

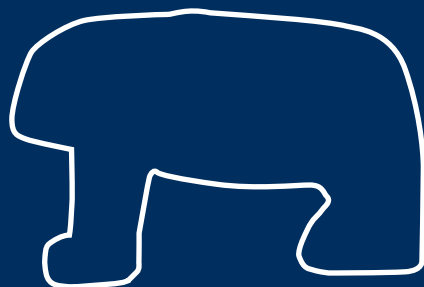


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ŚLĄSKI KWARTALNIK HISTORYCZNY SOBÓTKA



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ŚLĄSKI KWARTALNIK HISTORYCZNY SOBÓTKA

WARS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES
IN THE HISTORY OF SILESIA (10TH –20TH CENTURY)

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EDITORIAL

The forthcoming, third, English-language special issue of the “Silesian Historical Quarterly *Sobótka*” is devoted to the phenomenon of wars in the history of Silesia. The reason for taking up this issue was the “round“ historical anniversaries, though chronologically and internally distant, as they cover the years from the Peace of Bautzen (1018) to the territorial changes in Central Europe short before the Second World War (1938). These events are 900 years apart and can serve as a kind of bracket to discuss the diverse aspects of the past concerning the course and consequences of military conflicts in the history of the areas on both banks of the Oder River from the Middle Ages to the 20th century.

The volume opens with a synthetic article by Jerzy Maroń, analysing the place of Silesia in armed conflicts through the centuries, i.e. an area treated both as the starting point for excursions into neighbouring territories, and not only in relation to Poland. Also as battlefields in wars on a continental scale, in various historical epochs up to the present times.

The medieval military struggles were the subject of an analytical reflection by Stanisław Rosik, who focused on the ways in which the source narrative was shaped in the *Chronicle* written down in the second decade of the 11th century by Thietmar of Merseburg. The analysis concerns the report on the 3rd war (1015–1018) between the emperor (from 1014 till 1024) Henry II and then duke of Poland Bolesław I the Brave which ended with the Peace Treaty of Bautzen. Although the Emperor’s campaign was not successful and ended with the retreat of his troops with the threat of even defeat, the chronicler nevertheless, averse to the Slavs, biasedly declared him victorious.

Wojciech Iwańczak took as an object of his research interest the internal riots against the City Council, which occurred in Wrocław in July 1418 on social grounds, i.e. the dissatisfaction of the inhabitants due to the imposition of new taxes. Sigismund of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia and ruler of Silesia, treated the rioters harshly, with many of them being beheaded or sentenced to banishment. He also restricted the right of assembly, as Hussite ideas began to seep into Silesia from Bohemia, from 1419 being adopted by the urban poor and peasants. The events depicted in the text are rightly regarded by the Author as a prelude to the long-lasting Hussite Wars in

Bohemia, which soon reached Lower Silesia and continued in this part of Europe until the 1530s.

In turn, the Thirty Years' War fought between 1618 and 1648 by the Protestant states against the Catholic Habsburg dynasty, and more specifically the content of the political writings of the Silesian dukes and estates, which justified the necessity of armed action against the Habsburgs on the Bohemian throne – Matthias II, then Ferdinand II – is the subject of the article, by Gabriela Waś. Analysing their contents, the Author concluded that the conflict of that time, was little concerned with religious matters, but was rather a defence against the ruler's abuses, so that, above all, there was a military dispute over the political competence of the ruler and his subjects.

A strictly military analysis of the warfare was presented by Dariusz Nawrot, in an article on the events in Silesia during the Napoleonic campaigns – both those lost by Prussia in 1806 and 1807, and also during the war which was victorious for it in 1813. The Author challenges the legend of German historiography of the then supposedly widespread Prussian patriotism among the Silesian people, ready to make sacrifices. He underlines the lack of involvement of Silesians in 1806 and 1807. During the successful year 1813, however, mobilization of student youth and the bourgeoisie, favourable to the authorities after the reforms of ministers Stein and Hardenberg, saved Prussian state. So, these were not the social groups that should defend a feudal state.

Events a century later are referred to in an article by Teresa Kulak, titled "Political and Territorial Divisions in Silesia 1919–1926", in which she discusses internal affairs in Silesia related to the plebiscite held in Upper Silesia on 22nd March 1921, the results of which determined its political division between Germany and Poland in 1922. Less attention is paid, however, to the fact that the Prussian government, supreme for the whole of Silesia, in order to gain Upper Silesians in the future plebiscite, divided the Province of Silesia on 14th October 1919, into the Upper Silesian Province, administratively limited to the Opole Regierungsbezirk, and the Lower Silesian Province, with the Regierungsbezirks of Wrocław and Legnica, and an administrative centre in Wrocław. This was fiercely protested against by the Lower Silesians, for whom the division of the province meant a weakening of the position of Silesia as a whole within the Reich and in relation to a reborn Poland. They were reunited following Hitler's decision in 1939, on the symbolic date of 21st March.

Ryszard Kaczmarek, author of the text on Upper Silesia from the perspective of the area, focuses on German preparations for World War II. He recognised there that as early as 1938, in Upper Silesia not only a political game in this part of Europe had been set up, concerning the political influence of the Third Reich and the Western states, especially Great Britain. For Hitler, it was also important to initiate an experiment to test the methods of occupation, for their application in wartime. In 1945, it turned out that all of Hitler's conquests had ended in the defeat of the Third Reich and resulted in the shifting of the Polish-German border to the west. This brought to an end to the history of German Silesia.

As Miscellaneum, Wojciech Mrozowicz presented a discussion of the unique diary called *Diarium ab anno 1756 usque ad annum 1781*, written by the parish priest of Krzewina, one of the Catholic parishes in the area of Upper Lusatia. The diarium chronologically covers i.a. the period of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), also known as the Third Silesian War, and depicts the tragic consequences of the war for the region's population, in the form of disease and famine.

Whereas the review part of the issue includes an overview of a book on the theory of war and peace in the 17th century by Lucyna Harc and texts by Paweł Jaworski, Maciej Fic, Krystian Maciej Szudarek and Małgorzata Ruchniewicz on current publications related to the political events of 1918 and their consequences for Central and Eastern Europe. This issue is also addressed in the concluding Chronicle by Marek Białokur, which contains an extensive discussion of the celebrations of the centenary of Poland's independence, particularly in Opole Silesia.

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SILESIA AS A THEATRE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT THE AGES

ŚLĄSK JAKO TEREN WOJENNY NA PRZESTRZENI DZIEJÓW

ABSTRACT: The location of Silesia and Lusatia in Central Europe, their geographical conditions, the network of transport routes, as well as the geopolitical and military situation, determined the concepts for the use of the Silesian-Lusatian region for military operations as early as in the 14th century. Situated in the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor, it was used as a base for military activities both on the north-south axis, as well as in the north-east direction (against Wielkopolska and Poland) and in the west direction (towards Berlin and Dresden). It was not until the second half of the 20th century that Silesia became a rear area and hopefully it will not be used in that role.

KEYWORDS: military geography, military history, Silesian history

Introduction

The territory of Silesia and Lusatia as an area of military operations has been extensively studied in relation to the Middle Ages¹, the Thirty Years' War², the Silesian

¹ Benon Miśkiewicz, *Studia nad obroną polskiej granicy zachodniej w okresie wczesnofeudalnym*, Poznań 1961 (Dzieje polskiej granicy zachodniej, 1), pp. 21–50; Karol Olejnik, *Obrona polskiej granicy zachodniej 1138–1385*, Poznań 1970 (Dzieje polskiej granicy zachodniej, 5), pp. 23–39; Joseph Partsch, *Schlesien als Kriegsschauplatz*, [in:] *Schlesien. Eine Landeskunde für das deutsche Volk*, vol. 1, *Das ganze Land*, Breslau 1896, pp. 394–420.

² Jerzy Maroń, *Śląsk jako teatr działań wojennych w czasie wojny trzydziestoletniej*, „Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka”, 47 (1992), pp. 313–321; *idem*, *Operacyjna rola bramy łużyckiej*, [in:] *350 rocznica Pokoju Westfalskiego na terenach Euroregionu NYSA 1648–1998*, Jelenia

Wars of the 18th century³ and the Prussian-Austrian War of 1866⁴. From a military point of view, the real Gordian knot is the incompatibility of geographical, historical and military approaches. For geographers, Silesia as a separate administrative unit does not exist, because its territory is located within the territorial range of the North European Plain, the Bohemian Massif, the Carpathian Mountains and Outer Subcarpathia, as well as the so-called Western Europe⁵. Some Polish geographers understand the term “Silesia” as one of the historical districts of Poland, quite clearly separated from Małopolska, Pomerania and Wielkopolska⁶. In turn, scholars of Silesia’s past recognize a significant duality and inconsistency in the use of the term, and this was particularly strongly accentuated by Kazimierz Orzechowski⁷, an outstanding expert on Silesian history.

However, for geographic-military analyses, the aforementioned considerations of geographers and historians are of secondary importance. For, adopting a physiographic criterion, three distinct components of Silesia can be distinguished: mountains (the Sudetes together with the Sudeten Foreland, the western part of the Carpathians together with the Outer Subcarpathia), lowlands (the pre-Sudeten area) and uplands (the Silesian Upland). The Sudetes and the western part of the Carpathians form a kind of wall, defending the borders of both Silesia and the Bohemian Citadel⁸. In Silesia, the key axis is the Oder River, dividing the whole area into two distinct parts with its large volume of water⁹. Among military writers the prevailing view questions the military significance of mountains as obstacles to

Góra 1999, pp. 29–38; *idem*, *Operacyjna rola Górnych Łużyc*, [in:] *Górne Łużyce na przestrzeni wieków*, ed. Jerzy Maroń, Łukasz Tekiel, Lubań, 2007 (Lubańskie Studia Historyczne, 1), pp. 80–92; Łukasz Tekiel, *Die operative Bedeutung der Stadt Zittau während des Dreissigjährigen Krieges*, “Neues Lausitzisches Magazin”, NF, 12 (2009), pp. 49–58; *idem*, *Wojna trzydziestoletnia na Górnych Łużycach. Aspekty militarne*, Racibórz 2010, pp. 56–66.

³ Robert Kisiel, *Strzegom–Dobromierz 1745*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 66–73.

⁴ Adam Pudelka, *Wehrgeographie der Innersudetischen Pässe. Eine wehrgeographische Betrachtung*, “Schlesische Monatshefte”, 1934/36, pp. 203–221.

⁵ Jerzy Kondracki, *Geografia fizyczna Polski*, Warszawa 1965, pp. 256–263.

⁶ Andrzej Piskozub, *Dziedzictwo polskiej przestrzeni. Geograficznohistoryczne podstawy struktur przestrzennych ziem polskich*, Wrocław 1987, pp. 44–45, 47, 50, 54–55, 56.

⁷ Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Terytorialne podziały na Śląsku*, “Kwartalnik Opolski”, 17 (1970), pp. 55 ff.

⁸ Jerzy Kondracki, *Geografia Polski. Mezoregiony fizyczno-geograficzne*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 157–182, Fig. 19, pp. 158–159.

⁹ Partsch, *Schlesien als Kriegsschauplatz*, p. 409; Kondracki, *Geografia fizyczna Polski*, pp. 258 ff.

warfare¹⁰, but it must nevertheless be pointed out that they determine the capabilities of operating armies.

In the case of Lower Silesia, there are several gates in the southern wall of the Sudetes providing convenient marching conditions and several passages much more difficult to cross for large groups of troops. Almost in the centre of the mountain chain the Lubawka Gate is located, lying between the east edge of the Karonosze Mountains and the western border of the Wałbrzyskie and Stone Mountains. The Lubawka Gate is also conveniently connected with the Mioszów Depression and the Ścinawka Depression, stretching between Mioszów and the Kłodzko Basin. From Kłodzko it is easy to get to Náchod through the Polskie Wrota Pass, which separates the Orlické Mountains from the Levinské Hills, and from there to the Upa River. Access to the Kłodzko Basin from the north is much more difficult. It is closed by the Owl and Bardzkie Mountains, although both ranges are not very high, yet due to the sharp northern tectonic edge, they are a serious obstacle to cross. There are three “wickets” crossing them: Srebrna Pass, Kłodzka Pass and, in the Bardo area, the Nysa Kłodzka Gorge. They are considered to be one of the easiest positions to defend in Silesia. Mountain ranges located to the east, reaching deeply to the south, prevent larger groups of troops from passing along the north-south axis. Communication only becomes possible in the Opawskie Mountains, on the line Głuchołazy – Cukmantl.

The north-eastern border (with Wielkopolska) and the eastern border with Małopolska and the Łęczyca-Sieradz and Sandomierz lands are much less distinct, due to historical changes in political borders, both district and state ones¹¹. Therefore, an important question arises how to relate the geographical approach and the historical-geographical approach to the military one, and in the latter the problem arises as to which of the military-geographical levels should Silesia be classified.

¹⁰ Antoine H. Jomini, *Zarys sztuki wojennej*, Warszawa 1966, pp. 56 ff.; Partsch, *Schlesien als Kriegsschauplatz*, s. 395; Roman Umiastowski, *Granice polityczne, naturalne i obronne w czasach wojny i pokoju*, Kraków 1925, p. 75.

¹¹ Today, both Częstochowa and the Silesian-Dąbrowa Basin are part of the Upper Silesian Voivodship. In 1950, political reasons led to the creation of the Opole Voivodeship, an organism amongst several other administrative and self-governmental curiosities in contemporary Poland.

A military-historical approach

In this respect, the most relevant term used by military writers is a theatre of military operations (TMO). It has a long tradition in military writing, pioneered by Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine Henri Jomini. The Prussian theorist defined the theatre of military operations as “Eigentlich denkt man sich darunter einen solchen Teil des ganzen Kriebsraumes, der gedeckte Seiten und dadurch eine gewisse Selbständigkeit hat. Diese Deckung kann in Festungen liegen, in großen Hindernissen der Gegend, auch in einer beträchtlichen Entfernung von dem übrigen Kriebsraum. – Ein solcher Teil ist kein bloßes Stück des Ganzen, sondern selbst ein kleines Ganze, welcher dadurch mehr oder weniger in dem Fall ist, daß die Veränderungen, welche sich auf dem übrigen Kriebsraum zutragen, keinen unmittelbaren, sondern nur einen mittelbaren Einfluß auf ihn haben”¹². It was obvious that Silesia was not in itself a theatre of military operations, but the problem remained: what then was Silesia and what is it now? Here it comes with the help of a proposal by Jomini, a rival of Clausewitz, “On doit entendre, par zône d’opérations, une certain fraction du théâtre de la general de la guerre, qui serait parcourue par une armée dans un but determine, et principalement lorsque ce but serait combiné avec celui d’une armée secondaire. Par exemple, dans l’ensemble du plan campagne

¹² Claus von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, [in:] *Hinterlassene Werke über Krieg und Kriegführung*, vol. 1, 2nd edition, Berlin 1857, Buch V.2. Due to the multitude of editions of this work, including electronic ones, I quote it, in the same way as scholars of antiquity and medievalists quote sources. In the Polish military literature, this approach has been popularised by General Zygmunt Duszyński, who wrote about the TMO as a territory [for the maritime theatre: the coast and water space] on which the armed forces of the warring parties concentrate and conduct military operations in order to fulfill the strategic tasks set for them by the policy. [...] Each theatre of military operations constitutes a single whole, as a result of its geographical characteristics as well as its political significance. The natural borders of the theatre of military operations are geographical factors (sea, deserts, great rivers, mountains) and political ones (borders of states not taking part in the war): Zygmunt Duszyński, *Uwagi o powstaniu, rozwoju i ogólnych zasadach sztuki operacyjnej*, “Myśl Wojskowa”, 4 (1953), 1, pp. 47 ff. These terms were systematized by Zbigniew Parucki, *Teatry wojny i teatry działań wojennych*, “Biuletyn Wojskowej Akademii Politycznej”, 3–4 (1957), pp. 44–81. In the civilian circles, Clausewitz’s proposals were promoted by Karol Olejnik and Stanisław Alexandrowicz: “The theatre of war of a given state is the area which the army of that state must defend in order for it to retain its previous possessions and sometimes even its independence. Thus, it will be, on the one hand, an area of struggle against an attacking enemy, and on the other, areas decisive for maintaining the army in a state of combat readiness due to the fact that they will provide human and material reinforcements. The theatre of war of a given country may also be those areas which are the subject of intended political and military penetration”: Stanisław Aleksandrowicz, Karol Olejnik, *Charakterystyka polskiego teatru działań wojennych*, “Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości”, 26 (1983), p. 27.

de 1796, l'Italie était la zone d'opérations de la droite; la Bavière était celle de l'armée du centre (Rhin-et-Moselle); enfin la Franconie était la zone de l'armée gauche (Sombre-et-Meuse)¹³. Even from this perspective, Silesia is not a separate "area of military operations", remaining a part of a larger whole¹⁴. However, a closer definition of the area of military operations to which Silesia can be assigned is possible by pointing to its location in Central Europe and the importance of this fact¹⁵.

