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Open Regional Policy within the Frames of the Debate about Memory of the Western and Northern Parts of Poland¹ regional

Introduction

Consideration of multicultural and especially German, among others, uniqueness of Polish western and northern regions, which in history over centuries leaned towards the West of Europe, has become possible thanks to our acceptance of the regional and local perspective (consideration of territorial and cultural—historical characteristics of the region, as constitutive for regional thoughts, research and practice) which is strictly related to transformation and democratization of social life in the Third Republic, without which this process would not be possible.

As is observed by the German historian August Winkler in 1990:

... for the first time in 300 years the German issue (unification of the country) and the Polish one (regaining independence) were not in conflict but supplemented and supported each other. Therefore after the ultimate recognition of the Odra and Nysa border by united Germany in November 1990 the mutual relations between Poland and Germany in new Europe could be defined once more. There are treaties not worth the paper there had been written on, as they were just the tactical maneuver. But there are also those which for generations mould the rapport between partners. Signed in

¹ An Article being the historical-sociological study constitutes an integral part of an exploratory project in the subject of Polish—German reception of symbolic domains in Wrocław, Gdansk and Szczecin. Up till now (2011) realized are questionnaire studies and focuses amongst students of Universities in Wrocław (206 respondents, 2 focus groups) in the subject of reception of symbolic domain Grabiszyn II—a monument of the City Citizens Buried in Nonexistent Cemeteries in Wrocław and the visual documentation of the of the symbolic domains in Wrocław and Gdansk was made.

Bonn, 17 June 1991 Polish—German “Treaty of good neighbourhood and cooperation” became the stable foundation for new partnership relations between the two countries and societies.²

The passing 20 years from signing the mentioned treaty evoke various thoughts. They comprise those related to historical politics and political memory, being an inherent part of, for the first time after WW II so clearly, the context of regional and local politics built in the wider process of transformation. As mentioned by Bartosz Korzeniewski what can be seen in Poland after 1989 is:

... the progress in diversification of the public discourse on the past, having its expression in admittance of all sorts of interpretations of history and taking into consideration various different, very often contradictory, views of perception of historic events, and above all opening the unlimited possibilities for making such distinctions through assurance of freedom of speech and freedom of circulation of ideas about the past. Diversified public discourse about the past has its transfer to the sphere of official memory, which opens to various frequently absent before interpretations of national past.³

On the side of described by Korzeniewski plurality were also revealed, mentioned by the quoted author, regional and local memories.⁴

Multiplicity and diversity of local reference to the past

Multiplicity and diversity of both mentioned above memories, as well as, so important for us issue of reference to the past of Polish western and northern regions (Gdańsk, Wrocław) are pointed out by Andrzej Szpociński. The author indicates the mutual relationship between the local memory (connected with a given territory) and regional memory related, first of all, to cultural characteristics of the region. Therefore, as he suggests, it is possible to use both terms to describe both territorial and deterritorial community, when the formation and duration of the later depends also on the territorial

² *Polska—Niemcy 20 lat traktatu o dobrym sąsiedztwie i przyjaznej współpracy*, addition to magazine „Polityka,” no. 23/ 2810; 1.06-7.06.2011, p. 1.

³ B. Korzeniewski, *Transformacja pamięci. Przewartościowania w pamięci a wybrane aspekty funkcjonowania dyskursu publicznego o przeszłości w Polsce po 1989 roku*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, Poznań 2010, p. 117.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

factor.⁵ The same author introduces, important from the point of view of the further inquiry, typology of regional memory. Firstly, he mentions its classic model founded on relation region- nation, when the memory:

... about events (people, cultural products) connected with the regional and local community, appreciated and commemorated in many different ways [are practiced—A.W.I.S.] mainly because they represent the values (ideas, patters and behaviours) important from the point of view of the nation to which that community belongs.⁶

That memory is clearly subordinated to the central, realized by the state authorities and accomplished by them historical policy, distribution of patterns of behaviors and values. The region- nation model adds the constitutive features of the closed region, where not what is “local,” but only “local” can be identified as “ours” national, is fundamental for formation of regional or local identity. The second from all the indicated by Szpociński models refers to the region—transnational community type. This type of memory is formed when the centre does not legitimize the local or regional identity, and it (itself) draws power from relations with many other centers, among other, other countries, nations or Europe, stressing their own regional/local input into the transnational heritage.⁷ As Szpociński points out, such conviction, and what follows, past memory type is characteristic of “strong” regions and does not apply or does, only to a small degree, for example, Gdańsk or Wrocław. It results from the fact, that the local community so called inhabitants of Regained Lands, indeed can very well recognize regional or local heritage met there, as the legacy of “the other” but does not identify with it, that is it does not consider its own contribution into the transnational heritage (European and world). That is why German heritage does not elevate in Gdańsk and Wrocław, or at least it was so until recently, their present inhabitants.⁸ In the meantime, Szpociński mentions the third model of regional/local memory, mainly the memory of *signum loci*, in its two versions. The first one remains in the closest relation with regional and/or local characteristics, which make the regional/local community one in a thousand, on account of tradition or specific customs related to everyday life act. What is interesting, also here Szpociński indicates the difference in situation of such cities or regions like Gdańsk and Wrocław, where the local

⁵ A. Szpociński, *Rożnorodność odniesień do przeszłości lokalnej*, in: *Przeszłość jako przedmiot przekazu*, red. A. Szpociński, P.T. Kwiatkowski, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2006, p. 51.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ *Ibidem* p. 55.

⁸ *Ibidem* pp. 56-57.

communities take for specific these traditions and customs (remembering them and/or following them) with which they arrived from other regions of Poland, for example, Lwów traditions and customs or wider borderland one in Wrocław. In turn the identification with the encountered heritage of regional and local culture takes as Szpociński puts it a phoney form:

... the inhabitants inherited the past not from their ancestors, but they got it together with the land on which there are traces of it. In such situation exposing the historical or artistic values of those monuments takes place with omission (pushed into background) of the group, which all that legacy created and isolated from the group heritage it becomes above all a label, a sign of recognition of the place.⁹

In turn, characterizing the second version of historical culture of *signum loci* type, Szpociński writes about it as the culture non related with any strictly defined community, understood as a store of reserves, access to which is not limited by membership in the group but only by competence.¹⁰ Culture that:

... is connected with the globalization process, with readiness for the flow of information and goods. Popularization in a given community of culture understood as a collection of goods and information, which one can use in a chosen way, makes its members open to other cultures, and variety itself, value particularly appreciated by them.¹¹

Open region?

Typology of the cultures of regional/local memories, suggested by Szpociński, casts light on conditions under which we can speak about the open/closed character of the regions. It also allows to put forward a thesis that such phenomena like progressing plularization of the memory of the past and local/regional culture of *signum loci* type understood as a free flow of information and goods on account of competence of the regional/local community and its individual members, facilitates the approval of those to multiculturalism, which can substantially influence/influences the positive change in the attitude towards German heritage in Poland.

The tendency is even more visible, considering the fact, that there were few local or regional elements in the identity projects of the People's Poland and Polish People's Republic (PRL), the multicultural past of Poland was

⁹ *Ibidem* p. 59.

¹⁰ *Ibidem* p. 60.

¹¹ *Ibidem* p. 53, 60.

noticeable there. The German memory in the western and northern lands, as a part of intensive de-Germanization and Polonization, was being wiped off, introducing the legitimization of that area as *strictly* Polish.

De-Germanization and Polonization in regional dimension manifested itself in many ways, but “fight for monuments and plaques” was its especially spectacular form, together with the practice of methodical substitution of German monuments and plaques with the Polish ones.¹² As Tomasz Zarzycki puts it, regional discourse of the communist times was based, in the first place, on elements of nature (cormorants, storks and lakes) and anti-German ones (bottle of Tannenberg), whereas the regional division criteria was based on geographical characteristics. It was then to a great extent closed regionalism.¹³

As one of the Polish sociologists, to present open regionalism in his concept of “private homeland” was Stanisław Osowski, who proved, that not geographical or economical categories but cultural ones accurately describes the regional and local identity. In (PRL) Polish People Republic times, cultural criteria of regionalization with historical element included, where in effect in a very limited sense, and continuity of cultural and historical tradition was not—especially in Regained Lands, the subject of public debate. Moreover, as Zbigniew Mazur observes: “in common historical conscience the past of newly gained territory [Regained Land—A.W.I.S] was absent ... The history of the region, city, village was blank.”¹⁴ As in Regained Lands the past was unknown to the “old” Polish regions dimensions¹⁵ its reference to the past had to take into consideration the fact that what happened in 1945 was a dramatic break of demographic, and what follows cultural continuity.¹⁶

A comment to works of the historians of those lands by Aleksander Małecki is an instance of that. For example:

¹² Z. Mazur, *Między ratuszem, kościołem i cmentarzem*, in: Wokół niemieckiego dziedzictwa kulturowego na Ziemiach Zachodnich i Północnych, red. Z. Mazur, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Zachodniego, Poznań 1997, pp. 315-320.

¹³ A. Sakson, *Przemiany tożsamości mieszkańców Ziemi Zachodnich i Północnych. Druga dekada wolności. Socjologiczne konsekwencje i zagadki transformacji*, „Rocznik Lubuski,” 2010/36, p. 313.

