industrial region. Historical Upper Silesia was extended by the territory of the Czech Ostrava-Karvina and Polish Dąbrowa regions, as well as by the neighbouring industrialized areas of the Voivodeship of Kraków, all united under the name of *Provinz Oberschlesien* with its capital in Katowice. At the same time, numerous Silesian companies, especially from the heavy and chemical industry sectors, were incorporated into German concerns, thereby being deprived of their former regional character. At the same time the policy of the German People's List (*Volkslist*) entered by Nazi government was to lead to the complete Germanization of the Upper Silesian population. An identical purpose was pursued by involving young Upper Silesians in various Nazi organizations, and the eradication of both the Polish language and the Silesian dialect from everyday life. The results of these actions are difficult to evaluate. What is certain is that in connection with military service in the German army (*Wehrmacht*), they led to the growing identification of the inhabitants with the German Reich. However, the continued use of the Upper Silesian dialect in spite of the authorities was a sign of resistance. The same could be applied to numerous desertions of Upper Silesians from the *Wehrmacht*. Generally, we could say that the (Lower) Silesian identity – and, on some scale, an Upper Silesian one – survived through the period of intensive wartime Germanization, despite all the adverse circumstances.

What needs to be said when evaluating the entire period under consideration is that the political division of Silesia into smaller units was a clearly disintegrating factor for a region that had been formed between the 18th and 19th centuries on basis of the medieval and modern history of the Odra region. This resulted primarily from the ambition of the governments of all the interested countries to build centralized,

unitarist nation-states. Yet, on the other hand, the Czech, German and Polish policy towards the land of Silesia favoured the development of sub-regional integration on the scale of new, smaller units and often also local integration. As a result, new regional identities emerged from the ruins of the old, all-Silesian identity. Throughout this short period they did not evolve into any definitive shape, but only roughly overlapped with the historical division into Lower, Upper and Cieszyn Silesia. It was much less important than the division into its Czech, German and Polish part. Only these parts could give rise to three separate regions. However, there was not enough time to complete this process.

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Abbreviations

APWr. – Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu
AUWr. – 'Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis'
Dz.U. – 'Dziennik Ustaw' (Journal of Law)
PGS – 'Preussische Gesetzsammlung'
RGBl – 'Reichsgesetzblatt'
SHP – 'Studia Historycznoprawne'
SnFiZH – 'Studia nad Faszyzmem i Zbrodniami Hitlerowskimi'
VMO – 'Věstník Matice Opavske'
ZŚ – 'Zaranie Śląskie'

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Polish-German-Czech concordance of topographic names

Polish name	German Name	Czech Name
Będzin	Bendzin	-
Biała (in Silesia)	Biala	Bělá
Bielawa	Langenbielau	-
Bielsko	Bielitz	Bílsko
Bluszczów	Bluschau	-
Bogumin	Oderberg	Bohumin
Bolesławiec	Bunzlau	Boleslav, Slezská Boleslav, Boleslavec
Brochów	Bockau	-
Brzeg	Brieg	Břeh
Brzezie	Hohenbirken	-
Brzeziny Śląskie	Birkenhain	-
Bytom	Beuthen	Bytom
Chałupki	Annaberg	Annaberk
Chorzów	Königshütte	Chořov
Chybie	Chybi	-
Cieplice (dziś Cieplice Zdrój)	Bad Warmbrunn	-
Cieszyn	Teschen	Těšín
Czerwieńsk	Rothenburg	-
Dąbrowa Górnicza	Dombrowa	-
Drezdenko	Driesen	-
Duszniki Zdrój	Bad Reinerz	Dušníky
Dzierżoniów	Reichenbach	-
Gliwice	Gleiwitz	Hlivice, Glivice
Głogów	Glogau	Hlohov
Głogówek	Oberglogau	Horní Hlohov
Głubczyce	Leobschütz	Hlubčice
Góra	Guhrau	-
Hajduki Wielkie	Bismarckhütte	-
Hulczyn	Hultschin	Hlučín
Jaworzyna Śląska	Königszelt	-
Jelenia Góra	Hirschberg	Jeleni Hora, Hiršberk
Kamieniec Ząbkowicki	Kamenz	Kamenec
Karchowice	Karchowitz/Gutenquell	-
Karwina	Karvin	Karviná
Katowice	Kattowitz	Katovice