The territory of Central Europe is merely a historical-geographical or political-geographical term. This term covers the part of Europe that is a bridge between the Baltic Sea and the Adriatic and Black Seas, bounded by the Saale and Elbe rivers in the west and the Dnieper and Dvina rivers in the east¹⁶. Considered on a global scale, in the Central European geostrategic region and part of the European strategic region, the western part of Lower Silesia is a fragment of the Baltic-Adriatic passage, or more precisely its northern part, located between the Baltic Sea and the Sudeten and Carpathian Mountains. The western borderlands of Silesia already lie in the north-south passage, between Szczecin and Venice¹⁷.

From the Polish point of view, the most important is the latitudinal significance (east-west) of this narrowing, referred to as gates. In this view, the gates enabling

¹³ Antoine-Henri Jomini, *Précis de l'art de la guerre, ou Nouveau tableau analytique des principales combinaisons de la stratégie, de la grande tactique et de la politique militaire*, Paris 1837, p. 195. I use the second edition of the work, as the Polish translation is based on the first edition, which is much more scanty.

¹⁴ In reference to the Polish, Eastern, theatre of war, General Eduard Wilhelm Hans von Liebert divided it into 3 theatres of military operations: North-Eastern, Eastern and South-Eastern. See Sarmaticus, [E. W. H. von Liebert], *Der Polnische Kriegsschauplatz. Militärgeographische Studie*, vol.1 *Der nordpolnische Kriegsschauplatz*, Hannover 1880, p. 1, vol.2 *Der südpolnische Kriegsschauplatz. Operationstudien*, Hannover 1880, pp. 2, 4–5. In his next book he used a different terminological grid for the area of military operations (*Operationfelde*); *idem*, *Von der Weichsel zum Dnjepr. Geographische, kriegsgeschichtliche und operative Studie*, Hannover 1886, p. 323.

¹⁵ The nodal character of Silesia, including Wrocław, in Central Europe, was strongly emphasised by Grzegorz Myśliwski, who linked Silesia, together with Bohemia and Hungary (and thus together with Slovakia and Transylvania) and southern Poland (western Małopolska), to the Sudeten-Carpathian Zone. To the north, this zone was adjacent to the Baltic-Hanseatic Zone, to the west to the Lusatian-Saxon-Turanian Zone, to the southwest to the Upper German zone (Bavaria, Franconia, Swabia, Württemberg, Alsace, Switzerland and Austria) and to the east and southeast to the Black Sea Zone. More importantly, the border between the Baltic Zone and the Sudeten Carpathian-Zone ran through Silesia. See Grzegorz Myśliwski, *Wrocław w przestrzeni gospodarczej Europy (XIII–XV wiek). Centrum czy peryferie?*, Wrocław 2009, pp. 61–62, 63, 65, 67. He was inspired by the work: Marian Małowist, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w XIII–XVI wieku. Konfrontacja struktur społeczno-gospodarczych*, Warszawa 1973, pp. 25–26.

¹⁶ Stanisław Herbst, *Znaczenie strategiczne Europy Środkowej w II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *idem*, *Potrzeba historii, czyli o polskim stylu życia. Wybór pism*, Warszawa 1978, vol. 2, p. 412.

¹⁷ Zbigniew Lach, Andrzej Łaszczuk, *Geografia bezpieczeństwa*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 161, 168.

the passage from west to east and vice versa are of key importance. Three of the four gates, distinguished by historians, are located at the edge of Lower Silesia: Lubusz Gate, Krosno Gate and Lusatian Gate (actually the Upper Lusatian Gate in the area of Zgorzelec, Lubań and Żytawa)¹⁸. Nowadays, due to the development of motorization, the Krosno Gate has become a part of the Lubusz Gate¹⁹. In the past, the complex of the Lower Silesian and Lusatian Forests separating the Krosno Gate from the Lusatian Gate determined the east-west direction of military operations, but in military terms it did not constitute the western barrier-border of Lower Silesia, since the distance from Zgorzelec to Legnica meant a mere three days' march for infantry and two days' march for cavalry, while for motorised and armoured troops it took just about 11 hours²⁰.

Polish historical-military literature usually neglected discussions on the significance of Silesia in the south-north direction and vice versa, thus overlooking the key significance of the gates: the Lusatian one, opening the way into Bohemia, and the Lubusz one, allowing entry into Brandenburg and Western Pomerania²¹. This is perfectly understandable, as this role of Silesia was fully revealed in the struggles in which the Rzeczpospolita, for various reasons, did not participate, or in the post-Partition period, when the Polish state no longer existed. Hence, it makes sense to treat Silesia as an essential part of the Silesian-Lusatian theatre of military operations (*Operationfelde, zone d'opérations*), forming the eastern part of the Saxon-Silesian theatre of military operations. More importantly, two strategic directions, namely east-west

¹⁸ Benon Miśkiewicz, *Studia nad obroną polskiej granicy zachodnie w okresie wczesnofeudalnym*, Poznań 1961, pp. 30, 46 ff.; Stanisław Herbst, *Polski teatr wojny*, [in:] *idem, Potrzeba historii*, vol. 2, p. 438.

¹⁹ Bolesław Balcerowicz, *Czynniki geograficzne w strategii wojennej RP. Skrypt*, Warszawa 1991, p. 5. Three "routes" corresponded with this division: "the Margrave Road", the Lubusz Gate (the Toruń–Berlin Glacial Valley) and the Lusatian Gate. The first, the "coastal" one, led towards the Baltic republics; the second, the central one: through the Lubusz Gate towards Poznań, Warsaw and the central regions of Russia; and the third, the south one, from Saxony through the Lusatian Gate towards Ukraine. The result of a certain terminological inconsistency is the use of a different conceptual (operational) framework which does not correlate well with military-geographical terms. The three "routes" roughly correspond with the three operational directions: the Mecklenburg, the Lubusz and the Lusatian, Bolesław Balcerowicz, Jacek Pawłowski, Józef Marczak, *Problemy obrony Polski. Opracowanie studyjne*, Warszawa 1993, p. 231.

²⁰ The daily march standard is 30 km (infantry), 50 km (cavalry), 280 km (wheeled vehicles) and 200 km (tracked vehicles). A 2–3 day effort can be up to twice that.

²¹ The only exception was General Balcerowicz, who recognised the matter, but for political reasons limited it to the route leading from the „Sudeten Passes to Szczecin” and from the Moravian Gate to Gdańsk (“Amber Road”), see Balcerowicz, *Czynniki geograficzne*, p. 5. In his proposition, the Lusatian Gate did not exist, as it was on the territory of the western neighbour, namely West Germany.

and north-south, intersect in this area and each of them includes separate operational directions. The first includes 2 directions: the Lubusz and Lusatian, and the second includes 3 ones: the Lusatian, the “Sudeten” (from the Sudeten Passes, a controversial concept to say the least) and “Amber” (from the Moravian Gate to Gdańsk)²².

Road network

From the point of view of the military exploitation concept, apart from the demographic potential, the road network played a key role for the Silesian-Lusatian zone of military operations. In Silesia two transport axes were clearly visible and the first one, latitudinal, was formed by two main routes, one of which led from Dresden to Wrocław, through Zgorzelec, Bolesławiec, Chojnów, Legnica, Prochowice and Środa Śląska²³. It was supplemented by the old Podsudecka Road from Budziszyn through Gryfów Śląski, Lwówek Śląski, Jelenia Góra, Świdnica, Dzierżoniów, Ząbkowice Śląskie, Ziębice and Nysa. It was possible to get from Lwówek to Zgorzelec via Leśna²⁴. From the Podsudecka Road southwards there were routes leading to the Bohemian area. In the west it was possible thanks to a route from Jelenia Góra to Mieroszów, and from there through Ścinawka Depression to Broumov and Kłodzko. Also from Jelenia Góra it was possible to get to Świebodzice and Kamienna Góra and from there through the Lubawa Gate to Bohemia²⁵.

The second transport axis ran diagonally from north-west to south-east, connecting the two opposite Silesian gates: the Frankfurt and the Jablunkov Gates. The Frankfurt route led through Krosno Odrzańskie, Nowe Miasteczko, Prochowice to Wrocław.

²² Duszyński, *Uwagi o powstaniu*, p. 48 wrote: “strategic direction – is a significant strip of land, with political and industrial objects located on it, allowing to conduct concerted combat operations of large army groups. Strategic direction is determined by political and war-geographical factors. [...] there may be 1 – 2 (more rarely several) strategic directions in a single theatre of military operations”, while an operational direction being part of a strategic direction “depends on the specific location in a given theatre of military operations, taking into account the enemy forces, objects situated therein and the topographical conditions of the terrain”.

²³ *Atlas Homanna*, Map 9, scale 1:200000 (scale acc. to Julian Janczak, *Zarys dziejów kartografii śląskiej do końca XVIII wieku*, Opole 1976, p. 76); Map 13, scale 1:100000 (scale acc. to Janczak, *Zarys dziejów kartografii*, p. 75); *Geografische Verzeilung des Goerlitzer Creises*, ed. J. B. Homann, 1753, BOss, Dział Kartograficzny, 2071/IV, scale 1:180000 (scale acc. to Roman Wytyczak, *Katalog zbiorów kartograficznych BOss*). The author of cartographic pictures of Silesia was Jan Wolfgang Wieland, see Janczak, *Zarys dziejów kartografii*, pp. 71 ff.

²⁴ *Atlas Homanna*, Map 7, scale 1:220000 (scale acc. to Janczak, *Zarys dziejów kartografii*, p. 75); Map 6, scale 1:93000 (scale acc. to Janczak, *Zarys dziejów kartografii*, p. 75).

²⁵ *Atlas Homanna*, Map 7.

It was possible to shorten this route in Krosno, through Zielona Góra, Głogów, Polkowice or through Chocianów to Legnica and then to Wrocław, or, bypassing Legnica, through Prochowice to reach Wrocław directly²⁶. This biggest Silesian city had an excellent connection to the south, thanks to two routes: one led through Niemcza to Ząbkowice Śląskie and the other through Oława, Brzeg and Grodków to Nysa²⁷.

The road network in the western and eastern borderlands of Silesia was much less developed. Two roads led from Zielona Góra south to Bolesławiec, almost parallel to the border, but they ran through a heavily forested area of the Lower Silesian Forest²⁸. In the East, on the right side of the Oder River, there was a convenient route from Głogów to Góra and Wińsko, and from there to Wołów and Wrocław or Chobienia²⁹. In the industrial era these roads were supplemented by railway lines. From the north-west the line Zielona Góra – Nowa Sól – Głogów – Ścinawa – Wrocław ran and still runs nowadays intersecting in Głogów with the important Żagań line. Żagań was an important railway node and connected with Zasięki (via Żary), Gubin, Zgorzelec (via Węglińiec). Another line ran from Głogów through Wschowa and Leszno to Poznań. Moreover, the Wrocław line from Rudna-Gwizdanów had a connection with Legnica³⁰.

The most important railway node was of course Wrocław. There, besides the Zielona Góra line mentioned above, the lines from Dresden (via Zgorzelec and Legnica), from Poznań (via Rawicz and via Milicz and Krotoszyn), from Ostrów Wielkopolski to Katowice (via Gliwice, Strzelce Opolskie or Kędzierzyn – Koźle, Opole and Brzeg), to Jelenia Góra, Międzyzlesie and Kudowa (via Kłodzko) and Kłodzko via Sobótka converged. Slightly smaller transport nodes were: Jelenia Góra (with lines to Karpacz, Szklarska Poręba, Lubań and Zgorzelec), Brzeg (with a line to Nysa and Głuchołazy), Opole (with lines to Częstochowa, via Nysa to Kamieniec Ząbkowicki and Kłodzko and to Racibórz) and Gliwice had a connection to Częstochowa and Rybnik³¹. The railway lines thus supplemented the existing roads.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, Maps 9, 13.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, Maps 1, 6.

²⁸ The east road ran along the Bóbr River through Kozłów, the west one through Świętoszów, along the right bank of the Kwisa River, *Atlas Homanna*, Maps 8, 9.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, Map 9.

³⁰ For a thorough discussion of the origin and development of the railway network in Silesia, see Marian Jerczyński, Stanisław Koziański, *150 lat kolei na Śląsku*, Opole–Wrocław 1992, pp. 19–34, 65–80; Marek Potocki, *Sieć kolejowa w Województwie Dolnośląskim*, <http://www.bazakolejowa.pl/mapy/1/1090561049.png> (date of access: 01.06.2018).

³¹ Jerczyński, Koziański, *150 lat kolei*, pp. 30–31, 33–34.

Silesia as a base for military operations. Geopolitics

The geographical location, together with the network of transport routes, is a permanent factor determining the importance of the area of operations. The second factor for Silesia, determining its use was the configuration of the political borders of states – Poland, Germany (Brandenburg, Prussia), Bohemia, and even Russia, as well as their military potential and mutual relations, including active military-political alliances undergoing significant changes over the last millennium. Several periods can be distinguished in this respect:

1. the years 1348–1742, from the Peace of Namysłów and the Peace of Wrocław, that is, from the period when Silesia formally belonged to the Kingdom of Bohemia.
2. the years 1742–1918, from the Peace of Wrocław with Austria and the incorporation of Silesia into Prussia until the end of the First World War. With interludes in 1793 (Second Partition of Poland) and in 1807 (Treaty of Tilsit) and 1813 (Saxon-Silesian campaign).
3. the years 1918–1939, the period of Independent Poland, with an interlude in 1919 (Wielkopolska Uprising).
4. 1945 (Battle of Berlin).
5. the years 1945–1991 (Eastern Bloc until the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact)
6. the years 1991 to 1999, from the Warsaw Pact to Poland's accession to the NATO.

Taking into account political-military and geographical-military factors, there are several examples of the use of the Silesian-Lusatian area of operations:

- a) as a base for operations to the north (Pomerania) and south (Bohemia) directions.
- b) as the base of operations to the north and north-east: Greater Poland and Warsaw (1919, 1939).
- c) as a base for operations against Brandenburg/Berlin (1945).
- d) a rear area (1945–1991, and from 1999 until today).

The use of the Silesian-Lusatian area of military operations: the north-south passage.

The only case of making use of a part of Silesia as a base for operations in the north direction was the expedition of the “Sirotni” to the sea. At that time, on 27th May 1433, a strong Hussite corps was concentrated near Głogów, under the

command of Jan Čapek of San, (700 cavalry, 7 thousand infantry and 350 combat vehicles)³². Without any major problems, Władysław Jagiełło's Czech allies moved through Wielkopolska and then reached the New March and Pomerania, raiding the Teutonic Order's dominions with fire and sword. It was, of course, a classic operational raid, part of the Hussite art of warfare. Its essence was to destroy, not to conquer certain objects and territories³³.

A kind of mirror image of the "Sirotni" expedition, i.e. the treatment of the Silesian area as a buffer zone protecting Pomerania from the threat from the south, was the Swedish system for the control of operational directions and the exploitation of the necessary areas (1642–1648). It controlled the "Silesian operational core" and was based on the active defence of a system of fortresses. The nucleus of this system, a kind of defensive citadel, was Głogów. In its distant foreground, Swedish garrisons were located in Jawor, Oława (from 1644), Świdnica, Lwówek Śląski, Żmigród, Namysłów and Syców. Oława and Jawor were counter-fortresses against the Imperial troops garrisoned in Legnica and Brzeg. Świdnica and Lwówek Śląski, in turn, were outposts controlling the far foreground of Głogów and paralyzing the possibility of using the Silesian area as a logistical rear area and base for operations against Pomerania. The Emperor was therefore unable to field a strong, independent Silesian army to break up the Swedish corps and advance on Szczecin. This allowed the Swedish corps to roam freely in Silesia, moving into Moravia and Bohemia³⁴.