¹⁴ Z. Mazur, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

¹⁵ Z. Mazur, *Wstęp*, „Siedlisko,” no 1, quoted after: A. Małecki, „Kompromis w sprawie Hetmana” a „wygnanie do Stargardu.” *Walka o lokalną tożsamość między „wspólnym dziedzictwem” a „wschodnią pamięcią” w Stargardzie po 1989 r.*, in: Doświadczenie i pamięć. Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia między przestrzenią doświadczenia i horyzontem oczekiwań, red. M. Kujawska, I. Skórzyńska, Instytut Historii UAM, Poznań 2010, p. 64.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

... the history of Germans, who in the first post war years were removed from here for the reader of Kazimierz Kołzowski¹⁷ article can become an episode: “the history of Pomeranian community shaped here through countries, come to the end in 1945, when Polish settlers came here.... The rhetoric of this statement, when the Polish settlers simply “come” in 1945, while German “history closes” by itself, does not stress the violence of that “closure,” consisting in a forcible evacuation of the subjects of the history.”¹⁸

In this context a question should be asked about the process of distancing from “communist brainwash” (as Małecki calls PRL (Polish People Republic) on the basis of local and regional identity and about the role of freedom of the public opinion in relation to the dated anew symbols, shaping (as assumed) regional and local identities open in their character. As Anna Wolff- Powęska in the study of Polish memory and historical politics states:

No to be overestimated in the field of moulding of the historical awareness: are the achievements of the regions. The activity of, among others, “Karta” Centre, cultural community “Borussia,” “Pogranicze-Arts,” Cultures and Nations-Centre in Sejny brought realization of hundreds of projects, which were the promotion of Poland in the world in the best meaning of the word. Lots of places of memory were rehabilitated. Enfranchisement of history, found its expression in restoring to the places and regions, history and memory in its complete multicultural dimension.¹⁹

Regaining of the “local color” of the regions is one of many arguments which contradict, as the quoted author puts it,²⁰ the words of Bronisław Wildstein, “that we were born in 1989, conceived on the round table—and remember nothing.”²¹ So it is not true that we are stuck again in the spiritual vacuum, but of a different kind.

Nowadays one can observe great interest in the region and locality.²²

These tendencies in, so called Western Lands gain, shown already, new dimension of open regionalism, founded on the territorial and historical-cultural components of identity (so as a retreat from geography or

¹⁷ K. Kołzowski, *Problemy niemieckiego dziedzictwa i polskiej tożsamości na przykładzie Pomorza Zachodniego po 1989 roku*, in: *Europa regionów. Tradycje i perspektywy*, red. B. Nitschke, Zielona Góra 2002, p. 136.

¹⁸ A. Małecki, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹⁹ A. Wolff -Powęska, *Polskie spory o historię i pamięć*, „Przegląd Zachodni,” 2007, no. 1, p. 23. Also quoted after: R. Traba, *Walka o kulturę*, „Przegląd Polityczny,” 2006, no. 75, p. 53.

²⁰ Wolff -Powęska, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² Comp. amongst others : D. Konieczka-Śliwińska, *Edukacyjny nurt regionalizmu historycznego w Polsce po 1918 roku. Konteksty—konceptje programowe—realia*, Instytut Historii UAM, Poznań 2011, pp. 41-86.

economy only), and also on noticeable acceptance by regional and/or local communities of the free flow of goods and information. As pointed out by Andrzej Szpociński, quoting the quantity results concerning the local/regional memory (research on the “Polish Society Confronted with the Past” conducted on the sample 800 interviews, not considering the over-representative 200 interviews conducted with highly educated people) many participants of the focus groups stressed the multicultural character of the regions, which would indicate the promotion of recently described by Szpociński model of culture, and in consequence the tendency for the region to open, also in connection with the relation of local/regional communities to their multicultural past.²³

Pluralization of the Local Reference to the Past of the Regions

In the new presentation of the open regionalism historically conditioned cultural diversity of the regions returns to the public stage. Discovery of that fact and giving it a suitable prestige is a very important indication of enfranchisement. Monitoring and registration of this practice in the Polish-German relations, which are of special interest here, having local character, is the element of formation of a new special order after 1989. It is created by new organizations and societies, which set themselves a target to cultivate the past and bind a new, democratic reality on the local scale.

Below there are a few, interesting, from our point of view, examples showing the relevance of the idea of open regionalism, being at the same time a successful attempt of the passage from the closed to open regionalism, though they also draw attention to the barriers in the complex process of discovery and valorization of multicultural past of the regions and to thinking about that heritage.²⁴

Updating of Cultural Diversity of Regions

In the eighties of the 20th century there was a plaque fixed to the wall of St. Jacob's Cathedral in Szczecin to commemorate the cardinal August Józef Hlond for his input into stressing the Polish character of the land.

²³ A. Szpociński, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 60. Comp.: E. Wysocka, *Ciągłość tradycji historycznej jako jedno z kryteriów nowego podziału kraju na województwa*, in: K. Kwaśniewski, *Regionalizm, Wielkopolskie Towarzystwo Kulturalne, Poznań 1986*, pp. 41-53.

²⁴ T. Barazon, „*Soglitude*”—*introducing a method of thinking thresholds*, “*Conserveries Mémorielles*,” 2010/7.

Meanwhile, in 1994, right next to that plaque appeared another one, devoted to an organist, Karl von Loewe, playing in the Cathedral for 40 years, in the 19th century. It is one of many examples of positive pluralization and the receptiveness of the local identity policy. In the same city of Szczecin, we deal with other interesting ways of activation of the local heritage connected with the local Central Cemetery, where in 2003 the initiative to set up a Society for Central Cemetery was taken²⁵. The founder of the Society is Jerzy Wohland, and today three German citizens, members of the German minority, also contribute to it. The front-men and organizers of the Society have recently taken up the initiative to organize two routes for sightseeing the Szczecin Necropolis: the trail of the outstanding Germans, the former inhabitants of the city and the trail of eminent citizens of Szczecin in the period post WWII. According to Professor Kazimierz Kozłowski it would be valuable to compare the social reaction to these events- initiative, what would arouse controversy, which history memory is more popular, which and it what sense finds acceptance and which is rejected by inhabitants of Szczecin and guests from outside it.

On the other hand, and in reaction to regional politics a local conflict around revision of German heritage in Szczecin has emerged²⁶ Among the adversaries of recalling the German presence is, for instance, Edmund Glaza—the founder of the Committee of Defence Against Germanization.

As has been pointed out by PhD Maciej Słomiński, one of the most engaged organizers of the Society for Central Cemetery,²⁷ also media, on which lie responsible tasks in that matter, create and sometimes fuel hostile attitudes towards renovation and saving artistically outstanding German gravestones.²⁸ The example of those could be the reluctance, which became apparent on the occasion when the renovated monument of Haken family was unveiled. The ceremony coincided with the publication of the article in “Rzeczpospolita” under the title “German Promotion of the Cities”²⁹ the

²⁵ More: http://cmentarze.szczecin.pl/cmentarze/chapter_11811.asp [available 13.12. 2011].

²⁶ This phenomenon has a wider dimension and concerns many of Polish cities, towns and villages on so called Regained Territories, this is however not a subject of our inquiry in the article presented. Here we just want to signalize that we are aware of dispute especially about the Wilhelmian—Bismarck heritage on the territories mentioned.

²⁷ See <http://www.cmentarzcentralny.szczecin.pl/>—private page of Artura Komorowskiego under auspicious of Association for Central Cemetery in Szczecin. Also cmentarze.szczecin.pl/cmentarze/chapter_11811.asp [available 13 grudnia 2011].

²⁸ Informations contained in this paragraph come from a note from a meeting with dr. Maciejem Słonińskim and prof. Kazimierzem Kozłowskim (2011) with the sociology students „Salonik Socjologiczny” SWSH run by the cowriter of the text Anna Wachowiak. Note from the meeting in authors collection.

²⁹ M. Stankiewicz, it., jar., jak., *Germańska promocja miast*, „Rzeczpospolita,” 2007/06/05.

article was accompanied by comments of historians, reconcilable of Professor Włodzimierz Borodziej and provocative (confrontational) about Poles who Germanize themselves by Jan Żaryna.³⁰ Apart from the skeptical attitude towards the carried out idea of renovation of the monument—Haken tomb in Szczecin, the authors of the article also mentioned the renaming of Wrocław Peoples' Hall again into Century Hall and also many other cases of updating of the German heritage in the Polish Baltic towns and in Warmia and Dolny Śląsk (Lower Silesia)³¹ on the same tide rose the controversy around the reconstruction of Szczecin “Sedina.” In the text entitled ‘How does one think in Szczecin, Bogdan Twardochleb noted down:

In... Rejtan style texts, in Szczecin, there was brought back here and there the case of Sedina monument. A group of Szczecin inhabitants wanted its reconstruction, seeing in it the glorification of marine, peaceful and quiet Szczecin, benefiting from its location on big waters. Sedina does not even have any military attributes, on the contrary—on the statue there is a woman with a sail, anchor, a fish, shells and two naked figures. The group of Szczecin inhabitants, the followers of the idea of reconstruction was accused of willingness to reconstitute the “para German symbol” and “German spirit,” and that the monument is “in the style and manner of the Prussian expansionism epoch, in cult of the imperialist, Poles-eating rulers.” Where can that be seen? Is it symbolised by the woman with the sail, shell, fish or naked figures? Sedina as glorification of war and Prussian expansionism? Naked to war? In Prussian Army? With the fish, shells and water? What was also written there was that: “foreign monuments should not be rebuilt.”³²

“Sedina” was one of the more attractive fountain-monuments in Szczecin erected at the turn of the 20th century. Its name referred to Ptolemaic description of the land bordering with the Odra in “Geography.” It provides patronage for one of the more dynamically acting portal of the enthusiasts of old Szczecin.³³ At the same time it had the opposite effect, “anti-portal” embracing circles opposing revision of the German heritage in the city.³⁴

³⁰ Dwułoś. Włodzimierz Borodziej, Jan Żaryn, *Niemieckie ślady w Polsce*, not k.b., „Rzeczpospolita,” 2007/06/05.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² B. Twardochleb, *Rzecz o kulawości miasta. Jak się myśli w Szczecinie*, Transodra online 2011/02/24 <http://www.transodraonline.net/pl/node/11570> [available 28 August 2011].