Kędzierzyn	Kandrzin	Kandřín
Kępno	Kempen	-
Kluczbork	Kreuzburg	-
Kłodzko	Glatz	Kladsko
Kochłowice	Kochlowitz	-
Kończyce Wielkie	Gross-Kuntschitz	Velké Kunčice
Koźle	Cosel	Kozlí
Królewiec	Königsberg	Královec
Krzyż Wielkopolski	Kreuz	-
Książ	Fürstenstein	-
Legnica	Liegnitz	Lehnice
Leśnica	Leschnitz/Bergstadt	-
Lubawka	Liebau	Libava
Lubiąż	Leubus	Lubuš
Lubliniec	Lublinitz	-
Lipiny	Lipin	-
Lubsko	Sommerfeld	-
Lutomia	Leutmannsdorf	-
Łany	Lohnia	-
Łaziska Górne	Ober Lazisk	Horní Lazyska
Łazy	Lazy	Lazy
-	Klein Mohrau	Mala Morávka
Malczyce	Maltsch	-
Międzybórz	Neumittelwalde	-
Międzyrzecz	Meseritz	-
Mikołów	Nikolai	Mikulov
Mikulczyce	Mikultschütz	-
Mistek	Friedberg	Místek
Mizerów	Miserau	Mizerov
Morawska Ostrawa	Mährisch Ostrau	Moravská Ostrava
Moszna	Moschen	-
Mysłowice	Myslowitz	Myslovice
Namysłów	Namslau	-
Nowa Ruda	Neurode	Nová Ruda
Nowa Sól	Neusalz an der Oder	-
Oborniki Śląskie	Obernigk	-
Oleśnica	Oels	Olešnice
Opawa	Troppau	Opava
Opole	Oppeln	Opolí
Orłów	Orlov	Orlov

Ostrawa	Ostrau	Ostrava
Oświęcim	Auschwitz	Osvětim
Otmuchów	Ottmachau	-
Ozimek	Malapane	-
Pawłowice Śląskie	Pawlowitz OS	Slezské Pavlovice
Pieńsk	Penzig OL	-
Pieszyce	Peterswaldau	-
Piła	Schneidemühl	-
Piława	Peile	-
Piława Górna	Gnadenfrei	-
Pławniowice	Plawniowitz	-
Pszczyna	Pless	-
Pyskowice	Peiskretcham	-
Racibórz	Ratibor	Ratiboř
Radzionków	Radzionkau	-
Ruda	Ruda	-
Rudy	Rudy	-
Rybnik	Rybnik	-
Skoczów	Skotschau	Skočov
Skwierzyna	Schwerin an der Warte	-
Sława Śląska	Schlawe	-
Sławięcice	Slawentzitz	-
Sosnowiec	Sosnowitz	Sosnovec
Stare Bielice	Altbeelitz	-
Stary Zdrój	Altwasser	-
Strumień	Schwarzwasser	Strumeň
Strzegom	Striegau	Střihom
Strzelce Opolskie	Gross Strehlitz	-
Syców	Gross Wartenberg	-
Szczodre	Sibyllenort	-
Szombierki	Schomberg	-
Środa Śląska	Neumarkt in Schl.	Slezská Středa
Świdnica	Schweidnitz	Svídnice
Świebodzice	Freiburg	-
Świerklaniec	Neudeck	-
Świętochłowice	Schwentochlowitz	-
Tarnowskie Góry	Tarnowitz	Tarnovské Hory
Trzyniec	Trzynietz	Třinec
Turawa	Turawa	-
Tworóg	Tworog	-

Ujazd	Ujest	-
Wałbrzych	Waldenburg	Valdenburk, Valbřich
Wąsosz	Herrnstadt	-
Wodzisław Śląski	Löslau	Vladislav
Wrocław	Breslau	Vratislav
Wschowa	Fraustadt	-
Zabór	Fürsteneich (since 1936: Saabor)	-
Zabrze	Zabrze, Hindenburg OS (1915-1945)	-
Zator	Zator	Zátor
Ząbkowice Śląskie	Frankenstein	Frankenštejn
Zbąszynek	Neu Bentschen	-
Zebrzydowice	Seibersdorf	Žibřidovice
Zgorzelec	Görlitz	Zhořelec
Zielona Góra	Grünberg	Zelená Hora
Żagań	Sagan	Zaháň
Żmigród	Trachenberg	Trachenberk
Żory	Sohrau	Žáry, Žárov

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This book is a collection of articles devoted to the cohesion of Silesia as a region in the years 1918–1945. Their role is to conclude the studies conducted as part of another stage of the European Science Foundation's programme entitled *Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and the cohesion within regions*. The authors of the studies have attempted to analyse the functioning of five basic factors which determined the region's coherence. In line with the themes of the project as a whole, these are: the administrative framework (Tomasz Kruszewski), the economy (Miron Urbaniak), social groups (Tomasz Przerwa), ethnic issues (Grzegorz Strauchold) and the cultural identity of the region's inhabitants (Bernard Linek).

A special difficulty for the historians was posed by the necessity to trace the issues of their interest in the realities of three countries (Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland), whose functioning was at that time founded on national ideologies which strongly opposed regionalisms. Such an approach made it possible to identify phenomena on a scale much larger than those which were determined by the political activity of elites of a single country only. Above all, however, it made it possible for them to answer the question of whether the sense of being part of regional and local communities was transformed under the influence of political and ideological changes spreading through the whole of Central Europe, as well as the extent to which they resulted in Silesia surviving as a region or disintegrating into three provinces of three nation-states.

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