This role of Silesia, as an important element in the development of the army against the Bohemian Citadel, was fully revealed during the campaigns of 1744, 1757 and 1866.

³² Bronisław Działuch, *Wojny husyckie na Śląsku 1420–1435*, [in:] *Wybrane problemy historii militarnej Śląsk X-XX wieku*, Wrocław 1992, pp. 56–57. „Sierotki” (sirotčí svaz, sirotci, východočeský husitský svaz, sirotčí bratrstvo), radical wing of Hussitism – the Taborites, so called (the “Orphans”) after the death of Jan Žižka (1424).

³³ The specificity and significance of the Hussite raids (*spanilé jízdy*) was discussed by Konrad Ziółkowski, *Z Królestwa Czeskiego nad Bałtyk. Wyprowa wojsk polnych “sierotek” na Nową Marchię i Pomorze Gdańskie na tle pozostałych rejz*, [in:] *Mare Integrans. Studia nad dziejami wybrzeży Morza Bałtyckiego*, vol. VII “Migracje. Podróże w dziejach”. *Starożytność i średniowiecze, Monografia oparta na Materiałach z VII Międzynarodowej Sesji Naukowej Dziejów Ludów Morza Bałtyckiego, Wolin, 26–28 lipca 2014*, ed. Maciej Franz, Karol Kościelniak, Zbigniew Pilarczyk, Toruń 2015, pp. 334–339.

³⁴ Jerzy Maroń, *Szwedzi w Głogowie. Operacyjna rola Głogowa w czasie wojny trzydziestoletniej*, [in:] *Wielokulturowe dziedzictwo Głogowa – wczoraj i dziś – materiały z konferencji naukowej – Głogów 6.12.2010*, eds. Leszek Lenarczyk *et al.*, Głogów 2010, pp. 219–221.

In the first of them (1744), King Frederick II of Prussia divided his forces into three corps: the royal corps (40 thousand soldiers), the corps of Field Marshal Prince Leopold von Anhalt-Dessau the Younger (16 thousand) and the corps of Field Marshal Curt von Schwerin (16 thousand). The royal corps was to march through Saxony, Prince Leopold with his army was to advance through the Lusatian Gate, and Schwerin from Silesia through the Lubawka Pass. The corps was to be concentrated deep in Bohemia. Frederick II hoped that the surprised Austrians would withdraw their main forces from the West German theatre of operations and allow the French (Frederick II's allies) who were pursuing them to first occupy Bavaria and then enter Bohemia from the west. The Prussian army crossed the border into Saxony on 12th August 1744. The Saxons, surprised, put up no resistance and as fast as on 23rd August the royal corps crossed the border into Bohemia. At the beginning of September, the Prussian corps united at Prague. After a short siege (10–16 September 1744), the Bohemian capital fell into Prussian hands³⁵.

In the second campaign, the king applied this tactic almost unchanged. The army was divided into 4 corps. The corps of Prince Maurice von Anhalt (14,900 infantry, 5,200 cavalry) was spread between Zwickau and Chemnitz. The main royal corps (30,500 infantry and 9,100 cavalry) was concentrated in Saxony, in the area of Dippoldiswalde, Pirna and Dresden. In the Silesian-Lusatian border area the corps of Prince August Wilhelm von Braunschweig – Bevern (16,000 infantry, 4,300 cavalry) was located. Whereas in Silesia, the corps of Field Marshal Kurt Ch. von Schwerin was positioned (25,000 infantry and 9,300 cavalry)³⁶. The essence of this strategy was to make a kind of “concentration on the enemy” and destroy the main imperial forces. The Austrians had 7,700 infantry and 7,300 cavalry in Těšín Silesia and Moravia, 26,000 infantry and 6,600 cavalry in the Karlovy Vary region, 30,400 infantry and 8,700 cavalry between Prague and Budějovice, and 20,400 more infantry and 3,800 cavalry around Plan. The combat power ratio was therefore rather even (118,000 men and 72 guns against 118,000 and 120 heavy guns), but in heavy artillery the Prussians had a considerable advantage.

The corps of Prince August Wilhelm von Braunschweig-Bevern set off through the Lusatian Gate in the direction to Liberec and near this town, on 21st April, it

³⁵ Kisiel, *Strzegom–Dobromierz*, p. 75 ff.

³⁶ *Die Kriege Friedrichs des Grossen*, ed. Grossen Generalstabe, Abteilung für Kriegsgeschichte, vol. 3. *Der Siebenjährige Krieg 1756–1763*, vol. 2, Berlin 1901, p. 58 and Beilagen No. 1–4.

clashed with a part of the Austrian forces. The Prussians prevailed and pushed the Imperial troops back, suffering lower losses (650 against 1,000 killed)³⁷. The further march of the “Lusatian” corps was encouraged by Schwerin’s corps coming from the east. Divided into four columns, it crossed the Lubawka Pass in one day, and on 21st April it was concentrated in Dvůr Králové³⁸, threatening the rear of the Austrian troops facing Prince August Wilhelm’s troops. The further combat route of the Lusatian corps led through Turnovo, to Mnichovo Hradište, where its encounter with Schwerin’s “Silesian” corps took place on 27th April³⁹. The concentration of all Prussian corps took place on 5th May 1757, during the Prague battle. The forces of the opponents were almost equal: 48,500 Austrian infantry and 12,600 Austrian cavalry against 47,000 Prussian infantry and 17,000 Prussian cavalry⁴⁰. The Prussian army was victorious, despite the loss of 14,000 men (including 401 officers) against 13,000 Austrians killed or taken captive. King Frederick II, however, did not achieve his strategic goal, as the Emperor had strong reserves at his disposal, and consequently his troops defeated the Prussians at Kolin (18 June 1757).

It should be noted that on a different scale, due to the number of troops (230,000–250,000), this combat strategy of incursion into Bohemia was repeated by Helmuth von Moltke in 1866. General Herwarth von Bittenfeld’s Elbe Army was then deployed on the Prussian-Saxon border, and 1st Army troops were concentrated between the Elbe and the Lusatian Neisse, making extensive use of rail transport. In the second wave, the I Guards Corps was deployed in the Cottbus area, which was moved from Zgorzelec to Jelenia Góra, while the V and VI Corps went to Kamienna Góra. These 3rd Prussian armies, spread over the semi-circle of the Sudetes and Ore Mountains, were to enter Bohemia, including: from the north-west the Elbe Army, going along the left bank of the Elbe, in the centre: the 1st Army from Budziszyn and Zgorzelec, and the 2nd Army from Cieplice, Kamienna Góra and Kudowa⁴¹. Under pressure from the Prussian king, who feared for the fate of Upper Silesia, the corps of the 2nd Army was moved further east to the Neisse and Brzeg. On the eve of the start of hostilities, the concentration of the Prussian army was completed,

³⁷ Robert Kisiel, *Praga 1757*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 118 ff.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 70.

³⁹ Rudolf Koser, *Geschichte Friedrichs des Grossen*, Stuttgart–Berlin 1913, vol. 2, p. 473; *Die Kriege Friedrichs des Grossen*, p. 85. The latest monograph, Kisiel, *Praga 1757*.

⁴⁰ *Die Kriege Friedrichs des Grossen*, pp. 122, 127.

⁴¹ *Moltke Militärische Werke*, vol. 2 *Moltkes TaktischStrategische Aufsätze aus dem Jahren 1857 bis 1871*, Berlin 1900, Beilagen 1–13, Gordon B. Craig, *The Battle of Königgratz*, London 1965, p. 50; Alfred Schlieffen, *Cannae*, Fort Leavenworth, 1931, pp. 63 ff.

and the bulk of the forces were developed between the Elbe (including) and the Lusatian Neisse (including). In Lusatia the 1st Army of Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia was grouped. The strongest 2nd Army, of the heir to the throne Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (96 infantry battalions, 5.5 rifle battalions, 94 squadrons and 352 guns), was spread very widely, as far as Nysa and Kłodzko⁴². Helmuth von Moltke assigned the decisive role to the strike of the 1st Army and the Elbe Army. The 1st Army was to strike through the Lusatian Gate, from Budziszyn, Zgorzelec and Lubań. The Elbe Army, after pushing back the Saxon allies of Austria, was to enter Bohemia and unite with divisions of the 1st Army⁴³.

The decision to enter Bohemia was made on 19th June 1866. Special units of 2nd Army were to come from the direction of Lower Silesia, from Jelenia Góra through Cieplice and Szklarska Poręba. However, the original plans of the Field Marshal were not realised and the concentration of the Prussian army did not take place until near Jičín (82 km north-east of Prague). The divisions of the “Silesian” 2nd Army were coming from the Lubawka Pass and from the gorges in the area of Nowa Ruda and Náchod⁴⁴, fighting very hard battles with Austrian forces. The full concentration of the troops of the heir to the throne, Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, took place only at Dvůr Králové, and therefore the decisive battle of Jičín – intended by Moltke – did not take place. The great battle did not take place until 3rd July 1866 at Sadová – Hradec Kralove⁴⁵.

All these campaigns demonstrate the decisive importance of, above all, the “Lusatian Gate” and the much lesser role of the Sudeten Passes, easy to defend and very difficult to cross, which of course questions the suggestion of Gen. B. Balcerowicz about the existence in Lower Silesia of a central operational corridor, as one of the two key ones in the Polish part of Central Europe.

A base for operations in the north, north-east direction

Only once in its history did Silesia play the role of a base of operations in the north (Poznań) and north-east direction, and only once was it planned in that role. The first was John of Luxemburg’s expedition against Wielkopolska in 1331, when the

⁴² Moltke *Militärische Werke*, Beilagen 1–13; Craig, *The Battle of Königgratz*, p. 50.

⁴³ Schlieffen, *Cannae*, p. 86.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 89 ff.

⁴⁵ Werner Rüstow, *Der Krieg von 1866*, Zurich 1866, p. 197 ff.

Bohemian king, having concentrated his forces near Wrocław, moved towards Poznań along the route through Głogów and Kościan⁴⁶. He did not try to conquer Głogów, as he was leading a destructive raid, not an expedition aimed at political change.

Different assumptions underpinned German planning in 1919, as Silesia and Pomerania were to become the base for the operation to conquer Wielkopolska. From 17th January 1919 onwards, the German Government was determined to settle the question of Wielkopolska's affiliation in its favour "by force of arms". In mid-February 1919, the General Headquarters moved from Wilhelmshöhe near Kassel to Kołobrzeg, and Marshal Paul von Hindenburg Benckendorff appealed "to the sons of Germany" to fight to "defend the eastern border". General Wilhelm von Groener, Quartermaster General, after his inspection, assessed that things were not so good in East Prussia, better in West Prussia and "relatively good in Silesia"⁴⁷. However, the negotiations with Marshal Ferdinand Foch, taking place in Trier on 14–16 February 1919, made these plans impossible to achieve. Foch's firm stand forced the German side to accept the demarcation line and extend the armistice⁴⁸. However, it did not inhibit their preparations to launch an offensive, and on 20th March 1919. Armee Oberkommando (AOK) "Nord" gave the order to undertake the operation, codenamed Stellungskrieg. The Northern Group, commanded by Gen. Otto von Below of the XVII. Corps in Gdańsk, was to attack from the Bydgoszcz-Toruń area, in the direction of Gniezno and further to the south. Whereas the Southern Group (AOK "Süd"), under the command of General Kurt von dem Borne, was to advance from Lower Silesia towards Kalisz, Ostrów Wielkopolski and Krotoszyn in the direction of Gniezno, where it was planned to close the ring of encirclement. However, the post-war negotiations with the Entente and the social "unrest" in Germany at the time made this impossible⁴⁹. This did not mean that the German officer corps had completely given up on military resolve. In May 1919, serious forces were concentrated in the "German East", including: 72,000 in Pomerania and 96,000 in Silesia⁵⁰. In mid-June 1919, the army command

⁴⁶ Olejnik, *Obrona polskiej granicy zachodniej*, pp. 194–195.

⁴⁷ Przemysław Hauser, *Niemcy wobec sprawy polskiej. Październik 1918–czerwiec 1919*, Poznań 1984 (Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu. Seria historia, 121), pp. 123, 126, 127.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 136–138.

⁴⁹ Piotr Łossowski, *Między wojną a pokojem. Niemieckie zamysły wojenne na wschodzie w obliczu traktatu wersalskiego marzec-czerwiec 1919 roku*, Warszawa 1976, pp. 54 ff.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 121. The German concentration was closely watched by Polish intelligence, *ibidem*, pp. 122–123 (sketches). More on the development of Polish units, Tadeusz Grygier, *Polski front przeciwniemiecki w maju 1919 roku*, "Przegląd Zachodni", 4 (1948), 1, pp. 142–157.

positively assessed the chances of recapturing Wielkopolska⁵¹. With the peace of Versailles signed, the confrontation did not take place⁵².

The period of the Weimar Republic seemingly undermined the importance of the German part of Silesia as a base for operations against Poland, but in Lower Silesia a line of fortifications was being developed, the so-called Oder Position, between the mouth of the Kaczawa River and the Oder River⁵³. It should be remembered, however, that fortifications can also play an offensive role, and this was the case here⁵⁴. A different role was played by Silesia in the Polish campaign of 1939, as it became the starting area of the Wehrmacht's key strike force, the 10th Field Army (an armoured corps, two motorized corps and two army corps)⁵⁵. There was no attempt to conquer Wielkopolska and the German attack at the meeting point of the Polish armies "Łódź" and "Kraków" led to the breaking of the Polish defence line already on 2nd September and, as a result, to the collapse of the Polish war plan⁵⁶.

On a base of operations in the direction of Berlin and Dresden (1945)

In this role, Silesia as well as Lower and Upper Lusatia were used in 1945, during the Berlin and Lusatian operations of the 1st Ukrainian Front. The Russians concentrated gigantic forces on the border of Silesia and Lusatia, and their main strike towards Berlin was to be carried out by four field armies (3rd and 5th Guards, 13th and 28th Guards) and two armoured armies (3rd and 4th Guards). From the Dresden side, the 2nd Polish Army (reinforced by the Polish 1st Armoured Corps)

⁵¹ *Statement of the General Headquarters, 17 June 1919, Waldemar Erfurth, Niemiecki Sztab Generalny 1918–1945*, transl. Kazimierz Szarski, Warszawa 2007, p. 47.

⁵² The final decision to abandon operations in the east was taken at a meeting of the military leadership on 19th June 1919, in Weimar. The resistance in the west has been declared impossible, Jarosław Centek, *Hans von Seeckt. Twórca Reichsheer 1866–1936*, Kraków 2006, pp. 209–210.

⁵³ Work on this line was completed in 1938, with an average of 3 cannons per km, Tadeusz Rawski, *Niemieckie umocnienia na ziemiach polskich, w latach 1919–1939*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", 13 (1966), 1, p. 291; Robert Citino, *Niemcy bronią się przed Polską. Ewolucja taktyki blitzkriegu 1918–1933*, transl. J. Tomczak, Warszawa 2010, p. 290.

⁵⁴ Citino, *Niemcy*, pp. 126–127.

⁵⁵ Damian Tomczyk, *Rejencja opolska jako baza wypadowa Wehrmachtu przeciw Polsce*, [in:] *Śląsk wobec wojny polsko-niemieckiej 1939 r.*, ed. Wojciech Wrzesiński, Wrocław–Warszawa 1990, pp. 139–150.

⁵⁶ Marian Porwit, *Komentarze do polskich działań obronnych 1939 roku*, vol. 1, *Plany i bitwy graniczne*, Warszawa 1983, p. 281.

as well as the 52nd Field Army and the 1st Corps of the Guards Cavalry were advancing⁵⁷. The line of demarcation with the 1st Belorussian Front passed through Lubij, the smallest town in Upper Lusatia, while the back-up facilities and hospitals were located in the Lower Silesian Forest. Despite the exclusion of the Głogów, Wrocław and Opole railway nodes, thanks to the dense network of railway lines, military supplies flowed without problems to Zielona Góra and Ruszów. Once again, the German rail and road infrastructure worked positively. However, the disregard by the commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front the operational significance of the Lusatian Gate, which was completely controlled by the Germans, led to the disaster of the 2nd Polish Army⁵⁸. This gate played a certain role in the last days of the war, as the advance of the 2nd Polish Army and the 52nd Army towards Prague, took on the character of a battle march⁵⁹.