³³ <http://sedina.pl/>. Comp.: R. Czejarek, *Szczecin przełomu wieków XIX/XX*, Dom Wydawniczy Księży Młyn, Łódź 2008, p. 18.

³⁴ <http://www.stop-sedina.szczecin.pl> [available: 22 December 2011]. Comp. text place on the portal: J. Jasiński, *Bismarck i inne przypadki. Droga na manowce*; reprint from: Instytut Zachodni, Poznań, „Siedlisko,” no. 1.

It seems that much more open attitude towards the German heritage can be observed in Gdańsk, Hanzeatic city with the strong and indisputable Netherlandish and German tradition. As Roman Wapiński remarks, Gdańsk was for centuries a European border city rather, than the Polish one, similarly to the Baltic, which in the Polish history played the role of a border, beyond which there were competing with one another German, Netherlandish, Russian and Scandinavian powers.

Although, then the city played the key role in the history of Jagiellonian dynasty, it was above all connected with the economic power of the monarchy. It also was not “absorbed” by Sarmatian nationality creating myth, firstly because that myth, only to a small extent, was related to towns or cities as such and secondly it did not concern the protestant element (as Wapiński observes Sarmatian myth meant in the first place the gentry, the country and the Catholics).³⁵ The same author points out that also in the inter-war period, when Gdańsk was a free city, and after WWII when it became known in the common consciousness of Poles, but rather as the centre of the working class protest than the centre of the national revolt, it did not share the glory of the city—the symbol of the Polish identity.³⁶

At the end of 1945 Gdańsk became a Polish city [wrote the authors of the introduction to the publication updating German threads in its history, entitled “Danzing—Gdansk”] from November Poles constitute the majority, German names of the streets were substituted with fully Polish ones. No one is interested in the German past of the city, similar to previously Polish one, which German nationalists and fascists starting from the thirties were effectively wiping off.³⁷

Till the moment of occupation of Gdańsk by both the Red Army and the Polish Army 90% of the inhabitants were German. On the day of occupation and soon after it the exodus of the German inhabitants started and soon it changed into the planned displacement to Germany.³⁸ The tragedy of liberation brings also remarkable and comparable with Wrocław and Szczecin loss in the infrastructure of the city. At the end of March 1945 the systematic destruction (*urbicide*) of the city centre was started (it was 90% destroyed). Massive artillery and aerial attack brought more loss. The city centre was on

³⁵ Dwuǳłos: Włodzimierz Borodziej, Jan Żaryn, *Niemieckie ślady w Polsce...*

³⁶ R. Wapiński, *Gdańsk w polskiej mitologii politycznej—kształtowanie świadomości politycznej*, in: *Gdańsk. Z historii stosunków polsko-niemieckich*, ed. M. Andrzejewski, Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, Warszawa 1998, pp. 14-16.

³⁷ P.O. Loew, R. Zekert, E. Rusak (eds.), *Danzing-Gdańsk, Wspomnienia 50 lat później / Erinnerungennach 50 Jahren*, Wydawnictwo “Marpress,” Gdańsk 1997, p. 11.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

fire—St. John’s and Mary’s Churches, the Crane, the Granary Island and the whole quarters of tenements.³⁹ A slightly smaller destruction affected Wrzeszcz and Nowy Port.⁴⁰ The industrial plants and city transport were destroyed.⁴¹ Part of that destruction, what comes from the reports of the former inhabitants of the city, was done in revenge on German inhabitants by the Soviet soldiers, when the fights were over.⁴²

For hundreds of thousands of Polish inhabitants of Gdansk (the editors of “Danzing—Gdansk” continue) the city started after the war, that is the city they got to know and started to love and 1945 was the beginning for them. Almost everyone had to stay here, settle and learn to live. Gdansk in the city without the past for them, for Germans who escaped from there it is the city from the past. Only in the last few years have these different perspectives started to combine, the history of Gdansk starts to unite. There are those who read Gunter Grass and those who prefer Paweł Huelle. The first get to know about Gdansk of the others start to realize that there exists that disparity, but they respect it, and accept it also as their own city.⁴³

Twenty seven culturally “foreign”—German, Jewish, Dutch but also Polish necropolises were closed in the sixties of the 20th century. On pages devoted to their history we can read that:

... very little trace was left; knocked over plaques, smashed tombs, broken grave stones, from which one could sometimes read the fragments of names and dates. Many of the gravestones had inscriptions in German, which was hard to be accepted by the new inhabitants, very often leading to acts of vandalism, however, there were on the other hand instances, when Poles looked after abandoned graves of the German inhabitants of Gdansk.⁴⁴

In the first years of the 21st century there was a large-scale project launched in Gdańsk to commemorate with tablets the places, where the ashes of the deceased rest.

That is then that the idea emerged (explained Grzegorz Boros, from Zarząd Dróg i Zieleni /Administration of Roads and Green Areas in Gdańsk) to return this way to the inhabitants of Gdańsk the memory of the closed down necropolises. It is the matter of the cultural heritage in the 1000 years old history of the city. On the territory of these cemeteries 80% of non-

³⁹ B. Hajduk, *Rys historyczny*, in: Danzing—Gdańsk, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 23.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

exhumed human remains are still there. These tablets are there to make people remember that those remains are still there.⁴⁵

The tablets were located on the basis of the monograph of Joanna Labenz. “Thanks to it on 17 of them there were placed granite tablets in three languages: Polish, Latin and German.”⁴⁶ The tablets are placed respectively: along Aleja Zwycięstwa, at Gościnna street in Gdańsk Orunia, at the Fortress, and at Cedrowa street.⁴⁷ Within the same project there was the Cemetery of Non-existing Cemeteries erected in Gdańsk. As we can read on a private page of Jacek Krenz, one of the two authors of the Gdańsk project of the monument—necropolitan layout.⁴⁸ In spring 1998’ the City Council of Gdańsk supporting the initiative of Kalina Zabuska⁴⁹ and the social committee, with the special resolution accepted the idea of memorizing non-existing Gdańsk necropolises by building a memorial monument.⁵⁰

The complex was unveiled in May 2002, at the slope of Gradowa Mountain, in the park near the Corpus Christi Church in 3 Maja street, in the spot where once one of the closed down cemeteries had been placed.

At the beginning of the 19th century, thanks to the change in the status of Wrocław into an open city (previously a fortress) it gained space for development to, by midcentury thanks to Frederick William (the romantic on a throne) expand by buildings erected according to the rules of so fashionable then, historicism. Those were among others neo-Renaissance House of the Silesia States, General Police Headquarters of the city, neo-Gothic building of the court and prison and extended by a new wing King’s Palace.

Historicism was also adopted in the private building, so a lot of built then tenement houses were decorated with turrets, crenellations and artistic details on the front elevations borrowed from the architecture of the past centuries.⁵¹

⁴⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁴⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁴⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁴⁸ Other authores are Hanna Klementowska, cooperation: Katarzyna Krenz, Michał Krenz, Andrzej Wójcicki; sculpters: Zygfryd Korpalski, Witold Głuchowski.

⁴⁹ Custodian of National Museum in Gdansk.

⁵⁰ Authors of the monument project: H. Klementowska, J. Krenz cooperation: K. Krenz, M. Krenz, A. Wójcicki; sculptors: Z. Korpalski, W. Głuchowski. Investor: Gdansk City Council Substitute investor: Administration of Roads and Green Territories. Monument of Cemetery of Nonexistent Cemeteries at 3 Maja str. In the park between the bus station and Corpus Christi church. After: <http://www.p.gda.pl/~jkrenz/projekty-r4.html> [available: 26 August 2011].

⁵¹ T. Kulak, *Historia Wrocławia. Od twierdzy fryderycjańskiej do twierdzy hitlerowskiej*, Vol. II, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, Wrocław 2001, p. 201.



Photo 1 Cemetery of Nonexistent Cemeteries—Gdansk (photo from the authors collection).

In the second half of the 19th century, in connection with the growing number of inhabitants of Wrocław and also incorporation of new territories to the city, its authorities took to other building initiatives. This time they concerned building of a new Stock Exchange House, the Main Post Office and also fire brigade buildings, slaughterhouse, the port in Popowice, and two new bridges King's and William's. Wrocław gained new rail connections among others with southern Wielkopolska (Great Poland), the power plant in Mernicza St., electric tramway, and gained new factories, among others Mamut Bakery (1910), banks and the first department stores, and finally erected in 1913 to celebrate the German victory in the Battle of Nations at Leipzig, the Century Hall.⁵²

Being the German city Wrocław and its inhabitants only theoretically escaped the tragedy of WWII, which at the same time affected the Polish cities incorporated into the Third Reich, and Wrocław inhabitants themselves experienced fascism in many different ways, starting from 1933 and in the following years.

In August 1944, on the orders of General Heinz Guderian, Wrocław was announced a fortress. The consequence of that decision was the order of methodical destruction of the city in the situation of direct danger, which actually happened at the moment of the Soviet offensive and the Red Army encroachment.⁵³ The Soviet offensive on Wrocław started on the 18th January, 1945. Russians in the first place bombarded railway junctions. Two days later the headquarters of Wrocław Fortress gave orders for unconditioned evacuation of German citizens, with an exception of men able to defend the city. During the three weeks within imposed evacuation 700 thousand of civil inhabitants of Wrocław left and 200 thousand still remained there.⁵⁴ As the same author states, during the evacuation of Wrocław 90 thousand people lost their lives. And the defense of Wrocław claimed six thousand German soldiers and volunteers more.⁵⁵ At the beginning of April the Soviet air raids on the city intensified. "From phosphorus bombs a considerable part of the city burnt, including the Cathedral, Collegiate Church of Holly Cross and other historic buildings on Ostrów Tumski (Cathedral Island)...."⁵⁶

⁵² *Ibidem*, pp. 217-226.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, pp. 334-335.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 336-337.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 337.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 339.