A deep rear area

The new geopolitical configuration after World War II brought about a fundamental change in the perception of the Silesian-Lusatian area of military operations. It ceased to be the base of operations on the east-west axis or in the north-south passage. Instead, it became a rear area for the armies established in Czechoslovakia (south strategic direction) and the GDR (central strategic direction)⁶⁰. In this configuration, Lower Silesia and partly Upper Silesia were treated as an area for the development of a network of hospitals for the troops operating in the west. After Poland's accession to the NATO, this concept has not changed, except that it applies to troops fighting in the east.

In the course of 1000 years of history, geopolitical and military factors have conditioned and determined the concepts for the use of the Silesian-Lusatian area

⁵⁷ Iwan Koniew, *Zapiski dowódcy frontu 1943–1945*, transl. Piotr Marciszyn, Czesław Wałuk, Warszawa 1986, pp. 469–470 (General Headquarters Directive of 16th April 1945).

⁵⁸ A horrifying picture of the operations of the 2nd Polish Army was given by Kazimierz Kaczmarek, *W bojach przez Łużyce. Na drezdeńskim kierunku operacyjnym*, Warszawa 1965, pp. 279–393. The Army's losses (killed, missing and wounded) amounted to 20% of the total (just over 20,000). 57% of combat vehicles and 20% of guns were destroyed, *idem*, *Druga Armia Wojska Polskiego*, Warszawa 1978, pp. 569, 580.

⁵⁹ Losses amounted to 70 killed and 17 missing, Kaczmarek, *Druga Armia*, p. 581.

⁶⁰ Franciszek Puchała, *Sekrety Sztabu Generalnego pojaltańskiej Polski*, Warszawa 2011, p. 154 Appendix I.

of military operations. Situated in the Baltic-Adriatic corridor, Silesia was used as a base for north-south, north-east (against Wielkopolska and Poland) and west (in the direction of Berlin and Dresden) operations. It was not until the second half of the 20th century that Silesia became a rear area and hopefully will not be used in this strategic role.

STRESZCZENIE

Terytorium Śląska jako obszar działań wojennych było przedmiotem szczegółowych badań w odniesieniu do średniowiecza, wojny trzydziestoletniej, wojen śląskich XVIII wieku, wojny prusko-austriackiej z 1866 roku i lat 1919–1945. Z wojskowego punktu widzenia problemem jest odrębność i niezgodność podejścia geograficznego, historycznego i militarnego. Dla geografów Śląsk jako odrębny byt nie istnieje, natomiast pod względem militarnego wykorzystania Śląska z powodu warunków geograficznych i sieci drogowej należy wspólnie traktować Śląsk i Łużyce. Ich zalety zostały w pełni ujawnione jako bazy dla operacji na północy (Pomorze Zachodnie i Gdańsk) lub na południu (przeciwko Czechom). W tej formie Śląsk był używany w końcowym okresie wojny trzydziestoletniej i kampanii prusko-austriackiej w latach 1741 i 1744, 1757 i 1866. Kilkakrotnie Śląsk był wykorzystywany jako baza dla działań przeciwko Wielkopolsce (1331 – w rzeczywistości i w 1919 r. – potencjalnie) oraz podczas kampanii polskiej w 1939 r. W 1945 r. teren śląsko-łużycki został wykorzystany w ataku w kierunku Berlina i Drezna (działania 1 Frontu Białoruskiego). Po zmianie konfiguracji geopolitycznej w Europie od 1989 roku i przystąpieniu Polski do NATO, Śląsk stał się jego zapleczem.

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NIEMCZA (1017) – BAUTZEN (1018). DOES HISTORY “WRITE” WINNERS? (IN THE CIRCLE OF THIETMAR OF MERSEBURG’S CHRONICLE)

NIEMCZA (1017) – BUDZISZYN (1918). CZY HISTORIA PISZE ZWYCIĘZCÓW? (W KRĘGU PRZEKAZU THIETMARA Z MERSEBURGA)

ABSTRACT: The article concerns the shaping of the narrative of Thietmar of Merseburg about the third war between Henry II and Bolesław the Brave (1015–1018), which ended with the Peace of Bautzen. In the description of the culmination of the conflict (the siege of Niemcza in 1017), the moral and theological interpretation of events draws the attention. Thietmar did not conceal his admiration for the defenders of the castle, emphasizing their Christian attitude. In this context, it is surprising that the chronicler called the participants of the expedition victorious and therefore he is sometimes accused of propaganda. Whereas it is more about an assessment of the effects of the war. The description of the events demonstrates that both parties could declare a victory: Henry, because he had got Bolesław’s request for peace, and Bolesław, because he had avoided appearing before Henry II.

KEYWORDS: Thietmar of Merseburg, Henry II, Bolesław I the Brave, Siege of Niemcza (1017), Peace of Bautzen (1018)

The millennium has passed since *Thietmar’s Chronicle* was written, without which the oblivion would have swallowed up a great deal of knowledge about the Europe of the Liudolfings’ era¹. The axis of the narrative in this work is determined

¹ *Kronika Thietmara*, Latin and Polish text, transl., preface and commentary Marian Z. Jedlicki, Poznań 1953 [hereafter: Thietmar]. For the author and the work see, among others: Marian Z. Jedlicki, *Wstęp*, [in:] *Ibidem*, pp. I–XXXI; Helmut Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg. Reichsbischof und Chronist*, Köln–Wien 1973 (Mitteldeutsche Forschungen, 72), pp. 46–137;

by the history of the mentioned dynasty, although its geographical horizon extends much further than the range of the Liudolfings' reign – as far as to Byzantium, the south of the Apennine Peninsula, the British Isles, Scandinavia, Ruthenia and the Stepp People. Thietmar devoted a lot of space to the beginnings of Poland, strongly intertwined with the history of the Roman Empire restored by Otto I, which, let's recall, included Germany, emerging at that time from the East-Frankish monarchy, and large parts of Italy with the Kingdom of the Lombards.

Thietmar – due to his belonging to the Saxon aristocracy and holding the office of the Bishop of Merseburg since 1009, and thus also being a representative of the close elite gathered around the German ruler, Henry II – was a watchful and politically committed observer of the Liudolfings' eastern policy. This circumstance, combined with his unusual curiosity for the world, resulted in the pages of his work both in reporting on the events taking place in the circle of Germany's Slavic neighbours, as well as in many information about their countries: geography, the social system, dynastic relations or issues of culture and religion. Excellent examples of it are passages devoted to the issues indicated in the title of these reflections: the siege of Niemcza during the third war between Henry II and Bolesław the Brave (1015–1018) and the final Peace of Bautzen.

What is important is that reports about these events, permanently inscribed in the canon of the basic views of Polish history, appeared only in the final part of the chronicle – Thietmar died on 1st December 1018, but his story ends in the summer of that year. So in this case we have a voice in the then current debate on Henry II's policy. For, by creating a picture of the facts entrusted to the memory of the writing, the historian not only expressed his views, but also shaped those of the elite of the Empire at the time, and thus also engaged himself in the political process of his time. Perfectly evident in this case is the pragmatic aspect of historiography at the time², whose task was to influence the attitudes, behaviour and even decisions of the contemporaries, especially in the area of State's policy or the policy of the Church, integrally connected with the State.

Werner Trillmich, *Einleitung*, [in:] *Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi Chronicon*, ed. and transl. W. Trillmich, Darmstadt 1992, pp. IX–XXXII; Stanisław Rosik, *Interpretacja chrześcijańska religii pogańskich Słowian w świetle kronik niemieckich XI–XII wieku (Thietmar, Adam z Bremy, Helmold)*, Wrocław 2000 (Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis 2235, Historia CXLIV), pp. 43–60; Kerstin Schulmeyer-Ahl, *Der Anfang vom Ende der Ottonen. Konstitutionsbedingungen historiographischer Nachrichten in der Chronik Thietmars von Merseburg*, Berlin 2009.

² See e.g. Edward Potkowski, *Problemy kultury piśmiennej łacińskiego średniowiecza*, "Przegląd Humanistyczny", 3 (1994), pp. 21–40, p. 34.

References to more distant times and legendary threads have also gained not least importance in the realization of such a large-scale *causa scribendi*. And so the cornerstone in the structure of the narrative of *Thietmar's Chronicle* is the origins of Merseburg, mythologized and elevated with a Caesarian tune, as befits the future capital of the Diocese³, for whose good the author wrestled using the arms of writing. Founded in 968, it was already liquidated in 981, and its lands were divided between neighbouring dioceses with the Magdeburg Metropolis at the head, whose new Ordinary, Gisilher, hitherto the Bishop of Merseburg, was the main perpetrator of this dismantling⁴. In 1004, Henry II restored the Diocese of Merseburg, and Thietmar devoted the bulk of his work to his time, not only out of gratitude for the act itself, but also in the hope that in this way he would contribute to the widening of the boundaries of his diocese, which was restituted in a truncated form in relation to its original territorial shape⁵. The key importance in Thietmar's writing programme, however, was the very inscription of Merseburg as the church capital on the pages of history, so that no one would dare to erase it from them.

A warning in this case was the extensive development on the pages of the chronicle of the conviction, already widespread in the Empire, that the liquidation of the Diocese of Merseburg, approved by the authority of Otto II, was the cause of the misfortunes that had fallen on his monarchy at the end of his reign, such as the military disasters in Italy in the fight against the Saracens (982) and, above all, the loss of the Northern Polabia as a result of Slavic rebellions, first of all the Great Lutici Rising (983)⁶. It is worth recalling these threads as a model example of the chronicler's application of the moral and theological interpretation of history, which is here all the more clear since it concerns the past, in relation to which a considerable time distance itself was conducive to the selection of recorded events and their incorporation into the narrative stream in such a way that cause and effect sequences optimally reflect the essential messages of the narrative (in this case the

³ Thietmar I, 1; on the importance of this kind of – sometimes legendary – ancient, as well as apostolic “beginnings” in justifying the establishment of bishop's capitals, see e.g. Roman Michałowski, *Zjazd gnieźnieński. Religijne przesłanki powstania arcybiskupstwa gnieźnieńskiego*, Wrocław 2005, pp. 23–53.

⁴ Thietmar III, 14.

⁵ See e.g. Lippelt, *Thietmar*, pp. 89–115.

⁶ Before Thietmar this view was expressed in writing by St. Bruno of Querfurt – see Bruno of Kwerfurt, *Świętego Wojciecha żywot drugi*, Monumenta Poloniae Historica [hereafter: MPH], n.s., vol. 4, part 2, Warszawa 1969, II, 10, 12; see e.g. Michał Tomaszek, *Brunon z Kwerfurtu i Otton II: powstanie słowiańskie 983 roku jako grzech cesarza*, “Kwartalnik Historyczny”, 109 (2002), 4, p. 5.

idea of the aforementioned heavenly punishment for the act against the existence of a diocese)⁷.

In depicting times closer to their historical description, the pace of narration becomes inherently slower and more detailed, which today is of great value to a historian due to the growth of factual data. However, this made it more difficult at the same time for the chronicler to express an equally coherent, schematic interpretation of the described events in a historical dimension as in the case of references to the distant past. However, even in those written down “up-to-date” – as will be discussed in more detail in the reflections below – there are plenty of clear assessments of the characters’ attitudes and events. This offers a special opportunity to reflect on the socio-political and cultural context in which the message is being written, allowing us to take a look at an old debate on current events, in this case from a thousand years ago, in which a chronicler participated with his writing. It is important, however, that we are dealing here not only with his personal position, but also with a reference to the views functioning in the wider circle of the German court and Church elite, who were also the primary target of his work.

This conviction can be confirmed by reading *Annals Quedliburgenses*⁸, written on an ongoing basis, in which we find a laconic and very general reference to both events mentioned in the title of this article. Under the year 1017, the annalist recalls Henry II’s expedition against the Polish Bolesław, pointing out its

⁷ Thietmar III, 17–22, broadly presenting the course of events which he considered as a result of the liquidation of the Diocese of Merseburg in 981 (see *ibidem*, III, 16: “Sed quae res destructionem hanc subsequerentur, lector attende!”), he changed their chronology, first showing the havoc affecting the Metropolis of Magdeburg and its dioceses caused by the rebellion of the Slavic peoples who crushed the sovereignty of the Empire in the Northern Polabia (first of all the Great Lutici Rising of 983), and then describing Otto II’s defeats in Italy (982). In another place, however, he gave the correct date of the 983 uprising in a brief presentation, aptly juxtaposing it with the events after the Italian military defeats of the Empire (see *ibidem*, III, 24). Thus, the aforementioned reversal of the chronology can be seen as a manifestation of the hierarchy of guilt and punishment for the abolition of the bishopric in Merseburg: it would be borne in the first place by the ecclesiastical side, primarily by the metropolitan Gisilher, who was the *spiritus movens* of this liquidation action, and in the second place by the monarch who approved it. See e.g. Rosik, *Interpretacja*, pp. 90 ff.

⁸ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. Martina Giese, Monumenta Germaniae Historica [hereafter: MGH], *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* [hereafter: *Scriptores*], 72, Hannover 2004. Thietmar used these annals (see Martina Giese, *Einleitung*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 213 ff., 258 ff.), although with regard to the events of 1017–1018, which are key in these considerations, the impact of this reading is not noticeable, which is not surprising given that the chronicler reported on current events.

miserable effect due to the plague weakening the imperial army⁹, and then under the year 1018, he notifies of the conclusion of peace between the aforementioned rulers¹⁰. It is striking to note that Bolesław was mentioned as regaining the imperial grace, so probably he was seeking it. And a similar situation can be observed in Thietmar’s narrative, who, in the presentation of the origins of the Peace of Bautzen, emphasized that it was the Brave who tried hard to conclude it, and before that – as it will be discussed in more detail below – showed the military aspects of the expedition to Poland in 1017 in accordance with the pessimistic assessment of its effects contained in *Annales Quedlinburgenses*¹¹.

In this situation, however, it is remarkable that at the end of the description of this expedition its participants were called winners by Thietmar¹². Churchill used to say that “history is written by the winners”, but with regard to this passage of the chronicle, a rather opposite point may come to mind: it is history (of course the “out-of-the-inkwell” one) that writes the winners, even in spite of facts. However, before we succumb to the temptation to consider this mention of the Merseburg bishop only as a contribution to the study of the medieval history of political propaganda, it is worth making an attempt to explicate the meaning of this place in the chronicle, taking into account both the broader context of the work and the problems troubling the environment in which and for which it was created as its first addressee.

Therefore, let us treat the question posed in the title of these considerations only as a provocation to emphasize the specificity of the interpretation of the mentioned events in the work of the chronicler from Merseburg, whose interpretation of history – although it reproduces the common elements of living (though already fossilized in writing) memory in this matter, as we indicated above in relation to *Annales Quedlinburgenses*¹³ – is highly complex. On the one hand, Thietmar’s fundamental moral and theological messages are evident in his work, while on the other hand, his concern for the political interests of the Empire and its subjects,

⁹ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1117: “Imperator etiam hoc anno iterum castra movit contra Bolitzlavum, sed nimia pestilentia et mortalitate populi obstante sine belli effectu rediit in patriam”.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, a.a. 1018: “...hoc anno Bolitzlavo per nuncios reconciliata pace imperatoris gratiam recepit”.

¹¹ More on that below.

¹² Thietmar VII, 64.

¹³ In this case, we can speak of the voice of a specific narrative in the social circulation, expressing the core of socio-cultural memory (*memoria*) of events, subject to written interpretations, which were an important dimension not only of preserving but also of shaping this memory.

with the Saxons, native to the chronicler, at the forefront. Since their victory is difficult to see during the expedition of 1017¹⁴, it is nothing else to do but to expand our field of observation, starting with an indication of the causes of Henry II's third war with Bolesław the Brave, and therefore of the goals whose achievement could entitle the chronicler to the said verdict.

The origins of this conflict are known only from German sources, and it is particularly striking in Thietmar's account his unequivocal – and rather rightly suspicious¹⁵ – blaming the Brave for provoking it. According to the chronicler, the Polish ruler did not keep his promises to support Henry II in his quest for the Imperial Crown in Italy¹⁶, and, as *Annales Quedlinburgenses* also report¹⁷ – he tried, by sending his son Mieszko to Bohemia, to involve Oldřich, who ruled there, in a plot against the Emperor. However, Mieszko was imprisoned by the Přemyslid and then, at the request of Henry II, handed over to his custody (as his vassal)¹⁸. Some of the mighty in Germany believed – as Thietmar's narrative tells us – that the delay in the young man's liberation for too long contributed to Bolesław's such great dissatisfaction that even after his son was regained by him, he consistently refused to appear before the Emperor in person¹⁹. The Emperor, on the other hand, called upon him to explain himself and to make amends for his failure to provide support for the aforementioned Italian expedition²⁰.

Thietmar points out that Bolesław, in response to the imperial calls, sent only – accompanied by his son-in-law, Margrave Herman of Meissen – a messenger

¹⁴ For the course of the third war between Henry II and Bolesław the Brave, see e.g. Jerzy Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Poznań 1999, pp. 144–159; Przemysław Urbańczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry – lew ryczący*, Toruń 2017, pp. 258–269.

¹⁵ It's highlighted by Andrzej Pleszczyński (*Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii piastowskiej (963–1034). Narodziny stereotypu. Postrzeżenie i cywilizacyjna klasyfikacja władców Polski i ich kraju*, Lublin 2008, pp. 241–247), accurately pointing out some inconsistencies in Thietmar's narration, and above all the failure to take into account important aspects of the then Polish-Czech relations, crucial in the assessment of the case of imprisonment of Mieszko II by Udalryk, which is discussed below.

¹⁶ Thietmar VII, 4. Bolesław made a commitment of loyalty to Henryk in Merseburg, paying homage and receiving a “benefice”. Soon he also received Saxon support in his expedition to Rus' in 1013. (see *ibidem*, VI, 92).

¹⁷ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1014. This information is contained in two laconic records: firstly, about the imprisonment of Mieszko and the killing of his people by Udalryk, then about passing the captured one to the Emperor, and about his release and handing him over to his father.

¹⁸ Thietmar VII, 11–12. Here, too, about the release of Mieszko by the Saxon mighty, under the care of whom Henry II entrusted him.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, VII, 13.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, VII, 4.

named Stojgniew, who, however, with his lies, led to an escalation of tension. Upon his return to the country, he deliberately misrepresented the position of the Emperor, and in this situation Bolesław once more sent him to Henry, again in the company of Herman, who was making a particularly intensive effort to reconcile the conflicting parties²¹. However, in response, Henry only once again called upon Bolesław to appear before him in person, and the latter refused. Thietmar informs about the remaining imperial claims occasionally elsewhere when he mentions a convenient, yet not used by Henry II, moment for an attack on Poland in 1016, to restitute what Bolesław received from “our” lands, according to Thietmar, and to make him willing to surrender and be loyal to the Emperor for the latter’s offer of peace²².

The course of these events is more or less confirmed by *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, though they do not mention Bolesław’s disloyalty during Henry II’s Italian expedition. In the record under the year 1015, however, it was noted that the Brave was summoned before the Emperor’s face, and that he only sent the gifts, thereby, as the annalist points out, losing not only the gifts, but also the Emperor’s grace²³. Then – still in the same year – it is said that Henry II sent a message to Bolesław with a call to give back the lands he had seized, but Bolesław, in his pride, supposedly replied not only that he intended to keep his own areas, but also that he preferred rather to reach for those of others²⁴. It was with this answer that he allegedly provoked the emperor’s invasion.

In the first great clash, the Polish side, according to *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, lost as many as 900 people²⁵. Thietmar estimated these losses more modestly: over 600²⁶. Despite this success, Henry II’s army did not manage to enter far into the country of Bolesław, and during its retreat through the lands of the Dziadoszanie (*Dadosesani/Diadesisi*) a part of it was bloody destroyed by Mieszko, son of

²¹ *Ibidem*, VII, 9.

²² Henry did not take advantage of this moment as he was involved in the armed intervention in Burgundy. See *ibidem*, VII, 29: “Namque multi, quibus hoc cognitum erat, veraciter asserebant, si cesar ad eum tunc turmatim veniret, timorem, quod eundem de nostris respiceret, restituere et eum ad servitum suam pace tantum concessa promptum et fidelem habere potuisset”.

²³ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1015: “Ibi Bolitzlavo omnia munera, quae illi miserat, simul cum gratia perdidit, dum illum legatione superba infestum reddidit”.

²⁴ *Ibidem*: “Addidit etiam imperator hoc anno legationem mittere ad Bolitzlavum pro restituendis regionibus, quas abstulerat. Ille, ut solebat, superbe respondit se non solum propria retinere velle, quin potius non sua diripere malle”.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ Thietmar VII, 18.

the Brave²⁷. Later, Mieszko also besieged his brother-in-law Herman in Meissen, which with great difficulty managed to defend itself²⁸. So it is hard to finally consider this stage of the struggle as a success of the Emperor, who in the following year did not attack Poland, but without much success intervened in Burgundy. This gave Bolesław – not to mention the joy and pride driven by the miserable effect of these Emperor's efforts in the West – an opportunity to strengthen military his sovereignty²⁹ before another confrontation. In referring to this opportunity, we are already entering strictly into the thematic scope defined in the title of this article.

Thietmar's account gains a key importance in this case³⁰, as this time *Annales Quedlinburgenses* are very laconic, and their one-sentence information in this matter has already been presented above³¹. Whereas, Thietmar not only described the exact course of the expedition, but also the preceding attempts at peace made in the first months of 1017. First, he mentioned the exchange of messages preceded by Bolesław's request, which resulted in a truce³²; once it was concluded, Henry went to Merseburg, where he awaited the outcome of further negotiations. They were to be conducted on his part by appointed church and lay dignitaries³³, who asked Bolesław through their envoys to come to negotiate on the Elbe River (and then even closer, on the Black Elster), but he refused, stating – according to Thietmar, obviously insincerely – that he was afraid of his own safety in the land he did not control. The failure of this attempt at the final end of the war prompted Henry II to prepare a new expedition and forbid further contacts of his subjects with the Polish ruler, who otherwise had many sympathizers among the German elite³⁴.

In the late spring or summer of 1017, the Moravian warriors of the Brave slaughtered a Bavarian troop³⁵, which fuelled the atmosphere of conflict. Meanwhile,

²⁷ *Ibidem*, VII, 19–20; see also *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1015.

²⁸ Thietmar VII, 23.

²⁹ See Thietmar VII, 29: “Hostis autem noster Bolizlavus inter haec nil nostra lesit, sed sua munit et certus de eventu cesaris effectus laetatur et nimis extollitur”. Thietmar's psychologizations (here: Bolesław's joy or his pride) suggest that he had good contact with the Polish ruler's environment or... he was only making suggestive guesses.

³⁰ It is worth mentioning that the Annalist Saxo also relied on Thietmar's account, reporting extensively on the 1017 campaign – see *Annalista Saxo*, ed. Klaus Nass, MGH, Scriptores, Hannover 2006, a.a. 1017 (pp. 350 ff.).

³¹ See footnote 9.

³² Thietmar VII, 50. From the context of the information, it appears that this truce was concluded in January 1017.

³³ *Ibidem*, VII, 51.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, VII, 52.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, VII, 57.

the Emperor’s expedition was already gathering. On 8th July, Henry II left Magdeburg, crossed the Elbe and waited for the late troops in *Lesca*. Nevertheless, still at that time the negotiations of the last opportunity were undertaken, by exchanging envoys, yet failed³⁶. When the news came to light that Bolesław sent his son Mieszko on a plundering expedition to Bohemia – and this happened in the absence of Oldřich, who ruled there – it was the last straw: the emperor ordered the expedition to march out, having immediate support of the Bohemian and pagan Lutici troops, already tested as allies in his earlier struggles with Poland³⁷.

Spreading desolation, Henry II’s army arrived on 9th August at the stronghold in Głogów, where it was awaited by Bolesław and his men. Bolesław hid some of them, precisely archers, and provoked the enemy to fight. However, Henry, not falling into an ambush, forbade to attack³⁸ and ordered a further march towards Niemcza. His arrival there with the main forces was preceded by a vanguard in the form of twelve “legions”. They were supposed to prevent the reinforcements sent by Bolesław from reaching the stronghold in question, but those – only partially stopped – broke through to the stronghold under the cover of night and downpour³⁹. The Polish ruler himself did not close himself in Niemcza, but stayed on the line of the Oder River, now in Wrocław, where he awaited further developments⁴⁰.

Thietmar doesn’t explain why Henry directed the expedition to Niemcza in the “land of Ślężanie” (“pagus Silensi”)⁴¹. One can guess that in this way he

³⁶ *Ibidem*, Henry II was represented by his namesake, the Duke of Bavaria, at that time still temporarily deprived of his authority, but just being restored for graces.

³⁷ Already during the first war with the Brave they were allies of Henry II (see Thietmar VI, 22 and 25–26). For more on this, see Paweł Babij, *Wojskowość Słowian Polabskich*, vol. 1, Wrocław 2017 (Wrocławskie Studia z Historii Wojskowości, 5), pp. 144–147.

³⁸ Thietmar VII, 59.

³⁹ *Ibidem*. Henry II stood in front of Niemcza “after three days” (see *ibidem*, VII, 60), but it is doubtful whether those three days passed after his departure from Głogów or after the aforementioned breakthrough of the Brave’s reinforcements to Niemcza. The second solution was more feasible for such a large army for logistical reasons.

⁴⁰ Thietmar VII, 64.

⁴¹ A common translation of “*Silensi*” as ablativus from *Silensis* (“Silesian”) – see eg. Thietmar VII, 59, p. 554; cf. *Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi Chronicon*, ed. and transl. W. Trillmich, Darmstadt 1992, VII, 59, p. 421 (here: “Schlesiergau”); *Ottonian Germany. The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg*, transl. D. A. Warner, Manchester–New York 2001, p. 350 (here: “region of Silesia”) – in this particular case it is not appropriate, especially since it erroneously assumes the existence of Silesia as early as at the turn of the 10th and 11th centuries. For more information on this matter see e.g. Stanisław Rosik, *Kształtowanie się Śląska (do 1163 r.). Czynniki integracji regionalnej*, “Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka”, 67 (2012), 4, 31–52; cf. *idem*, *The formation of Silesia (to 1163). Factors of regional integration*, [in:] *The long formation of the Region Silesia (c. 1000–1526)*, ed. Przemysław Wiszewski, Wrocław 2013 (Cuius regio? Ideological and Territorial

wanted to secure his way to Bohemia, especially if we assume that conquering this stronghold would only be a part of the plan to return to the Oder River, e.g. to besiege Wrocław. However, this plan is only a guess, so let's give up the temptation to make further speculations in this direction, especially that – what is worth emphasizing – for Bolesław just being deprived of Niemcza would be a severe loss. For the functioning of the then Polish statehood in the lands of the future Silesia individual tribal territories were still of key importance⁴², and strongholds were representative seats of the Piast rule in their area. The capture of Niemcza would thus reduce Bolesław's possession of the “pagus Silensi”, and could be for instance handed over to Oldřich from Bohemia, who personally supported the Emperor during the siege⁴³.

However, the assumption about such plans cannot be strengthened by observing the further course of events, because more than three weeks⁴⁴ of fights for Niemcza – we come back to Thietmar's account – did not bring success to the attackers. The chronicler complains about the low morale of Henry II's people, who did not properly support his plans⁴⁵. In addition, they were thwarted by a powerful relief that managed to break into the castle at night. Even when the Emperor's forces built siege machines, the inhabitants of the stronghold made similar ones, and soon burned those of the besieging with fire thrown from the ramparts⁴⁶. When describing these incidents, the chronicler did not hide his admiration for the defenders, regarding not only their proficiency in the art of war, but also their attitude: moderation both in showing joy at success and sadness at failure. This praise of the knightly virtues is also reflected in the chronicler's emphasis on the ostentatious attachment of people of Niemcza to the Christian faith: they erected a cross against the storming pagan Lutici, trusting that they would win under this emblem⁴⁷.

Cohesion of the Historical Region of Silesia (c. 1000–2000), 1), pp. 41–64, esp. 55–57; see also below, footnote 55.

⁴² Thus, the formulation of statements that Silesia was annexed to Poland or Bohemia at that time should be considered anachronistic (e.g. with regard to the effects of the “regnum ablatum” war mentioned by Thietmar, hypothetically dated 990, or the territorial acquisitions of Czech Bretislav I after his invasion to Poland in 1038/1039), see for example Lech A. Tyszkiewicz, *Przylączenie Śląska do monarchii piastowskiej pod koniec X wieku*, [in:] *Od plemienia do państwa. Śląsk na tle Słowiańszczyzny Zachodniej*, ed. Lech Leciejewicz, Wrocław–Warszawa 1991, pp. 120–152; Jan Tyszkiewicz, *Geografia historyczna Polski w średniowieczu. Zbiór studiów*, Warszawa 2003, p. 39.

⁴³ Thietmar VII, 63.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, VII, 60.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, VII, 60, 63.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, VII, 60, 63, VII, 60.

The chronicler, especially as a clergyman, was probably quite impressed by this behaviour, and although the aforementioned hope of victory may only be narrowed down here to repulse the Lutici assault, the message of this passage of the chronicle is not indifferent to an overall assessment of the attackers' attitude. For Thietmar had already expressed his regrets about Henry II's alliance with these pagans⁴⁸. It may be assumed though that the chronicler, since he e.g. called those who instigated to break the alliance “evil”⁴⁹, accepted its necessity⁵⁰, but this cannot be regarded as certain. This is because in this case the condemnation may have concerned the very encouragement to abandon the Emperor, betrayal of whom was an evil in itself, even if it were to have a positive effect in the religious perspective, i.e. to break the controversial alliance.

We should recall that almost a decade earlier St. Bruno of Querfurt in his letter to Henry II compared him with the – after all, impossible – communion of “Christ with Belial”⁵¹. What is important, Thietmar testifies that such hostile religious sentiments against the Lutici were not only held by clergy, but also by imperial knights. One of them, a companion of Margrave Herman – already on their way to homeland after the siege of Niemcza – destroyed the sacred banner of the Lutici goddess with a stone. This incident cost Henry II a great deal of money, as he had to compensate the pagans for their loss with “12 talents”⁵². The chronicler by no means judged the decision of the ruler in this case, but the mere mention of this expense deepened the negative balance in the assessment of the expedition.

The theme of spiritual confrontation, highlighted in the image of repulsing the pagan assault by the defenders under the sign of the Cross, gains in clarity thanks to additional elements of the scenery of events painted on the pages of Thietmar's work, introduced as etymological digressions. The chronicler stresses that the Niemcza, literally: “Nemci”, or “Niemcy”⁵³, gained its name from “the ours” who founded it⁵⁴,

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, VI, 25.

⁴⁹ This allegedly took place after the siege of Niemcza was retracted, see Thietmar VII, 64.

⁵⁰ See e.g. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, p. 124.

⁵¹ *Epistola Brunonis ad Henricum regem*, ed. Jadwiga Karwasińska, [in:] MPH n.s., vol. 4, part 3, Warszawa 1973, pp. 101 ff. Cf. 2 Kor 6, 15.

⁵² Thietmar VII, 64.

⁵³ The word “Niemcy” in Slavic/Polish stands for “Germans” (translator's note).

⁵⁴ Presumably, the name is connected with a foreign population (prisoners of war?) settled in this place to build this stronghold, see e.g. Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, Jürgen Schölzel, *Najdawniejsza Niemcza*, [in:] *Niemcza. Wielka historia malego miasta*, ed. Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, Wrocław 2002, p. 28.

while the name of the country, i. e. “Silensi”⁵⁵, in which this stronghold is situated – the chronicler continues – was once taken from a certain great and high mountain, which in pagan times was worshipped by all the inhabitants because of its greatness and qualities (literally *qualitas*)⁵⁶. It is not difficult to guess that it was Ślęża⁵⁷.

In Thietmar’s view, therefore, the land of Ślężanie (*Silensi*) still breathes paganism because of its name, which was taken from the cult mountain being the focal point of the landscape, but, what is important, this paganism was already a thing of the past⁵⁸. Thus, Niemcza appears as a special sign of the new, Christian reality in the landscape of the country, and at the same time was founded by strangers in the native Slavic environment, although by the chronicler called *expressis verbis* as “the ours”. This Saxon⁵⁹ origin of the stronghold became part of the foundation of a new order, alternative to the tribal one, and the paganism that was connected with it, which, however, once again (and paradoxically, because together with the Christian emperor) came here with the Lutici carrying their idols⁶⁰.