In 1945 and in the following years Wrocław went through almost total exchange of inhabitants, who were mainly German in the prewar times.⁵⁷ After the war, besides few Germans and Jews, one could meet, above all, the settlers from Great Poland, Zabuza or so frequently associated with Wrocław, former Lvov inhabitants. The statement about domination in Wrocław, in the first post war times, of people coming from Lvov is a myth. In the community of the new inhabitants of Wrocław, the former Lvov inhabitants constituted only 10%.⁵⁸ The reality of a deserted city settled anew provoked the situation of the acceptance and approval of others, as everyone was in some sense different from one another and no one was from “here.” They differed in accent, religion, customs, cuisine, and also life experience. Almost absolute absence of indigenous inhabitants caused that each settler could have a feeling of being “on their own” in a relatively short time. This phenomena was additionally reinforced by official propaganda of the socialist era, which distinctly referred to the area of Lower Silesia as Regained Lands—traditionally Piast owned and therefore Polish, which was accompanied by deliberate Polonization policy. Its apparent result was the rejection of German heritage of Wrocław. One of the most spectacular forms of Polonization of the city was, as pointed out by Zbigniew Mazur, the substitution of the German monuments and tablets with the Polish ones.

The removal of the monument of William II in Świdnicka street was accompanied by a march and a rally with flags and banners. The hidden by Germans Bismark’s statue was found and destroyed only in 1947... demolition of around 70 monuments and extirpation of cemeteries deprived Wrocław of its memory.⁵⁹

In the surge of getting rid of post German symbolic domains, even Fryderyk Schiller’s monument was destroyed.⁶⁰ The fate of monuments, street names, and Wrocław buildings referring to centuries old presence of Habsburgs, the Prussians and Germans was shared by cemeteries.

⁵⁷ M. Lewicka, *Dwa miasta—dwa mikrokosmosy. Wrocław i Lwów w pamięci swoich mieszkańców*, in: *My Wrocławianie. Społeczna przestrzeń miasta*, eds. J. Pluta, P. Żuk, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, Wrocław 2006, pp. 102-104.

⁵⁸ J. Goćkowski, B. Jałowicki, *Prace nadesłane na konkurs „Czym jest dla Ciebie miasto Wrocław?” jako materiał socjologiczny*, in: *Wrocławskie reminiscencje socjologiczne*, ed. J. Wojtaś, Wydawnictwo Silesia, Wrocław 2009, p. 64. Data after: I. Turanu, *Studia nad strukturą ludnościową polskiego Wrocławia*, Instytut Zachodni, Poznań 1960.

⁵⁹ Z. Mazur (ed.), *Wokół niemieckiego dziedzictwa kulturowego na Ziemiach Zachodnich i Północnych*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Zachodniego, Poznań 1997, p. 305. Quoted after: C. Wąs, *Wrocław w epoce pomników*, „Odra,” 1994, no 11, pp. 39-43.

⁶⁰ Z. Mazur (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 307.



Photo 2 Monument of the Citizens Buried on the Nonexistent Cemeteries Grabiszyn II—Wrocław (photo from the authors collection)

Similarly to what happened in Gdańsk, also in Wrocław numerous necropolises were closed down.⁶¹ In 2008 there was the initiative taken in the city, preceded by a public debate,⁶² to erect the Monument ‘to commemorate the inhabitants of Wrocław buried in the non-existing Wrocław cemeteries.’⁶³ BY decision of the city authorities the mentioned monument was located at Grabiszynska street, in the spot where there were three different cemetery layouts earlier (Municipal Cemetery Grabiszyn I, Community Cemetery Grabiszyn I and Brothers Hospitallers Convention Cemetery) and also

⁶¹ M. Burak, H. Okólska, *Cmentarze dawnego Wrocławia*, Museum of Architekture in Wrocław, Wrocław 2007, p. 18.

⁶² Echoes of this debate appeared in Wrocław press, on internet forum and blogs.

⁶³ M. Burak, H. Okólska, *op. cit.* Authors respectively mention: Act no. XXXIII/564/2001 Lower Silesia Province Council dated 30 March 2001 (Lower Silesia Province Marshal Archives sign. 11/15); published under title.: *Opieka nad nekropoliami Dolnego Śląska*, ed. G. Grajewski, Wrocław 2000; *Studia nad strategią miasta*, Z. 1 (42), Wrocław 2002; Act no. LI/1799/02 Wrocław City Council dated 26 September 2002, Wrocław City Council Archives, sign. 53/06; Act no. XVI/479/03 Wrocław City Council dated 5 December 2003. Wrocław City Council Office no. Sign.

erected here in the sixties of the 19th century: neo-Gothic Chapel modernized in 1925, and in 1926 a crematory together with the set urn field.⁶⁴

The Grabiszyn II Monument was located on the outskirts of the city. It has become and inherent part of the natural surroundings of Grabiszynski Park in its landscape and recreational functions., and at the same time corresponds with the scattered among rich vegetation old gravestones and lying on the other side of the street still active Grabiszyn Municipal Cemetery. The shape of the monument corresponds with its surroundings and has apart from commemorative (fixed in the stone walls, original gravestones of different rites) also distinct aesthetic values. Engraved and enriched by gravestones surface of the wall in a delicate sandy colour is cut by a few passages, which function as gates. There are two inscriptions on the monument. The first one is on the vertical slab and describes the function of the monument and the circumstances of its creation. The other one, horizontal contains the list of non-existing Wroclaw cemeteries.

Re-Catholization of Polish Western Thought

Addressing the historic-cultural indicators of identity of such cities as Gdańsk, Wroclaw, or Szczecin, the mentioned already Jan Żaryn made a suggestion that “running of the Polish historical policy,” there, meaning the Regained Lands should consist in:

... emphasizing the role of Catholic Church, which after the war Polonized and re Catholicized the west. Also soldiers of the underground movement after 1945 should not be forgotten, as well as successive generations of opposition, till the times of ‘Solidarity’. Numerous heroes acted there. Say, Jerzy Kozarzewski, a poet, emissary of the National Armed Forces and later long-standing social activist in Nysa.⁶⁵

To some extent the view presented by Jan Żaryn is shared by a part of Polish society. The example of Szczecin movement against Germanization has its equivalent, perhaps less important socially but spectacular, in a form of the letter, which was placed on the base of the monument of Maria Konopnicka in Gańsk by an anonymous author. The letter dated on 22nd June 2011 was inspired, as we guess, by the coming visit of Angela Merkel in Hel.

⁶⁴ M. Burak, H. Okólska, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-226. Through authors recall: Building Archives of City Wroclaw, City Building Police Files, sign. 2539; National Archives in Wroclaw, National Council Presidium of City Wroclaw, sign. 478; Burgemeister L., Grundmann G., *Die Kunstdenkmaler der Stadt Breslau*, vol. 3., Breslau 1934.

⁶⁵ Dwugłós. *Niemieckie ślady w Polsce...*



Photo 3 Maria Konopnicka Monument—Gdansk. On the plinth a patriotic “letter—appeal” (photo from the authors collection)

The author appeals in it to his countrymen to fight for Polish identity against the recurring German threat and the situation of disappearance of patriotic feelings in some of them.⁶⁶

As turns out from the above, the open concept of the identity (memory heritage) of the western and northern parts of Poland overlaps recently, with pointed out by Szpociński, classical model that identity founded on the relation region-nation.⁶⁷

It is, let us remind, the model of closed regionalism, where not what is “local” but only “local” which can be identified as “ours” national and Polish, lies at the basis of formation of regional and local identity.⁶⁸ In the relation region-nation it is the state and its offices that govern that identity. Jan Zyryn⁶⁹ seems to sympathise with that model when he writes about a “new” old identity of the northern and western lands, as the subject of Catholicization

⁶⁶ Photo of the monument together with placed on it letter In the authors collection. Documented in July 2011.

⁶⁷ A. Szpociński, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁶⁹ Dwugłós. *Niemieckie ślady w Polsce...*

and Polonization of these areas not long ago, placing his hope for the revival of their Polish identity in the memory of that recent past.

In a suggestion formulated this way appears (is updated) Polish western thought in connection with the new historical policy of the state, also related to regions. It is the policy noticeable especially from the perspective of the last few years and connected with the Polish access to.

In a suggestion formulated this way appears (is updated) Polish western thought in connection with the new historical policy of the state, also related to regions. It is the policy noticeable especially from the perspective of the last few years and connected with the Polish access to EU (2004) in the answer to fears of blurring the cultural difference among nations and ethnic groups and of weakening of the role of the state as the guardian of national identity. The present Polish-German relations in their regional dimension are characterized by, on the one hand progressing openness as the result of the influence of the memory and history in the Polish-German dialogue, on the other hand, we also observe the return of a vivid discussion on Polish national interest and national identity behind which there is mentioned above update (revision actually) of the Polish western thought. It is absolutely understandable, as it seems that that idea had its positive role in the 19th century and inter-war period and in the contemporary historical-political context. However, although the views presented then, successfully supported Polonization of western lands after WWI, they also appeared and worked, supporting the socialist state (People's Poland and Polish People's Republic) in the efforts of Polonization of so called Regained Lands after 1945.