In the context of these observations, Marian Z. Jedlicki’s classic statement today that the defense of Niemcza “must have been truly heroic, since such a fierce enemy of the Poles as Thietmar wrote [...] words of his appreciation”⁶¹ towards defenders is worth a certain compliment. The praise given to the besieged had in

⁵⁵ Thietmar used Slavic names such as *Silensi* (*Cilensi*), *Diadesisi/Diedesi*, etc. both to describe the countries and the tribes living there and did not declinate these names by cases, see Stanisław Rosik, *Czy za pierwszych Piastów istniał pagus Silensis? O nowożytnej genezie dzisiejszych problemów interpretacyjno-translatorskich (na przykładzie badań nad wątkiem Ślęży w Kronice Thietmara)*, [in:] *Editiones sine fine*, vol. 1, ed. Krzysztof Kopiński, Wojciech Mrozowicz, Janusz Tandecki, Toruń 2017, pp. 91–98. See also above, note 41.

⁵⁶ Thietmar VII, 59; the classical Polish translation spreads at this point a rather erroneous view that the reason for the cult of Ślęża was – as the translator added – its “purpose” to celebrate “pagan rituals” on it (see *ibidem*, p. 554). This interpretation blurs Thietmar’s clear interpretation on this point, indicating *expressis verbis* as the reason for worshipping a mountain its qualities (literally *qualitas*) and height – see e.g. Rosik, *Czy za pierwszych Piastów*, pp. 93–96.

⁵⁷ Then it was probably called “Ślęż” (*Slenz*), see e.g. Stanisław Rospond, *Ślęża* (1), [in:] *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich*, vol. 5, eds. Gerard Labuda, Zdzisław Stieber, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk 1975, p. 564.

⁵⁸ This is evidenced not only by the past tense used by the chronicler in this message, but also by the specificity of Thietmar’s treatment of areas already belonging to Christian monarchies, and in this case also those covered by the diocesan network, see e.g. Rosik, *Interpretacja*, pp. 86–90, 147 ff.

⁵⁹ Thietmar here speaks of the founding of the stronghold “by the ours” (“a nostris”), which points to the Saxons, but in fact it could also have been some other non-Slavic population, although most probably from the German area, see above, note 54.

⁶⁰ Carrying images of deities was a war custom of the Lutici see e.g. Thietmar VI, 22, as well as above, note 52.

⁶¹ See the publisher’s comment in: Thietmar, p. 555, note 405.

its subtext first the German (Saxon) origin of their stronghold, and then – although not in the second place – a religious factor⁶²: the topos, which dates back to the Constantinian tradition, of the hope placed on the Cross, the emphasis of which made the defenders of Niemcza true knights of Christ, prudent and full of virtues. From the key perspective of the chronicle’s theological-moral interpretation of history, the effectiveness of their resistance against the Emperor’s forces acting in the company of worshippers of the diabolical Svarožic⁶³, is not surprising.

It is the people of Niemcza who, on the literary created scene of events, present an attitude deserving the favour of Providence, with which the word about the joy of their ruler at the news of the end of the siege also clearly corresponds. The chronicler informs that while staying in Wrocław, Bolesław shared the joy with his soldiers in a mundane way, but also – and this should be emphasized – he had “joy in the Lord”⁶⁴. This New Testament motif⁶⁵ appeared already earlier in Thietmar’s chronicle, even in the description of the conflict between Henry II and the Polish ruler, and at that time this topical joy was to overwhelm the German king’s circle of people because of saving him from danger⁶⁶. This time, however, the joy was achieved by Bolesław, what indicates whose side, in the chronicler’s opinion, the race of Heaven was on⁶⁷, and it is worth to emphasize this, considering his strongly unfavourable position towards this Piast⁶⁸.

⁶² The importance of this world-view factor in the assessment of individual protagonists and whole peoples in Thietmar’s chronicle was pointed out over half a century ago by Lech A. Tyszkiewicz, *Motywy oceny Słowian w Kronice Thietmara*, [in:] *Studia z dziejów kultury i ideologii poświęcone Ewie Maleczyńskiej*, Wrocław 1968, pp. 104–118.

⁶³ The name of the devil (*diabolus*) was used for this deity by Saint Bruno in his letter to Henry II (see above, note 51). Similarly, Thietmar (VI, 23–25), characterizing extensively the cult of the Lutici – including the central role of the temple of Svarožic in Radogošč – also introduces a demonic element (e.g., the phrase „simulacra demonum” – *ibidem*, VI, 25) in the theological evaluation of idolatry, albeit limiting himself to defining Svarožic and other deities as “*deus/dea*”.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, VII, 64.

⁶⁵ Php 4, 4.

⁶⁶ Thietmar VI, 11.

⁶⁷ This division of joy into spiritual (“in Domino”) and “mundane” (“in seculo”) gains significant value already in the next verse, as it refers to a plundering expedition of more than 600 Bolesław’s warriors into Bohemia, who eventually fell into their own trap and were almost all killed (see *ibidem*, VII, 64). Thus, the “mundane” joy – ascribed in this episode to the Polish warriors – had to be reduced on the side of the Brave, but this fact did not overshadowed by the joy “in the Lord” that was only granted to him (especially since the chronicler is silent about the Brave’s participation in the unfortunate action, even in terms of inspiration).

⁶⁸ See e.g. Thietmar IV, 45, where Bolesław is denied the merits which would be indicated by the ‘greater fame’ sounding in his name; IV, 56, where Bolesław’s is a negation of his ‘good’, even by

A moral and theological dimension of the course of events is also clearly visible in Thietmar's story about the fate of the imperial expedition after the siege of Niemcza. It was ended in September, not only in the face of the failure of the assaults on the embankments and the burning of the siege machines, but also – mentioned as well in *Annales Quedlinburgenses* – a plague tormenting the imperial army⁶⁹. Its march through Bohemia, and from there to the homeland, also proved to be very tedious, and particularly telling misfortunes were falling on the Lutici. Thietmar points out that they lost as many as two images of their goddess, the first one, as already mentioned, destroyed by a stone, and the second one during the crossing the Mulda River, consumed by its swamped waters, which took also an excellent troop of 50 warriors.

It is only after that information the chronicler goes on to the thread of the suffering that fell on the Saxons as they were retreating to their homeland, and this order of description of the misfortunes that afflicted the participants of the expedition brings to mind the way in which the guilt and punishment of the Heavens are hierarchised, already known from Thietmar's chronicle when presenting the order of disasters falling on the Empire after the liquidation of the Merseburg diocese in 981⁷⁰. It is probably no coincidence that in his description of the return of the 1017 expedition to their homeland, Thietmar first mentions the scourges that plagued the Lutici as overt idolaters, and secondly refers to the Christians suffering for their sins, and he also communicates *expressis verbis*: “This expedition was undertaken to the loss of the enemy, but it has done much harm to **our victors** [emphasis – S.R.] due to our misdeed”⁷¹.

This is not, by the way, a surprising moment in Thietmar's narrative, who has often judged severely even the emperors themselves, including Henry II, precisely in his referencing to the supernatural sphere. Suffice it to recall that Thietmar has

name, mother, of course Dobrava (the adjective ‘dobra’ in Slavic / Polish means good); VI, 12, where Boleslaus is a ‘venomous serpent’.

⁶⁹ Thietmar VII, 63. See footnote 9.

⁷⁰ See above, note 7.

⁷¹ Thietmar VII, 64: “Facta est haec expeditio ad perniciem hostis; sed crimine nostro multum lesit victoribus nostris”. M.Z. Jedlicki's translation (see *ibidem*, p. 560) introduces here the plural form of the noun *crimen*, in the original being the singular, which immediately directs the interpretation towards many “crimes”. It is also worth mentioning an attempt to translate this point in such a way, that this misdeed has harmed not “victors”, but “victories” (see Strzelczyk, *Boleslaw*, p. 157), which would change the meaning of this sentence (by the way, in accordance with the described course of the expedition). However, it is definitely more convincing to derive the form “victoribus” here from the Latin word *victor* than *victoria*.

not hesitated to explain the reasons for the failure of Henry II’s earlier expedition to Poland (from 1015) with an episode proving that the German ruler undertook it, disregarding the warnings of Heaven⁷². However, in the description of the expedition of 1017 he did not decide on such a clear interpretation of the theological causes of the misfortunes plaguing it. And so, what specific misdeed is referred to in relation to it, one can only make guesses whose hypothetical ranking opens up the alliance of the Empire with the pagans⁷³.

However, it cannot be ruled out that this crime (*crimen*) is generally a sphere of sin affecting the entire community of the Empire. For in the next sentence the puzzle is intensified, but at the same time it is conducive to this solution: “For what was not then possible for the enemies [to do] towards us, was later done by our misdeeds”⁷⁴. Maybe this misfortune “completing the measure” was the ravaging of the lands between the Mulda and the Elbe by Bolesław’s men and the abduction of more than a thousand people⁷⁵, mentioned in the next sentence, dated on 19th September, but these “our misdeeds” are already hard to speculate on in concrete terms. So it is probably better to stop at the conclusion that it was a general assessment of the moral condition of the subjects of Henry II⁷⁶.

It’s not the end of enigmas in this quotation presented here piece by piece. For it is also striking with its recognition of the imperial army withdrawing to its own country after the unsuccessful siege of Niemcza as the winners, which is the leitmotiv of these reflections. Although there is no lack of mentions in the chronicle about other fights then waged with varying degrees of luck for both sides⁷⁷, these episodes did not bring about a breakthrough that could have authorised such an optimistic verdict for the subjects of Henry II. Thus it remains to seek the explication of the genesis of the victory attributed to them in more promising directions, i. e. *memoria* (and propaganda) and diplomacy.

⁷² See Thietmar VII, 15, where it mention a prophecy disregarded by Henry II brought to him by some remarkably big villager.

⁷³ Less likely seems to be e.g. the already mentioned instigation of the Lutici by “bad” people to abandon Henry II (see *ibidem*, VII, 64).

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*: “Quod enim tunc in nobis non licuit inimicis, peractum est postea criminibus nostris”.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁶ Similarly, Thietmar (VII, 21) explains the defeat of the Germans in the country of Dziadoszanie (*Diadesisi*) generally by the guilt of the subjects of the Empire (he speaks precisely of “us” as culpable).

⁷⁷ It is worth to mention here, for example, the unsuccessful attack of Polish warriors on Bohemia and, on the other hand, the plundering of lands between the Elbe and Mulda by the Brave (see *ibidem*, VII, 64).

In this first respect, it is worth considering whether the answer is not already in the quoted sentence that it was only later – after leaving Bolesław’s lands by the expedition of 1017 – that vices of the subjects of the Empire done what the Poles were unable to do during the expedition itself. Therefore, the very fact that the imperial army was not broken up and Henry II was returning home safely should be considered as proof of victory. But this verdict is very questionable. For since the previous sentence says that the aim of the expedition was the perdition or defeat (*pernicies*) of the enemy, and this was certainly not achieved, then at most we should talk about a still unresolved conflict. In this situation it remains for us to look closer at the circumstances of its conclusion.

The conclusion of the Peace of Bautzen took place on 30th January 1018⁷⁸, but negotiations leading to this finale began as early as November previous year. First, Bolesław sent back young Liudolf captured during the fights to regain his warriors taken captive in return, but at the same time he was already investigating whether he could send a messenger to “regain the Emperor’s grace”. Henry, pressed by the requests of his “princes”, agreed to this⁷⁹. Significantly, Thietmar, like *Annales Quedliburgenses*, indicates the Polish ruler as the party trying to stop the war, and so it was easy to say, especially at the Emperor’s court, that the reckless neighbour finally yielded to his majesty, and to declare the Emperor’s victory. In accordance with such a verdict, it is also the fact that Bolesław gave the hostages as a guarantee of keeping the agreement⁸⁰.

Following this lead, we find reason to believe that Thietmar presented the expedition of 1017 in writing after the first requests of the Brave to end the war, which would explain describing “the ours” (for the chronicler’s) as winners already at the stage of the narrative about events not indicating the success of the Empire; maybe he did it “in advance”, and perhaps even unconsciously, because of his inclination towards presentism. However, the final effect of the negotiations in Bautzen did not make him euphoric: he considered that peace was established “non ut decuit, set sicut tunc fieri potuit” – “not as it should have been, but as it was then possible to conclude”⁸¹. The restraint of this assessment even gave rise to the conviction,

⁷⁸ Thietmar VIII, 1.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, VII, 65.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, VIII, 1. In the next century, *Annalista Saxo*, a.a. 1018 (p. 352) pointed out that the hostages were exchanged by both parties, but given that he relied in this case on Thietmar’s account, it remains to be concluded that he “creatively” interpreted it.

⁸¹ Thietmar VIII, 1.

repeated in historical science, that the real winner of the struggle against Henry II was The Brave⁸², and Thietmar, aware of this, deliberately kept quiet about the peace arrangements in order to conceal that they were disadvantageous to the Empire⁸³.

In a fairly common opinion in historical science, Bolesław maintained Lusatia and Milsko, and the key to this statement is a reference to the supposed conclusions – supposed because with regards to the territories in question they were not drawn from the medieval sources⁸⁴ – of the Congress of Merseburg (1013), during which Bolesław, after paying his homage to Henry, received the “desired beneficiary”⁸⁵, hypothetically identified primarily with these countries⁸⁶. In the belief that the war of 1015–1018 was about their possession, the dispute about the decisions in Bautzen revolved around the question whether Bolesław kept these countries as a fief or without any obligations⁸⁷. At present, the second option⁸⁸ prevails, which does not, however, close the discussion on the old, one might say, textbook-like, interpretations of the agreement in Bautzen.

First of all, it does not seem grounded to believe that Thietmar tried to hide the unfavourable conditions of the Peace of Bautzen for the Empire. We have to admit that in his detailed account of the course of the conflict, he gave enough grounds to believe that Henry II’s desire, being the *casus belli*, to take back from Bolesław the land considered by him to be illegally owned, was not achieved. Moreover, the fact that Bolesław defended his possessions was no secret to the main addressee of the work, i.e. the German elite who knew the described matters, like the chronicler, from current politics. Although, given the *casus belli*, it is hard to imagine that no

⁸² See e.g. Gerd Althoff, *Ottonowie. Władza królewska bez państwa*, transl. Marta Tycner-Wolicka, Warszawa 2009, p. 173, also below, note 110.

⁸³ See e.g. Stanisław Szczur, *Historia Polski. Średniowiecze*, Kraków 2002, p. 73.

⁸⁴ However, an important premise in favour of this direction of search is the general indication in the sources nearest to the time of the events of territorial claims of the Empire as *casus belli*; see above notes 22 and 24.

⁸⁵ Thietmar VI, 91.

⁸⁶ For an account of the discussion see e.g. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, pp. 139–143; Jarosław Sochacki, *Stosunki publicznoprawne między państwem polskim a Cesarstwem Rzymskim w latach 963–1102*, Słupsk–Gdańsk 2003, pp. 71–74. An extensive presentation of the older literature on the subject was provided by Jedlicki in: Thietmar, pp. 440–443, note 473. See also e.g. Althoff, *Ottonowie*, p. 168; Pleszczyński, *Niemcy*, 241; Urbańczyk, *Bolesław*, p. 231.

⁸⁷ For an overview of positions see, among others Jedlicki in: Thietmar, pp. 578–581, note 6; Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, p. 159; Sochacki, *Stosunki*, pp. 75 ff.

⁸⁸ See e.g. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, p. 159; Szczur, *Historia*, p. 73; Eduard Mühle, *Die Pfanden. Polen im Mittelalter*, München 2011, p. 17; Tomasz Jurek, Edmund Kizik, *Historia Polski. Do 1572*, Warszawa 2013, p. 65.

territorial issues were discussed during peace negotiations, in the face of Thietmar's silence on the subject, it remains to be assumed that Bolesław maintained the lands to which the Emperor was claiming his right at the outbreak of war.

The hypothesis that they concerned Lusatia and Milsko – even if by the scholarly tradition, for which there is no equally strong alternative⁸⁹ – is still worthy of special recognition. Whereas, it seems less grounded to continue the consideration of a possible restoration in Bautzen of Bolesław's fief status in relation to Germany on account of his possession of Lusatia and Milsko (or other lands) in reference to the decisions of 1013. After all, the causes of the Polish-German War initiated two years later prove – according to Thietmar's account – that the Treaty of Merseburg lost its validity as a result of the Brave's disloyalty and his refusal to appear before the Emperor in order to possibly repair mutual relations. As neither in Bautzen nor later was there a repetition of acts of submission like those that had previously taken place in Merseburg, the discussion about the vassal and fief relationship of the Polish ruler towards Henry II has no source basis.

Indeed, the previous scholarly debate took into account the possible permanence, even if nominally, of the legal status established in Merseburg in 1013 also at the stage of the conclusion of the Peace of Bautzen⁹⁰, but such a view reflects at most the alleged claims of Henry II at the time, and even minimized in relation to the outbreak of the war. After all, the reason for the war was the attempt to deprive Bolesław of certain lands of the Empire, which – assuming that they were the “beneficiary” granted to him in 1013 – meant the actual cancellation of the Merseburg arrangements in their supposed territorial scope. In a situation where, after a trial of strength, Henry II did not manage to deprive his opponent of the disputed areas, nor to force – which was of key importance in the world of the ritual of that time – him to humble himself before him in person (*deditio*)⁹¹, are no enough premises to state that the Merseburg decisions were sustained at the stage of the Peace of Bautzen (as far as we don't talk about possible Henry II's plans for the future).

Importantly, the Polish ruler's very refusal to appear before the Emperor in person forced the mode of swearing the peace by the envoys. It is possible that Henry II agreed to such a solution as early as in 1017, when – as already mentioned

⁸⁹ Although there were also other suggestions (e.g. Moravia), see above, note 86.

⁹⁰ For an overview of positions see Sochacki, *Stosunki*, pp. 75 ff.

⁹¹ See Zbigniew Dalewski, *Rytuał i polityka. Opowieść Galla Anonima o konflikcie Bolesława Krzywoustego ze Zbigniewem*, Warszawa 2005, p. 73; Althoff, *Ottonowie*, p. 170.

above – he sent his dignitaries to negotiate with the Brave. However, the Brave did not want to meet them in a foreign land at that time, and he finally reached his goal at the end of January of the following year, accepting an imperial delegation in Bautzen which was under his control. Its composition was listed in detail by Thietmar⁹², who did not, however, mention either Bolesław’s presence there or his being represented by envoys.

Thus, in the face of the silence of the medieval sources⁹³, it remains to take both solutions into account on the basis of alternative hypotheses, but in favour of the possibility assuming a personal oath of peace by the Polish ruler, it can be indicated as its analogy with the way his first war with Germany was ended (1002–1005). According to Thietmar, he made the peace in Poznań with Henry II’s envoys in person, asking for their arrival⁹⁴. In the case of Bautzen – if we believe the chronicler – the Brave similarly asked the Emperor to send his envoys. Their status was, after all, so high that Bolesław’s failure to receive them in person might have been badly perceived by the German elite, whose favours he cared about. He soon married Margrave Eckard I’ daughter, Oda, perhaps to strengthen the Peace of Bautzen⁹⁵, and shortly afterwards the Saxons supported him in his Kiev expedition.

The plan to undertake this expedition should be considered as one of the possible reasons for Bolesław’s efforts for peace with the Empire. Its conclusion meant at the same time that Henry abandoned his alliance with Yaroslav the Wise, that one which resulted in an attack of Rus’ troops on an unknown stronghold in 1017, repulsed by the Brave’s garrison⁹⁶. One can even suppose that the Saxons’ support for Bolesław’s Kiev expedition was also discussed in Merseburg, but this is also another example of filling the silence of the sources in this respect by theories, perhaps in an exaggerated way: there was still enough time to later agree on such cooperation, which was needed not before the summer.

⁹² Thietmar VIII, 1. Beside the already mentioned son-in-law of Bolesław the Brave, Margrave Herman, the chronicler mentions the Saxon graf Theodoric, the imperial chamberlain Frederick and two clergy figures: Metropolitan of Magdeburg Gero and Bishop of Halberstadt Arnulf.

⁹³ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1018, They speak of concluding the peace by envoys, but that does not make it definite whether they were from both sides or only from the imperial side.

⁹⁴ Thietmar VI, 27.

⁹⁵ E.g. Szczur, *Historia*, p. 73; Jurek, Kizik, *Historia*, p. 65. Taking into account Thietmar’s report (VIII, 1) that Oda came to her husband’s country four days after making peace in Bautzen, it is worth considering the possibility that negotiations on this marriage of the Brave were already underway earlier.

⁹⁶ Thietmar VII, 65.

In the face of this – also observed in the other examples above – tendency to multiply *ex silentio* entities in the investigations of the Peace of Bautzen, it is worth to stress that the reading of the sources emerging in the current debate on the conflict that has ended as a result of this peace directs our thoughts primarily towards two of the issues already discussed here, which were the *casus belli*: 1) the attempts to take away from the Brave the lands which, according to the Emperor's side, were owned illegally and 2) to force the Polish ruler to appear before Henry II in order to ask pardon for his insubordination. Significantly, both of these matters did not ultimately get resolved according to the Emperor's wish, which is enough to explain Thietmar's rather pessimistic assessment of the Bautzen agreements.

On the other hand, however, there is no doubt that the years of fruitless struggle increased expectations for peace in Germany, and hence the very end of the war was received with relief in many circles, which is accurately reflected in a letter from Abbot Berno of Reichenau to Archbishop Gero of Magdeburg participating in the negotiations in Bautzen⁹⁷. Neither did Thietmar question the very need for this peace, agreeing to a compromise that would mean real benefits for Bolesław. Taking into consideration such a state of medieval sources, it seems unreasonable to go beyond the scope outlined above in the discussion on the territorial dimension of the peace, but it is still worthwhile to reflect on the scale of submissiveness of the Polish ruler in the negotiations undertaken.

The Brave could not hope for a meeting with the Emperor as equals, and undoubtedly he could regard as a success the opportunity to make an agreement in the stronghold which was under his control and by envoys. So what did he gain by not appearing personally at the imperial court? First, a guarantee of his own safety. For Henry II – or more precisely for Thietmar, who probably expressed views close to the Emperor – the Brave remained a disloyal subject, moreover an ungrateful one not only because of his failure to reciprocate with his faithful service for the “beneficiary” granted him in 1013, but also his underestimation of recovering his son from Bohemian captivity⁹⁸. In this situation, Bolesław may have been afraid that, if he appeared at the imperial court, he would be brought before the imperial tribunal and imprisoned, if only to force some compromises on him⁹⁹.

⁹⁷ See Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, p. 150.

⁹⁸ See Thietmar VI, 10–12; see also – here in less detail – *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1014.

⁹⁹ Temporary imprisonment was then used as part of the general principles of demonstrating imperial grace to disloyal vassals, and it preceded the ritual of *deditio*, see Althoff, *Ottonomie*, p. 186.

Moreover, he could even expect the threat of an assassination attempt, bearing in mind what happened to him nearly 16 years earlier in Merseburg. Let us recall that then, in 1002, already after an agreement was made with Henry II, when leaving, he was attacked by a crowd, losing a few dozen people and barely his own life¹⁰⁰.

However, the very concern for his own safety does not seem to explain unquestionably Bolesław’s reluctance to go to the imperial court, if only because he could demand e.g. a guarantee of his inviolability in the form of hostages¹⁰¹. Therefore, it is worth considering the broader context of possible political benefits from the avoidance of personal appearance before the Emperor discussed here. In the case of such a visit, the natural course of things would be to restore the Polish ruler’s subordinated status (e.g., on the basis of the 1013 treaty interpreted in science as a vassal one)¹⁰², and probably he was no longer interested in this, aware of his strength towards the Empire: after all, he defended his country twice before its invasion. It is difficult, however, to rule out any other form of dependence, manifested by paying tribute and providing armed reinforcements, but in this case rather from the whole dominion and out of respect for the universalist – Roman – prerogatives of the Emperor¹⁰³.

One hundred years later, Gall Anonim, expressing political ideas circulating in Bolesław III Wrymouth’s milieu, stressed the Polish ruler’s consent to this kind of services, but at the same time his objection to attempts by the Emperor to interfere in the internal affairs of Poland. These were to be resolved by him relying on the advice of “his men”, i.e. in practice the elite of the Piast monarchy¹⁰⁴. Similarly, the Brave himself also was to reply to Henry II in 1015, that he would consult with

¹⁰⁰ It was, by the way, the beginning of the sequence of Polish-German wars concluded in Bautzen. For a broad discussion of the events in Merseburg in 1002, taking into account the specificities of Thietmar’s relevant narrative, see Pleszczyński, *Niemcy*, pp. 184–223.

¹⁰¹ In this way, by sending hostages to Poland by Henry II, Bolesław was guaranteed the safety of his stay in Merseburg in 1013. See Thietmar VI, 91.

¹⁰² In fact, Bolesław could have expected even less honourable treatment than in Merseburg in 1013, given the deliberate, as Thietmar (VII, 9) stresses, invitation in 1015 of his envoy Stojgniew for spectacular humbling of the rebellious German dukes in front of the Emperor’s face before their restoration to grace. See Dalewski, *Rytuał*, p. 73.

¹⁰³ It is worth noting that, according to Thietmar (VIII, 33), from the Kiev expedition, Bolesław the Brave, supported by the Emperor’s subjects, sent him – counting on further assistance – gifts accompanied by the assurance of his obedience, see Althoff, *Ottonowie*, p. 173.

¹⁰⁴ *Galli Anonymi cronicae et gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, MPH n.s., vol. 2, Cracoviae 1952, III, 2.

“his” nobles (*principes*) whether to accept the Emperor’s demands¹⁰⁵. This empowerment of the Polish elite was accompanied by putting the good of his own homeland before his vassal subordination to the Emperor, which is aptly illustrated by Thietmar’s account of Mieszko’s behaviour at the beginning of his father’s third war with Henry II. Although the son of the Bolesław was a vassal of the latter when he faced the choice of whether to show loyalty to his senior or obedience to his father ordering him to defend his homeland, he chose the latter duty¹⁰⁶.

Thietmar, probably also expressing the views of the imperial court, read these behaviours of the Piasts as a rebellion against superior power. However, the indicated analogies to the story of Gall Anonim, in which – let’s add – Bolesław the Brave is portrayed as an ideal of a king, make it possible to show more clearly the possibility that the aim of this ruler in the final stage of the wars with Henry II was to breaking out of the status of a subordinate of the king of Germany – *vide*: Merseburg (1013) – in favour of a position that was already considered for him in the times of Otto III, ultimately most probably a royal one¹⁰⁷. He finally cemented this state with his coronation in 1025, although he had already stamped his coins with the title *rex* between 1015 and 1020¹⁰⁸. However, this Piast coronation was considered a usurpation by the German elite¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁵ Thietmar VII, 9: “...Bolizlavus se ad excusandum vel inobedientiam ad emendandum a cesare vocatus in presentiam eius venire noluit, sed coram principibus suis haec fieri postulavit”. This sentence is difficult to interpret and it is worth mentioning that some researchers relate “suis” in this case to the Emperor (see discussion in: Thietmar, pp. 478 f., note 69), acknowledging that the Brave demanded an opportunity to explain himself before the dignitaries of Henry II. However, the broader context of Thietmar’s chronicle indicates that the Polish ruler at the time was striving to strengthen his position towards the Empire, with which the interpretation that he decided to rely on the advice of his own nobles in resolving his conflict with the Empire corresponds.

¹⁰⁶ Thietmar VII, 17. Of course, in this case we are dealing with a literary creation of Mieszko II’s statement to Henryk II’s envoys (see Pleszczyński, *Niemcy*, p. 248), but it seems quite probable that the young prince was put in the face of a dilemma as to who to serve: the emperor or the father?

¹⁰⁷ Before 1025, it seems safer to talk about the Brave’s aspirations to achieve the status above a princely one, but ultimately a royal; for a discussion on this, see e.g. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, pp. 51–62, 84; Johannes Fried, *Otton III i Bolesław Chrobry. Miniatura dedykacyjna z Ewangeliarza z Akwizgranu, zjazd gnieźnieński a królestwa polskie i węgierskie. Analiza ikonograficzna i wnioski historyczne*, transl. E. Kaźmierczak and W. Leder, Warszawa 2000; Sochacki, *Stosunki*, pp. 69, 74; Pleszczyński, *Niemcy*, pp. 124–138, 304–317; Althoff, *Ottonowie*, pp. 147 ff.

¹⁰⁸ Stanisław Suchodolski, *Numizmatyka średniowieczna. Moneta źródłem archeologicznym, historycznym i ikonograficznym*, Warszawa 2012, p. 280.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, a.a. 1025; also e.g. *Gesta Chuonradi II*, [in:] *Wiponis Opera*, ed. Harry Bresslau, MGH, Scriptorum, Hannoverae 1915, 8 (pp. 31 ff.). For more details on this, see e.g. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław*, pp. 192–198; Pleszczyński, *Niemcy*, pp. 282–297.

Thus, we have a clear example of the collision of two “narratives” in politics, which dates back at least to the time of the third Polish-German war (although ideologically on the Polish side even to the Gniezno congress in the year 1000). Thus, paradoxically, the Peace of Bautzen could be treated by both sides as a confirmation of their own victory¹¹⁰, although in the case of Henry II it was achieved on the basis of a compromise. Not anywhere other than at the gates of Niemcza less than half a year earlier he had to accept the inability to break the military force of the Polish ruler during the trial, which turned out to be the last one in this respect. This state of affairs was sealed by the agreement in Bautzen. Sometimes the status of the Brave after its conclusion is considered that of a national sovereignty¹¹¹. If so, however, it should be noted that still in the world of *Christianitas* at the time, the idea of the primacy of Rome, not only of the papacy, but also of the Empire renewed by the Ottons, has not become invalid.

STRESZCZENIE

Tytułowe pytanie to pretekst do szerszej refleksji nad kształtowaniem narracji Thietmara z Merseburga o trzeciej wojnie między Henrykiem II a Bolesławem Chrobrym (1015–1018) i jej zakończeniu na mocy pokoju w Budziszynie. W opisie kulminacji wojennych zmagani, czyli oblężenia Niemczy latem 1017 r. przez armię cesarską uwagę przykuwa moralno-teologiczna interpretacja zdarzeń. Thietmar, choć lojalny wobec Henryka II, nie taił podziwu dla obrońców grodu, podkreślając ich chrześcijańską postawę. W tym kontekście zaskakuje nazwanie uczestników wyprawy przez kronikarza zwycięzcami. Przebieg wyprawy temu przeczy. Mimo to nie wydaje się słuszne oskarżanie autora o propagandowe kreowanie literackiej rzeczywistości. Lepsze wyjaśnienie to przypuszczenie, iż doszła w tym momencie narracji do głosu ocena zakończenia całości konfliktu. O zawarciu pokoju według Thietmara poprosił Bolesław Chrobry, co wskazuje, iż stroną zwycięską było cesarstwo. Porozumienie zawarte w Budziszynie Thietmar ocenił z rezerwą: pokój nie taki, jaki być powinien, ale jaki dało się w ówczesnej sytuacji zawrzeć. Skłania to często badaczy do uznania, iż zwycięzcą trzeciej wojny między Henrykiem II a Bolesławem Chrobrym był właśnie ten drugi. Pokój w Budziszynie zawarto przez posłów wysłanych przez Henryka II a w dodatku w grodzie pod kontrolą Chrobrego. Mamy więc do czynienia z sytuacją, gdy obie strony mogły ogłosić zwycięstwo: Henryk, gdyż doczekał się prośby Bolesława o pokój, a Bolesław, gdyż uniknął stawianictwa się przed Henrykiem II. Stan posiadania Bolesława Chrobrego ustalił się najpewniej już przed wybuchem trzeciej wojny z Niemcami, a zatem nie dziwi milczenie Thietmara w tej sprawie przy omawianiu postanowień pokoju z Budziszyna. Pokój budziszynski prawdopodobnie zawarto na zasadzie uznania *status quo*, a tym samym insynuowanie Thietmarowi celowego przemilczenia jego szczegółowych postanowień jest bezzasadne.

¹¹⁰ The opinion that Boleslaw could feel like a winner in Bautzen is supported by e.g. Mühle, *Die Piasten*, p. 17; see also recently Urbańczyk, *Boleslaw*, pp. 269 ff.