The synthetic and multilayer picture of the history of the Polish western thought and institutions being its exponents are shown by Maria Tomczak. She notices the relationship between the post war research and popularization of the German issue in the way clearly referring to the prewar western thought. Post war institutions concentrating on this goal had a common trait, which was their noncommunist origin, which, as Tomczak points out, made them an unusual and exceptional phenomenon on PRL (Polish People's Republic) grounds.⁷⁰ The same author tries to answer (1) what were the roles that the authorities assigned to the institutions of that type. (2) what was their real function in different times.⁷¹ In her reflection

⁷⁰ M. Tomczak, *Polska myśl zachodnia*, in: Polacy wobec Niemców, Z dziejów kultury politycznej Polski 1945–1989, ed. A. Wolff -Powęska, Instytut Zachodni, Poznań 1993, p. 161-193.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 161. Comp. also: M. Mroczko, *Polska myśl zachodnia 1918–1939. Kształtowanie i upowszechnianie*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Zachodniego, Poznań 1986, especially chapter I, pp. 21-58.

concerning point (1) Tomczak concentrates mainly on the institutions in Poznan milieu, traditionally connected with Polish western thought of which the most complete representative was the Western Institute (IZ). The genesis of Polish western thought is derived there from publications of Jan Ludwig Poplawski and Roman Dmowski. The quoted by Tomczak and connected with Western Institute, Andrzej Kwilecki,

... distinguishes 5 elements constituting in different periods Polish western thought. These are: (1) Sustaining the Polish life and stimulating national feeling of the people under the German rule.

(2) Efforts for the most favorable for Poland shape of the western border of the revived after WWI Polish state. (3) Working out the concept justifying the return of Western Land to the Motherland. (4) Settling, development and cultural activation of this region in PRL times. (5) keeping up the relation with the Polish emigration in the West and with the Polish community abroad.⁷²

As Tomczak notices:

During WWI times and Versailles Conference the western thought was connected with soliciting for restoration of independence and fight for establishing the most favorable borders in the west of Poland. The concept became one of the main elements of the programme of national democracy.... Dmowski wanted to make Poland both the "most important anti German factor" and in the pursuance of "friendly Russia" become the main force, in the group of the future, post war middle and south Slavonic countries.... These views became the interpretation of the concept of foreign policy of the National Democratic Party. They allowed to concentrate around Dmowski and his party a significant group of Polish experts on Germany and West Slovenian researchers (especially connected with Poznan community). That exceptional alliance of science and politics turned out to be especially useful after the war, when German disappointment with the results of Versailles Treaty was articulated to a great extent in the revival of anti-Polish feelings.... The fear of Germans was the strongest in the west of Poland. That is where social organization having as a goal the defense against Germans and propagating the Polish western thought came into being.⁷³

The presented above diagnosis of the state of the Polish western thought in the period right after the end of WWI is accompanied by, the mentioned by the quoted author,⁷⁴ institutions backing the views expressed by national democrats including The Association for Protection of the Western Lands

⁷² M. Tomczak, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, pp. 163-164.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 164.

(ZOKZ), with which as the author points out such outstanding scientists like: Roman Pollak, Robert Górski, Teodor Tyc, Kazimierz Tymieniecki were connected. The periodical associated with ZOKZ was the “Strażnica Zachodnia.” And the coordinating institution—the West-Slavonic Institute founded in 1921 by professor Mikołaj Rudnicki at Poznan University.⁷⁵ ZKOZ, after many vicissitudes, among others silencing the anti-German propaganda on the part of the Polish authorities and the intention to close the organisation, which finally did not happen, but it was changed into Polish Western Association (PZZ), which in the end also took to anti-German propaganda, organizing among others manifestations in that tone.⁷⁶

After WWII, as Tomczak points out, the attitude of the scientists from the nationalist formation (though their view on the world was nationalist and Catholic) only superficially and not fully remained contradictory to the communist (atheistic and international). The differences did not exclude (though they looked basic) the possibility of cooperation. The common ground was recognition of the shift of the western and northern borders of Poland as the priority, as a *sine qua non* condition of the revival and existence of Poland and also a great importance of territorial demands in the entirety of the programme concepts of both orientations.⁷⁷ The common elements were also the unfriendly attitude towards GB and the USA and similar principles of the foreign policy, among others, “the willingness to settle the best possible relations with the USSR and clearly marked hostility towards Germany.”⁷⁸ Zygmunt Wojciechowski, the founder of Poznan Western Institute, relating to the western thought in a jubilee, made on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of IZ speech, said:

Taking it at one glance the period of 10 years of my activity in Western Institute, what must be said... is that within that time my views on the place of Poland in the world have been realized. Poles have finally gained the appropriate geographical situation in agreement with historical studies.⁷⁹

The flagship of the works created within this trend—was published by “Ojczyzna” (Homeland) during the occupation work by Zygmunt Wojciechowski entitled *Polska—Niemcy. Dziesięć wieków zmagania*—Tomczak summarised—concentrated almost exclusively on mutual hostility of Poles

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 168.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁹ Z. Wojciechowski, *Spojrzenie wstecz*, in: *Studia historyczne*, Warszawa 1955. Quoted after: M. Tomczak, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

and Germans, what at the time when the publication came to light was not something unnatural.⁸⁰

The numerous awareness rising and propaganda actions served the same purpose, as the continuation of the Polish western thought in its dimension of collective reference to the past.

The greatest intensity of propaganda actions usually took place in spring, when the all-Poles weeks of Regained Lands were celebrated. In their concept the celebrations referred to the pre-war weeks of the western borderland. Within the general frame there were speeches, lectures, rallies, and demonstrations... Also Western Press Agency (ZAP) served propaganda purposes.... Among the objectives of the Agency there were such as: outlining to the Polish citizens problems of the western lands, their history and the present and also following through and analysing the development of German issues and the manifestations of various aspects of political life in various German occupation zones.... It was the tradition of the Polish western thought to bind the political and scientific spheres of activity. The formation of scientific basis for the post war activity served appointed on the basis of the underground Western Study and functioning in Poznan western Institute.⁸¹

Another thread in the “western” activity was the support for Lusatia Serbs strives (their irredenty), so as to support, in the future, the incorporation of Lusatia into Poland. At that time in many Polish cities, societies for Lusatia friendship were established, among others in Krakow, Szczecin, Wroclaw and Częstochowa. In Poznan it was the Prołuż⁸² organization. The western ideas were also supported by Polish historiography and literature of western lands. As Halina Tumolska points out, in the period right after the war in historiography itself and literature there was a great interest of the historians and writers in the issue of the historical fate of that area with the special consideration of (1) the Piast times (2) the Polish origin of the west border (3) the history of Polish-German conflict (4) the Polish settlement after WWII.⁸³ In turn, on the popular culture grounds those were numerous films, music works, dramas, and performances moulding the picture of a German as an aggressor and fascist. What should be added here, was the growing number of national holidays, monuments and tablets and accompanying ceremonies, with systematically recounting Germany as eternal enemy of

⁸⁰ M. Tomczak, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 174.

⁸² As M. Tomczak notices those topics are in known brochure by Wanda Goebel *Wyspa zapomnianych*, Poznań 1947. Quoted after: M. Tomczak, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

⁸³ H. Tumolska, *Mitologia kresow zachodnich w pamiętnikarstwie i beletrystyce polskiej (szkice do dziejow kultury pogranicza)*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2007, pp. 7-17.

Poland and the Polish. The contemporary anti German historical policy was also influenced by the widespread practice of taking over and very often destroying of German heritage on the Polish grounds. It was peculiarly understood URBICIDE and WARCHITECTURE concerning chosen city districts and objects. The process was started with the allied counter offensive in Europe and liberation of Poland by the Red Army together with the Polish Army when cities like Wrocław, Szczecin or Gdańsk functioning as German fortresses fell victims of unprecedented destruction, first on the allied part and the by the Red Army. The continuation of the process consisted in taking over and also rebuilding, but under different names and in different functions, post German secular and sacred objects and public and private buildings. WARCHITECTURE affected also, continued till the sixties of the 20th century, planned and systematic close-down of the German cemeteries. As can be seen reference to the institutions and people connected with western thought, accompanied not only the public debate -academic and political-revolving around the legitimization of the western and northern lands as *stricte* Polish ones (with Polish, ideologically shaped historical genealogy), but also the process of taking over and adaptation of that land by Poland.

In 1945 Polish Western Association was reactivated in Poznań. As Maria Tomczak observes:

... the political activity take up by PZZ (Polish Western Association) had a many-sided character and was connected almost exclusively with western lands. The Association took active part in the operation of displacement of Germans and in the settlement action, in the activities connected with verification and repatriation of indigenous inhabitants and in the fight with the manifestation of German influence. It also carried out its own widespread information—propaganda activity, which was aiming at informing the Polish society and international opinion about the Polish rights to Western Lands about the level of development, progressing integration and re-Polonization.⁸⁴

That consistent cooperation and of representing the Polish western thought scientists and authorities of PRL (Polish People's Republic) did not last long. The communist authorities started becoming suspicious of so called "western" researchers. The quoted already Tomczak cites the following excerpt from "Dziennik Ludowy:" in Western Association all the former, well-known personages of pre-September regime made themselves nests.... so we can see professor Zygmunt Wojciechowski, a distinguished ideologist of Polish nationalism and outstanding political activist in the foremost workstation.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ M. Tomczak, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

⁸⁵ „Dziennik Ludowy,” 1945 no. 12; quoted after: M. Tomczak, *op. cit.* p. 175.

Similar in its tone criticism of “western thought” was articulated on the pages of “Trybuna Robotnicza” which blamed the “west researchers” for the continuation of the Sanacja policy of national treason and the defeat initiated by ONR and OZN.⁸⁶ In the note from 1952, concerning the Western Institute, the bad climate which was created around “western” researchers was stressed:

Politically Western Institute has been captured by a group of Catholics gathered around Professor Wojciechowski. The administrative—technical personnel is also selected from the point of view of their political Catholicism. The Party does not have any influence on the way the Institute works, especially on the subject matter and the methods applied.⁸⁷

Years 1949–1955 are assessed as the crisis of Polish knowledge of the German issue. Mistakes made by some activists when assessing the internal situation in Germany are particularly stressed. These errors include ignoring German issues as a part of international situation where “aggressive politics of American imperialism”⁸⁸ was diagnosed as the dominant. The fate of (Western Institute) IZ was hanging by a thread (there was a proposal to transform it into a place studying the history of Western Slavs). The pressure concerned mainly the party oriented “set up” of the scientific research. The compromise on the part of IZ (Western Institute) was the cooperation with PAX, within which there was a shared publication of a Catholic magazine, “Życie i Myśl,” which resulted more from the desire to avoid more repressions on part of the state authorities, than the change of ideological attitude of IZ (Western Institute) Against expectations- the decision made (alliance with PAX) had a reverse result. The motion to close the magazine was put forward and against IZ (Western Institute) there were more repressions, expressed by limitations in the funds for further research. At the end of 1940s and the beginning of 1950s of the 20th century a few staff members were arrested. Only the authority of Wojciechowski let the institution survive though in a very cut down form. As Tomczak writes, at the moment of Wojciechowski’s death (October, 1955) the Institute had only one and a half staff employment. On the day of Professor’s funeral the decision was made to close IZ. The execution was stopped by the thaw and accompanying it change of the foreign policy of the West Germany. In such circumstances there was a return to knowledge of Germany research (institutional reconstruction took place between 1957–1959) As a part of the same indicative there were established:

⁸⁶ Quoted after: M. Tomczak, *op. cit.* p. 176.

⁸⁷ Note In the case of Western Institute, Archives of Polish Left Wing. Quoted after: M. Tomczak, *op. cit.* p. 177.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem.*

Silesia Institute in Opole, Silesian Scientific Institute in Katowice (1957) and also the Baltic Institute (1959) in Gdansk. The Western Press Agency, taking up the western subject, was called into being and Polish Western Union was reactivated—moved from Poznan to Warsaw and revived in the form of the Society of Development of Western Lands (TRZZ). The urgent task of the Society was considered to be “activation and development of Western and Northern Lands.... But also making a stand against revisionist attempts on our western borders” and also the support of integrative processes.⁸⁹

At the same time there were program changes introduced in the revived IZ (Western Institute).

The Institute concentrated mainly on the research connected with the anti-war movement in West Germany and development of East Germany, stigmatizing at the same time the signs of rebirth of nationalism and militarism in West Germany. As Tomczak observes “that programme was realized till 1970.... A part of those works was still concerned with the problem of western lands and their integration with the rest of the country.”⁹⁰ In this spirit there were works of such authors like: Zygmunt Dulczewski, Andrzej Kwilecki, Władysław Markiewicz. And among the history works of Jerzy Krasuski, Mieczysław Wojciechowski, Gerard Labuda there is a monumental monograph *Polska Granica Zachodnia. Tysiąc lat dziejów politycznych*.

One of the essential topics taken up in the research was the German issue in the context of Polish post-Yalta borders. Here still, as Tomczak mentions, “the west German politicians were perceived as epigones of the Teutonic Knights, Prussian and Hitler legacy,” as the threat to the world peace.⁹¹

It did not stop attacks on IZ for its continuation of the Polish western thought in the changed conditions of a socialist country. In KW PZPR (Executive Committee of the Party) files, quoted by Tomczak, the following note appeared:

Thanks to its founder Z. Wojciechowski, IZ became the centre focusing the clerical-national elements, basically unfriendly towards the socialist system but ready to cooperate with it on the grounds of National Front, especially in the area of fight with German revisionism considered to be a continuation of the eternal drive of German Imperialism to the east (“Drang nach Osten”).⁹²

⁸⁹ Statute TRZZ. Quoted after: M. Tomczak, *op. cit.* pp. 180-181.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem* p. 182.

⁹¹ *Ibidem* p. 183.

⁹² *Ibidem*, p. 185. The author quotes a fragment of files coming from National Archives in Poznan, Z.A. KW PZPR, Wydział Nauki i Oświaty, sygn. 74/IV/144—work evaluation IŻ in Poznaniu.

In that situation a plan was devised to incorporate the IZ (Western Institute) into the Party, which was realized soon. As a result the institution lost on popularity, rightly perceived as ‘propaganda speaking tube of the (Party) PZPR.

He change started only after 7th December, 1970, when it came to signing of the fundamental agreement between Poland and West Germany, what influenced the attitude towards the German issue in the Polish research. The prevailing so far, subject matter of so called Regained Lands was expanded then by modern studies of Germanic features, gradually returning the presence of centuries old Foreign in the west and north of Poland.⁹³ The IZ(Western Institute) studies were directed towards the internal relations and politics of West Germany, which was approved by the contemporary authorities. Meanwhile, there were a number of directives on the way in which IZ scientists should write about Germany and the Germans. Namely, in such a way that no one in the West Germany would quote their works. “That “quotation” was at that time treated almost at the same level as betrayal of national interests and disqualified as a scientist, the author of the quoted in West Germany statements.⁹⁴ Also the eighties of the 20th century did not influence the elimination of the picture of a German as an “enemy,” which was the consequence of consolidation of the former activists of PZZ and TRZZ and bringing into life the Wisla-Odra Society. The activity of the society consisted mainly in organizing for schools meetings and lectures concerning the past and the present of the west lands and also organizing the so called Piast Univerities referring to ZOKZ tradition. The Society hostile towards Germans propagated at the same time the illusory picture of good relations between Poland and East Germany.⁹⁵

In the period from mid-seventies of the 20th century there were more or less successful trials of change in the moulding of Polish-German relations, what is illustrated by research programs of numerous centres, among which there was also, discussed by us in detail, working from 1945 Poznan IZ (Western Institute).

The key changes in this field took place only after 1989, in connection with the change in the profile of the research and attitude of already existing communities responsible for the Polish studies of Germany and because of the establishment of new institutions. To those one can include, working in Wroclaw from 2002 Willy Brandt German and European Studies Centre. A separate place on the map of research over the past of the German-Polish

⁹³ H. Tumolska, *op. cit.*

⁹⁴ M. Tomczak, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁹⁵ The society ended its activity in 1995.

border in its modern version was taken up by initiatives of the editors of the magazines, which according to their programmes referred to that subject matter, among others, the editor of Wrocław "Odra," the periodic being published since 1961 and Olsztyn "Borussia" since 1990, and finally the repetitive initiatives for creating the mutual Polish-German history course book.⁹⁶ In the social dimension there were more initiatives: raised in 1991 Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation and Foundation for Polish-German Reconciliation and established in 1990 Foundation "Krzyżowa" for European reconciliation. The end of this, so fruitful, period in the story of research over the history and Polish-German memory coincided with the stormy debate on the subject of compensation for Polish forced labourers in Germany and enforced expel of Germans from Poland after 1945, and soon after that, the controversial initiative of Erika Steinbach to create in Berlin the Expelled Centre.⁹⁷

Meanwhile, in the Polish history of western thought we notice another twist, having its expression in the re-actualisation of the "old" new version of Polinization western and northern lands. From the point of view of carried by us research project,⁹⁸ one element is of special importance and it's the one which is included in point (3) mentioned by Andrzej Kwilecki related to development of "the concept" justifying the return of Western Lands to Motherland.⁹⁹ The idea had in different periods different goals to fulfil. In the post war period the prevailing accent in research works of many "western institutions" was the Polish west border and the attitude towards it. However, with the passage of time some threads started to become outdated, which not always had its reflection in the change of activity profile of the centres conducting Germany centred research. Actually, among the institutions founded shortly after the end of the war, only IZ "emerged unscathed" from that ideological trap, and which in the times of transformation inaugurated the 'western' studies on open regionalism, as an expression of enfranchisement, gradual discovery, return and promotion

⁹⁶ M. Ruchniewicz, K. Ruchniewicz, T. Weger, K. Wóycicki, *Zrozumieć historię—kształtować przyszłość. Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1933–1949. Materiały pomocnicze do nauczania historii*, under ed. K. Hartmann, Wydawnictwo Gajt, Drezno—Wrocław 2007. At the moment the works on Polish—German history course book are carried, analogical to already functioning on the European market French—German course book.

⁹⁷ Comp. A. Łada, *Debata publiczna na temat powstania Centrum przeciw Wypędzeniom w prasie polskiej i niemieckiej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Atut,” Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2006. Also: S. Jankowiak, *Wysiedlenie i emigracja ludności niemieckiej w polityce władz polskich w latach 1945–1979*, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Warszawa 2005.

⁹⁸ Comp. note 1.

⁹⁹ Comp. Wolff -Powęska, *Polskie spory o historię i pamięć*, „Przegląd Zachodni,” 2007, no. 1.

of the chosen threads of German past of Polish western and northern cities. Those activities found their material shape also in the support of many cultural initiatives, which aimed at protection of the German heritage in the area. The process, however, is not free of tensions, and one of their sources is, mentioned already, revision of the Polish western thought, as an expression of reviving in Poland national-conservative convictions.

The character of that revision is very well presented by the tone of the debate, which took place during the Szczecin conference in 2011, devoted to the “Polish western thought” and how it is perceived in the contemporary context, in the situation of growing Euro-skeptical moods.¹⁰⁰ As one of the participants of the conference, Ryszard Surmacz, noted down, the gathered in Szczecin speakers pondered to what extent the Polish western thought could influence the Polish People’s Republic propaganda and to what extent it legitimized the system, and also to what extent the issue of west border decided/decides about the Polish state affairs in the wider context of Polish interests on the international arena.¹⁰¹

What needs to be emphasized in the comment accompanying the meetings, is above all, the fact that in certain scientific events, the external political, scientific and cultural context, or a mix of these, may be important, which has its place today, in view of the severe crisis in EU inducing confrontation of thoughts and ideas of Federalists and Euro-skeptics and what is also connected with updating (revival) the former (forgotten) it seems posts in relation to especially interesting for us Polish Western Lands.

Should we be concerned about the recently “erased” borders?—asked the participants of the mentioned above conference. In answer there were arguments put forward that the cultural context is very important, and perhaps decisive about the fate of Poles and Poland. It will decide about our motor force and structural weakness.¹⁰²

Gathered in Szczecin speakers noticed, Ryszard Surmacz observed, that from Z. Wojciechowski’s death the subject matter [the problem of western lands and legitimization of those] gradually vanished or arrived “dispersed.”¹⁰³ A considerable issue was also raised, mainly, that at present the German interpretation of those processes is treated as much more credible

¹⁰⁰ R. Surmacz, *Polska myśl zachodnia*. „Mentalnie Polacy na ziemiach Zachodnich znaleźli się na bardzo niewygodnym gruncie.” An article in electronic al version: <http://wpolityce.pl/artykuly/17223-polska-mysl-zachodnia-mentalnie> [available 4 grudnia 2011], Conference in Szczecin (21–22 October, 2011).

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰² *Ibidem*.

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*.

than the Polish one (both in relation to the sources, and knowledge gained from outside sources). However, national thought cannot be extracted from general achievements of Polish thought, likewise the Catholic Church cannot be separated from the Polish culture. This thought is a part of a bigger entity [Surmacz observed].¹⁰⁴ That important message appeared in reflections around the perception of western thought after transformation. It was noticed that the very fact of reference to it, constitutes a breakthrough in the rules of the former political correctness and as such deserves appreciation. Arguments were also presented, that after the Russian troops marched out of Poland (stationed in the west lands till 1993):

... the curtain falls and it turns out that we have to deal with the 116 paragraphs of German constitution, absence of peace treaty, with the border treaty in which the definite acceptance of the border is not mentioned, but only “confirmation” with German minority, the existence of very very strong compatriot’s associations in Germany etc. All that till 1993 was beyond the imagination of a statistical Pole.¹⁰⁵

In the comment to Szczecin debate also the inhabitants of western lands were criticized for not being attached enough to their Piast background.

The argument is prosaic [Surmacz noted] because the communist propaganda called it so... After less than [seventy] years of ruling it, the Polish society (in the third generation) is convinced that [western and northern regions—I.S.A.W.] are the German possession, not noticing that this way they are pulling the carpet from under their feet.... we are not mentally prepared for loosing them.¹⁰⁶

The area which we are talking about constitutes:

... 1/3 of the territory of the Polish state. It is one of the most manipulated and hypocritical part of Poland. Poles have mentally found themselves on a very uncomfortable ground, or as a matter of fact, in the situation of its lack—not Jagiellonian and more, but not Piast related yet. This fact can arouse surprise, because they have been treading this ground for 60 years and have no idea of its geopolitical conditioning. How can one patch together a country of all this? In the face of danger of the demise of EU, or its closure within the “sphere of faster development” or “hard core” on the very border we get a group of people with consciousness of the local ones.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem.*

The criticism of the Polish western thought in its propaganda version, concerns here, especially, the situation of lack of awareness (memory?) of the source of that thought and its much too simple identification with the ideology of the socialist country. “The border on Odra and Nysa was given to us by Stalin”—we can read in Surmacz’s comment.

The above concept (a conviction, short-cut) can be often encountered in the studies considered scientific. But, what does “gave” mean?... Is Stalin more important than our national interest, and is the Red Army still staying in the regained regions? The logics is as follows: “As Stalin was bad, then the present must be bad or; as Stalin gave those regions to us then he wanted to oppress us or Germans, and we good Poles do not want to participate in it:” “expulsion,” experiencing the traces of German culture, the cult of Berlin, German injustice not relate to Polish one etc. And where is there a place for your own house, own perspective, own thought?... the young people are highly influenced by the idea of no borders and freedom of movement around the world. PRL (Polish People’s Republic) is for them a country which was bad. And that is it. They do not take into consideration the fundamental truth that absence of borders is an e for experiment and travel around the world is something natural. Working out the objective criteria of assessment of Polish People’s Republic should be a priority, especially for IPN (the Institute for National Memory).¹⁰⁸

Readjustments of Polish western thought in reaction to open regional policy, is founded, from what, among others, Jan Żaryna and Ryszard Surmacz say, on the simplified diagnosis of experience, the state of knowledge and awareness of Poles, the inhabitants of western and northern regions among the others. It is indicated by both the described above local practices of updating of the German past in the western and northern lands and the results of more and more numerous cases of research on among others: the attitude of Polish people to German heritage, the memory of the past in relation to the Polish memory of WWII or the reception of the monument of the deceased inhabitants of Wrocław, buried in a non-existing cemeteries by the present inhabitants of the city.

Social Frames of Formation of Open Regionalism in Western and Northern Regions of Poland

These and other examples of local practices of actualization of the German past, similar to more frequent cases of social research on the subject, show a vital change in the relation of Poles to the Polish-German past, the change

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem.*

(or at least pluralization) of treatment of that past included, and resignation of the classical model of the regional identity founded on the relation nation-region for transnational model and a model of *genius loci* type in its two suggested by Szpocinski types. Only when considered together they give the correct picture of the state of the regional and local identity in the modern northern and western lands. They also allow for correct diagnosis of their inhabitants' awareness in the context of a question concerning open/closed regional policy of the area.

In the first case we mean, the mentioned by us problem of the deposit and inheritance in relation to the German heritage of northern and western grounds, vividly discussed by Polish humanities and journalism since the time of publication of the text by J.J. Lipski *Dwie ojczyzny—dwa patriotyzmy*¹⁰⁹ (*Two homelands—two patriotisms*). A meaningful clue on the matter, which is the quoted in Sakson's work report, based on OBOP research from 2001 on;¹¹⁰ What to do with the German cultural heritage in the western and Northern Lands, what should be done with the hypothetical monument from before 1945 (German explorer, discoverer or a person of merit for the region). The possible choice and the breakdown of the answers looked as following: erase all the trace of German past (2%), destroyed should not be rebuilt, but at the same time but at the same time do not allow for the destruction of the objects which are in a good state (42%) rebuild, restore to the previous state (47%), something else (1%), hard to say (8%).¹¹¹ As can be seen, the opinions on that matter divide the respondents roughly by half. The distinguishing variables were here; education, provenance from a big city, a lower age, and also positive statements about Polish-German relations. Right—wing views, centre-right, or left-wing did not play any important role here. As Sakson notices, the varied answers result from, first of all, so important premises as “arguments about the interpretation of the history and assessment of its results. It is also the matter of recognition which contents should form the basis for education and formation of social attitudes.”¹¹² So in arguments like that, the differentiation of concepts and the basis for common identity of the inhabitants of the area is illustrated. The present pluralization of Polish-German memory in the local and regional dimension, the efforts on the part

¹⁰⁹ J.J. Lipski, *Dwie ojczyzny—dwa patriotyzmy. (Uwagi o megalomanii narodowej i ksenofobii Polaków)*, „Gazeta Wyborcza,” 2006/09/26 (first edition Oficyna NOWA 1981).

¹¹⁰ Studies done on commission of A. Saksona and Western Institute In Poznan. A. Sakson, *Przemiany tożsamości mieszkańców Ziemi Zachodnich i Północnych*, in: *Druga dekada wolności. Socjologiczne konsekwencje i zagadki transformacji*, (ed.) J. Frątczak-Müller, A. Mielczarek-Żejmo, L. Szczegółka, „Rocznik Lubuski,” 2010, vol. 36, part 2, pp. 316-319.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 316.

¹¹² *Ibidem*, p. 319.

of different circles of animators and many instances of success in this field, is still accompanied by the shortage of historical memory and knowledge in relation to regional and local past. Moreover, that pluralization sometimes also means that if we used Leikert's attitudes scale (from definitely yes, through rather yes, rather no, no, to definitely no) there will also be attitudes negative to actions creating the open regional politics.

The second of the mentioned already studies concerning the Polish memory of WWII,¹¹³ conducted in 2009 by a group of researchers from Pentor Research International, on directive of WWII Museum, proved that Poles in the 3rd Republic did not lose the feeling of pride of their own past.¹¹⁴ And also that Polish memory of war *anno domini* 2009 is to a great extent founded on the history and memory shaped after 1989, so in independent Poland. From the result of the survey it turns out, among others, that our hierarchy of enemies did not change—countries and nations blamed for the outbreak of the war. These are in the first place Germans, next Russians and in the third place Ukrainians.¹¹⁵ However, in the family relations it looks a bit different. Ukrainians are located in the first place (the Polish-Ukrainian conflict only recently became the subject of historical research and memory policy, so it is relatively fresh) in the second place there are Germans. Here, to what Barbara Szacka attracts our attention, though the guild of Germans and Ukrainians is incomparable, at the same time, the problem of guilt and punishment and compensation in connection with Germany was reworked and in family memories of the Polish families more and more often appear stories about good, decent Germans.¹¹⁶ The later, family memories, are a part of a wider phenomenon, mainly, the tendency to remember the war not only from the perspective of its heroes and heroic deeds (national memory) but also more and more often from the perspective of everyday was reality. (family and biographical memory). The later tendency is by Paweł Machcewicz interpreted as the need to include in the national repertoire of memory “tales of a patient civilian” which is one of the goals of being created in Gdansk WWII Muzeum.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Comp. P. Machcewicz, *Wstęp*, in: *Między codziennością a wielką historią. Druga wojna światowa w pamięci zbiorowej społeczeństwa polskiego*, eds. P.T. Kwiatkowski, L.M. Nijakowski, B. Szacka, A. Szpociński, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2010, pp. 7-8. Also: *ibidem*: P.T. Kwiatkowski, *Wprowadzenie. Doświadczenie II wojny światowej w badaniach socjologicznych*, pp. 13-14.

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 10.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem* p. 11.

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

The results of research obtained by us in connection with the reception of the symbolic domain Grabiszyn II in Wrocław, are also meaningful in this context. As we have mentioned, till the end of the sixties of the 20th century there are closed or destined to be closed 44 “foreign”—German, Jewish, and Czech necropolises. In the eighties of the 20th century, the process of inventorying of “lost disparate heritage” was started, resulting in creation of monument—necropolis layout Grabiszyn II.

In the research of the reception of that layout we were interested in three issues, which cast the light on conditions, in which the complex process of creating Wrocław as an open city (multicultural, meeting place) among others, in relation to its German heritage takes place.

The first issue concerned the perception of Grodziszyn II monument from the perspective of the national conflict, understood as a historical experience of the 20th century conflicts, transformed into the symbolic sphere, as a conflict about symbols and monuments “foreign” in this case German, in the Polish local landscape.

The second concerned the relation of Wrocław inhabitants to Grabiszyn monument in the context of cultural ritual of remembering the deceased.

The third one concerned the history/memory knowledge supporting the raise of Grabiszyn II monument and its share in the process of recognition/establishing the meanings of that layout among the present inhabitants of Wrocław.

The received results cast the light on, understood wider and supported by other examples complex process of constructing of the cultural memory being the basis for the opened regionalism, in the context and with the participation of historical politics of the state, especially in connection with signed in 1991 in Bonn, Polish—German agreement on friendship and mutual cooperation. The agreement also settles the matters of German deported and killed, buried in Poland, the memory of whom is the subject of concern within the scope of activity of existing from 1994 Polish-German Foundation Pamięć (Memory) and POMOST Society.

The first conclusion, resulting from Wrocław research concerns the perception of Grabiszyn II monument from the perspective of the ethnic-national conflict, understood as a historical experience of Wrocław inhabitants, transferred to the symbolic sphere, so as a conflict about the possession of the symbolic place by one ethnic group at the expense of the other.¹¹⁸ Here, although more than a half of the respondents (59%) discerns the possibility of such a conflict, also half of them (55%) stated that Grabiszyn

¹¹⁸ L.M. Nijakowski, *Domeny symboliczne. Konflikty narodowe i etniczne w wymiarze symbolicznym*, Wydawnictwo Scholar, Warszawa 2006.

II monument does not serve the purpose of allocating of the symbolic place by one group at the expense of the other. The Wrocław inhabitants then feel at home and the initiative of commemorating of, also German, deceased is not perceived by them only in political categories but also cultural categories. The same in terms of numbers group (more than 50%) considered Grabiszyn II as a monument layout directed against traditional nationalistic values, and so in its nature open to other than national values. It is confirmed by the answer to the question if Grabiszyn II monument is based on the opposition (local-foreign) or if it rather testifies the history of the city. The respondents definitely indicated the monument as the one testifying the complex history of the city (77% indications)

As very important for our research concerning the perception of Grabiszyn II in terms of the ethnic conflict, we also consider the fact that the respondents were against the “correction” of the symbolic objects, meaning their destruction as foreign objects and substituting them with “local” ones. As many as 81% did not support such practice, every tenth person answered ‘yes’ (10%) and only 9% did not have any opinion on that matter.

The second conclusion results from the question about the functions, which in the respondents’ opinion, are fulfilled by Grabiszyn layout. As the most important function the respondents considered the cultural practice of paying tribute to those who passed away (36% indications). The second in turn was the image function connected with the promotion of Wrocław as a multicultural city (34% indication). For 12% of the respondents Grabiszyn is the expression of the historical policy of the state and for 8% the result of implementation of the rules for political correctness.

In connection with the question if Grabiszyn II creates new values, the respondents do not necessarily see them (only 25% of the respondents said that it is so, 36% stated that behind the domain there are no new values and 39% had no opinion). The explanation here could be the fact of strong identification of Grabiszyn II monument with the obligation to remember the dead in the cultural dimension (which is the timeless, universal value, not new, connected with experiencing the death as the break in time continuity and not as a serious demand of historical politics).

In turn, a question about the new values in the context of Polish-German relations, and taking into consideration the young age of the respondents and the fact that their historical awareness in the last 20 years was shaped by historical policy of the country, directed in the first place towards the

Polish-German reconciliation, we can assume, that the value of that reconciliation is for them something they grew up with and what is very well recognized. Known from the earlier times, antagonist approach to

Polish-German relations was not experienced by them to the same degree as experienced by their grandparents and parents.

The third conclusion coming from our research concerns the role of historical knowledge in the process of imparting meanings to the symbolic domain Grabiszyn II. So, when defining the functions of Grabiszyn II monument, the respondents pointed out clearly that, besides responsibility of respect for the dead, there are cognitive functions related to history and historical memory (in proportion 32% to 29%). As many as 78,3% of the respondents stressed that knowledge of the reason for establishing of the Grabiszyn layout is essential and only 4,4% stated that such knowledge is not important. It means that there is conviction in the younger generation about the essential role of the second degree history (according to Pierre Nora¹¹⁹) in moulding the historical awareness.

Conclusion

In the idea of open regionalism, supported by such models of revision of the past (memory constructions) as transnational or *genus loci*, there is also absolute necessity to include revision of the Polish western thought as the turn to tradition of having access to regional memory history also by the state or nation. It results from the assumption about free flow of goods and information, as the basis for moulding the collective relations to the past in northern and western regions of Poland, understood by us as open regions, where both the grassroots initiatives of updating the regional past as multicultural and also shaped by the state and its institutions new historical policy directed to revival of the Polish spirit in this region come to the fore. The clash of these two systems of moulding the history/memory of northern and western lands, especially the public debate on different identities of their inhabitants, find the place in a widely understood political history, about which Barbara Szacka and Anna Wolff-Powęska write, that it is conscious but intentional study of the past by the state and its institutions, shown "in different fields of activity" from "scientific, purely cognitive, public and aesthetic aspect" "to strongly stressed political dimension of history, being a part of historical awareness and historical culture." Historical awareness

¹¹⁹ P. Nora, *Between memory and history*, [in:] *Realms of memory. Rethinking the French past*, Vol. 1: *Conflicts and divisions*, ed. by P. Nora, trans. A. Goldhammer, Columbia University Press, New York 1996.

represents the subjective factor of the historical process. It needs care, inspiration and most of all arguments.¹²⁰

And the argument is what it is all about, about the right to express different views and undertake different practices of memory, in the context of progressing pluralization of the social relations to the regional past, where both the citizen and the state, both the supporters of the open, as well as closed regionalism have the same right to express opinions and present their arguments.

In view of the questions about the memory and identity of the present northern and western lands of Poland, the answer is not contained in the statement which option will win but in the public debate on the topic and the fact that the debate like this is going on and that it takes into consideration all the social actors engaged in the updating of the history/memory of these regions.

This is how the open regionalism differs from the closed one, mainly by the fact that it allows for updating of many experiences and expectations, the acting (articulation, action) of which in the public debate, shows different, valuable form the point of view of all the social actors, national, regional, local and private, anchored in the past but also running into the future senses.

Open Regional Policy within the Frames of the Debate about Memory of the Western and Northern Parts of Poland

by Izabela Skorzyńska and Anna Wachowiak

Abstract

Updating German heritage, especially on former Regained Lands, is related to the complex process of reminding (bringing back) multicultural past of Poland in transformation conditions—democratization and public spirited social life after 1989. This process refers to Poland as a whole, as well as regional and local one too. It

¹²⁰ A. Wolff -Powęska, *Polskie spory o historię i pamięć*, „Przegląd Zachodni,” 2007/1, p. 9. Also by author reference to: B. Szacka, *Pamięć społeczna*, in: *Encyklopedia socjologii*, vol 3., Warszawa 2000, p. 54 also amongst others O. Steinbach, *Erinnerung und Gesichtspolitik. Ein Gespräch mit Prof. Dr. Peter Steinbach*, „Universitas,” 1995, Jg. 50, pp. 181-194; E. Wolfrum, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949–1989. Phasen und Kontroversen*, [in:] P. Bock, E. Wolfrum, *Umkämpfte Vergangenheit. Geschichtsbilder, Erinnerung und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen 1999, pp. 55-81.

concerns both practices revealing open regional policy accepting German heritage on western and northern parts of Poland and contrary ones typical for closed regional policy. In the first case due to open regional policy there appear in public sphere (are reminded) both German heritage—history and memory of Germans as former inhabitants of these territories, and those traditions, especially Polish thoughts related to the west, which used to serve the battle against the Germanization practices as well as promotion of Polish north and west as traditional Polish areas. However, advocates of closed regional policy, contradicting the updating of German heritage on these lands, express demand in politicians and social activist speeches as well as scientists, the re-Polonization of Wrocław, Gdańsk and Szczecin memories. In both cases the keyword is dispute associated with shaping open-closed regional policy concerning the former Regained Lands and arguments which are expressed in this dispute. Appealing to history and memory of Polish western and northern lands and to results of social inquires (carried out by us and other research groups) we present the process of forming the open regional policy in western and northern parts of Poland.

Keywords: memory and local/regional history, open/closed regional policy, democratization, public spirited social life, updating of German cultural heritage in Poland, re-polonization of western and northern parts of Poland.