¹¹¹ E.g. Jurek, Kizik, *Historia*, p. 65.

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YEAR 1418 – EVENTS IN WROCLAW AS A PRELUDE TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE HUSSITE WARS

WYDARZENIA WE WROCLAWIU W 1418 R. JAKO WSTĘP DO WYBUCHU WOJEN HUSYCKICH

ABSTRACT: Hussitism was a movement indigenously Czech, with great specificity and political European connections. In the 15th century Silesia was a part of the Bohemian Crown and Wrocław, at the turn of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, was regarded as the second political center in the Bohemian state after Prague. The events that took place in 1418 are known to us in general terms and we even have at our disposal many details from which we can conclude that they were undoubtedly a manifestation of social conflicts and clashing interests of various groups of inhabitants, revealed in the internal life of the medieval city.

KEYWORDS: defenestration, patriciate, commoners, craft guilds, social conflict

In the Central European perspective, Wrocław was a rather special case due to its geopolitical location. Situated in Silesia, in the geographical, ethnic, and cultural borderland, it was a “transmission belt” between East and West¹. The property and occupational structure of Wrocław’s population was, however, quite typical for urban centres of this size. Therefore, the basic groups of the city’s population necessarily entered into various conflicts in addition to cooperation. The bloody events of 1418², which are the main focus here, were exceptional in terms

¹ See notes in, among others: *Czechy i Polska między Wschodem i Zachodem – średniowiecze i wczesna epoka nowożytna*, eds. Tomasz Ciesielski, Wojciech Iwańczak, Warszawa 2016.

² Lack of a modern and comprehensive study. See Colmar Grünhagen, *Zur Geschichte des Breslauer Aufstandes v. 1418*, „Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens”, 11 (1871),

of their severity and scale, as can be seen from earlier sources, which also provided evidence of other social unrests³.

It is worth mentioning here that more than a century earlier there had also been tensions between the craftsmen and the merchant patricians, probably caused by the great famine of 1314 in Silesia. Its consequences fell on the whole city, but the city council, dominated by the wealthiest patrician families, pursued a financial policy favourable only to them. Its most influential members were exempted from tax burdens. In 1314, in circumstances unknown to us, 6 representatives of craftsmen were added to the council. From now on the council consisted of 12 members, half of them were to be recruited from the craftsmen. The hated patricians, including Jeszek from Zgorzelec and Piotr from Paczków, were removed from the previous composition. After that the financial structure of the city changed immediately, because as a result of those changes the amount of taxes collected from the community was reduced by $\frac{1}{4}$ and the council stopped buying cloth from the Wrocław merchants. The guilds' victory was short-lived, however, as already in 1320 the council was reduced from 12 to 8 members, among whom there was no place for craftsmen anymore.

Another clash took place in 1329 when journeymen apprenticing at leather belt manufacturers went on strike, demanding the possibility of receiving training from masters of their choice and also committing themselves to it for only one year. We do not know what the outcome of this dispute was, but probably the masters, having the support of the patricians, did not give in to the journeymen's demands⁴. The most serious trial of strength took place in 1333 when weavers from the neighboring town of New Town revolted⁵. The end of the reign of Duke

pp. 188–196; Hermann Markgraf, *Aus Breslaus unruhigen Zeiten 1418–1426*, „Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens”, 15 (1880), pp. 63–99; Bedřich Mendl, *Sociální krize a zapasy ve městech čtrnáctého věku*, Praha 1926; Roman Heck, *Walki społeczne w średniowiecznym Wrocławiu*, „Rocznik Wrocławski”, 1 (1957), pp. 45–81; Waclaw Długoborski, Józef Gierowski, Karol Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia do roku 1807*, Warszawa 1958, p. 159 ff.; Cezary Buśko, Mateusz Goliński, Michał Kaczmarek, Leszek Ziątkowski, *Historia Wrocławia*, vol. 1, Wrocław 2001, p. 177.

³ Heck, *Walki społeczne*, p. 52 ff.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 5; Długoborski, Gierowski, Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia*, p. 150.

⁵ Aemil Steinbeck, *Der Aufstand der Tuchmacher zu Breslau im Jahre 1333*, „Abhandlungen des schlesischen Gesellschaft für vaterländische Cultur. Philosophisch – historische Klasse”, 1 (1861), p. 32–54; Adolf F. G. Weiss, *Chronik der Stadt Breslau von der ältesten bis zur neuesten Zeit*, Breslau 1888, p. 158 ff.; Alfred Kowalik, *Aus der Frühzeit der Breslauer Tuchmacher*, „Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt Breslau”, 5 (1938), pp. 27–74; Heck, *Walki społeczne*, pp. 56 ff.; Długoborski, Gierowski, Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia*, p. 150 ff.

Henry VI the Good of Wrocław was marked by social unrest in the city, because as early as in 1331 King John of Luxembourg issued a decree in which he empowered councilors to punish ruthlessly anyone who carried a weapon⁶. The outbreak came in 1333, when weavers went to the duke to complain about councilors whose policies were ruining their craft. They tried to win Henry VI over by suggesting that they wanted to take an oath of obedience not to the councillors but to him. They promised the duke a barrel of gold and a barrel of silver, but they also claimed to have on their side 900 men fully armed with helmets and armour, as well as many apprentices and journeymen ready to fight. The dispute was not settled during the first visit to the duke, so they met a second time, but then it turned out that the strikers were by no means a monolith. The talks had no effect, and the representatives of the weavers were very indecisive. The source information is very enigmatic, we do not know if there was street fighting. The rebellion ended with harsh sentences passed on its leaders. Konrad Gleser, the Vogt of New Town Hartmann and Nicolaus Hartung were decapitated. Six people were sentenced to banishment and one rebel was pardoned due to old age. Historians have puzzled over the actual course of events in this conflict, but the paucity of source information makes it impossible to solve the mystery of why an army of 900 men did not help their leaders. In any case, what we have here is a testimony to the divergence of interests not only between the elite and the masses in the city, but also within individual craft sectors. There were 136 weavers working in Wrocław at that time, so these 900 men could not refer only to guild masters, but also to apprentices, journeymen, as well as servants and local peasants.

The uprising of the weavers did not bring any concrete results, but rather led to the strengthening of the patricians' position in the city. Against this background, the events of 1418 will be discussed. Relatively little attention was paid to them by medieval Silesian sources. A chronicler from Wrocław Zygmunt Rosicz mentioned the murder of six councillors and one burgher of Wrocław (Johannes Sachs, Henricus Secundus, Nicolaus Freiberg, Nicolaus Feistling, Johannes Stille, Nicolaus Neumargk ponadto Johannes Megerlin) on the feast day of St. Arnulf, that is, 18th July 1418⁷. To give the date and general mention of the riots are limited records

⁶ Nicolaus Pol, *Jahrbücher der Stadt Breslau*, I, ed. Johann Gustav Gottlieb Büsching, Breslau 1813, p. 107; *Breslauer Urkundenbuch*, ed. Georg Korn, vol. I, Breslau 1870, No. 141, p. 130.

⁷ [Sigismundi Rosiczii], *Gesta diversa transactis temporibus facta in Silesia et alibi*, [in:] *Geschichtsschreiber Schlesiens des XV. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Franz Wachter, Breslau 1883 (Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum, 12), p. 44. Probably in connection with this yearbook remains the information

in several further Silesian annals⁸. A more extensive description was provided by a Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, who recorded: “On the 19th of July (1418) a group of Wrocław burghers, who had long been bitterly angry with the city councillors, burst into the City Hall and, after breaking down the gate without, beheaded, without any court procedure, six of the councillors, namely: Jan Sachsen, Henrik Schmieden, Freiburger, Nikolai Faustling, Jan Stille and Nikolai Neumarkt, and one of the burghers Jan Mergelin, whom they knew to be conspiring with the councillors, was thrown on his head from the tower of the City Hall. The burghers treated the city councillors with such cruelty that, having stripped them of all their clothing, they decided to lead them naked to execution for the greater disgrace, forbidding them any conversation with their wives and relatives, which they wished so much. Apparently, they were angry with the city councillors for oppressing them in various ways with constant tributes and payments, without providing any accounts for them”⁹.

The most extensive situation report was provided more than 100 years later by a German historian Nicolaus Pol, who must have some detailed descriptions of events at his disposal. First of all, he showed the circumstances of the conspiracy and its preparation: “On Sunday, 17th July, in New Town, in the church of St. Clement, during the sermon at the mass, the common people gathered quietly, as they were all waiting after the service. Here those gathered made a mutual resolution, went to confession before a different priest, who also gave them absolution, then took communion and decided that they would attack the council the next day. All this was to be hidden from the council and, of course, as if involuntary. But the simple, frenzied commoners provoked the following rebellion and riot presumably for these reasons: for the common good and benefit, for deep and serious reasons, the council instituted new levies, or taxes, to be collected on the very day. The common people were the most vocal against this, and in their anger and fierceness

of the *Silesian Yearbook II*, known from the late 17th-century version, see *Chronica rerum gestarum Slesiae*, ed. Godofredus Rhonius, [in:] *Epistolarum historicarum tertia de quibusdam ineditis historiae Silesiacae scriptoribus*, Vratislaviae 1694, p. B4-C1 (ed.).

⁸ See Waclaw Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka Śląska*, Wrocław 1966, p. 271; *Rocznik wrocławski (Annalia seu contingentia in civitate Wratislavia)*, ed. Aleksander Semkowicz, Monumenta Poloniae Historica, vol. 3, Lwów 1878, p. 735; *Rocznik magistratu wrocławskiego*, ed. August Bielowski, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 685.

⁹ *Jana Długosza Roczniki czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego*, vol. 11, ed. Stanisław Gawęda, Warszawa 2009, p. 89; *Joannis Długossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, Lib. 11, 1413–1430, ed. Krzysztof Baczkowski, Warszawa 2000, p. 86 ff.

they neither wanted to resign nor pay. So they held meetings in secret, at which they pledged among themselves that they would not pay these charges at all, and that they would firmly keep together”¹⁰. Words after words, the conspirators decided to commence their act the next day. And lo and behold: “On the 18th of July, the day of St. Arnulf, the Monday after the Sending of the Twelve Apostles, or the consecration of the church of St. Elizabeth, early in the morning after 12 o’clock, when the shepherd called with his horn to drive out the cattle (this was the sign and signal of the rebels), the commoners gathered again in New Town in the church of St. Clement. The butchers gathered there, who were the impune instigators and criminal perpetrators of this rebellion, together with the weavers and their other relatives, after a meeting, when the sound of the shepherd’s horn rang out, ran to the City Hall and attacked the council in session, not expecting such a riot and tumult.

A cooper, Jakub Kreuzberg, chopped down the entrance to the City Hall tower, and a brewer, Mateusz Hengesweib, struck the City Hall’s bell. The following council members were beheaded in the market square under the pillory: the Burgomaster Nikolai Freiberger, three councillors: Hans Sachsen, Henrik Schmieden, Jan Stille and furthermore Nikolai Fäustling and Nikolai Neumarkt from the commune. A shoemaker, George Rathburg pulled his fellow John Megerlin, who had ducked there and hid in a corner under a roof to save his life, out of the City Hall’s tower without any mercy. He then threw him into the fish market, directly onto the javelins of a rebellious commoners, standing here in full armor, and the commoners then threw him from the javelins into the garden of the fish market, where he ended his life in enormous suffering. What else evil they did besides this is clearly expressed in the following sentence: The broken gate to the council with marks of blows still hangs in the chapel of St. Materno in the cemetery of St. Elizabeth Church”¹¹. Moreover, several councillors were wounded or ran away. The attackers have chopped down the chests stored in the City Hall, destroyed the documents containing the old town privileges, and robbed the money kept in the chests. The weapons stored in the town hall arsenal were also seized. The city jail also fell to their prey, from where they freed all the convicts, among whom were common robbers, criminals of all kinds and prisoners for debt. Interestingly, the robbers occupied the City Hall for 5 days, but the flame of the rebellion did not spread throughout the city, and the private houses and property of the martyred and injured

¹⁰ Pol, *Jahrbücher*, I, p. 158.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 159.

councillors remained untouched, and there are no traces of robbery of private property. This development of events indicates a certain specificity of the Wrocław incidents in comparison to similar rebellions known from cities in various European countries. From a spontaneous rebellion the movement – as some suppose – was subordinated to the patrician families of the Dompnigs and Neissers, who used it for their own purposes¹². Besides, in the description of the later chronicler we find elements of certain stereotypes, characteristic of accounts of this type. First of all, the destruction of documents was a regular practice during popular rebellions; after all, the “papers” contained the debts and dues of the subjects, so it was believed that destroying the documents eliminated the problem of obligations. Release of prisoners, regardless of their offences, was also a kind of demonstration of opposition to the policies of the rulers.

The account draws attention to the key role of weavers and butchers during the revolt. The power and importance of the weavers’ guild was already evident during the events of 1333. Butchers must also have belonged to a distinguished professional group. As Wrocław was the second most important city in the Bohemian state after Prague, it is worth mentioning by way of example that butchers also played a significant role in Prague¹³. Before the Hussite revolution, more than 200 butcher’s stalls were counted there, while in Brno there were more than 50, in Litoměřice more than 40, and in the small Bohemian Brody at the beginning of the 15th century about 20. Despite the large number of people involved in this profession, they formed a fairly closed community with a clear hierarchy, for example, between 1324 and 1393, only three butchers in Prague were granted town privileges, so those who had them defended access to this privilege for others. This shows the scale of internal tensions in this community, which to some extent in Wrocław must have translated into an outbreak of emotions in 1418.

After the events of July 1418, Wrocław remained without any authorities for two weeks. The councillors who survived feared for their own skins, while the craftsmen also did not feel strong enough to appoint a new council. Finally, on 10th August, by the decision of King Wenceslas IV, a new city council and a new board were established. New people, who had not been members of these bodies before,

¹² Długoborski, Gierowski, Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia*, p. 160; Buško, Goliński, Kaczmarek, Ziátkowski, *Historia Wrocławia*, vol. I, p. 177; *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, XI, eds. Hermann Markgraf, Otto Frenzel, Breslau 1882, No. 43, p. 185.

¹³ Zikmund Winter, *Dějiny řemesel a obchodu v Čechách v XIV. a v XV. století*, Praha 1906, p. 417 ff.; František Hoffmann, *České město ve středověku*, Praha 1992, p. 183.

were introduced. There were enough room for two craftsmen in each of the two institutions, and a few moderate patricians were also co-opted, which can be considered a compromise. Wenceslas IV called three members of the council and three representatives of the guilds to Prague in order to clarify the actual course of events in Wrocław. At the same time, the newly appointed council received the king's consent to introduce a new tax on all the citizens of the city in order to pay Wrocław's debts. Wenceslas IV's attitude has to be assessed as very moderate; in his letter of 25th February 1419 he reprimanded the incidents of July 1418 as a violation of the law, but promised not to draw any consequences provided the city remained peaceful¹⁴. This is hardly surprising when we remember that the atmosphere in Prague and in the Bohemian lands was already explosive and led to the Prague defenestration on 30th July, which actually and symbolically started the Hussite revolution.

The violent rebellion in Wrocław in July 1418 was the apogee of the outbreak of social discontent in the city in the Middle Ages. With all its peculiarities – to which we have already tried to draw attention – it was a rebellion to some extent typical of the late medieval period. Throughout Europe, cities and towns – especially the largest ones – were the scene of various types of strife and rebellion. In 1405 in Bautzen, the poor, led by craftsmen, chased away the town council and attacked the castle where the royal vogt resided. A few years later similar riots were observed in Kłodzko, and in 1416 Żytawa became the scene of a dispute between the town council and the commune. Social struggles at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries swept across the continent, with struggles in Florence, Lübeck, Paris, Cologne, and Greater Novgorod. Comparable events to those that took place in 1418 in Wrocław can be compared to those that occurred in Lübeck. The chronicler Detmar of Lübeck gives us an account of what happened in this city which headed the North German Hanseatic League in 1384 “The leaders of the guilds (butchers, bakers, furriers) planned the following: on St. Lambert's Day, in the morning, when the clock strikes 9 o'clock and the whole council is present, 40 armed men will gather in the inn at Oldevere, they will go to the City Hall, slaughter the council and all its people... at the same time the house... on Klingenberg should be set on fire, so that people would gather there and the conspirators could murder the council without any problems...”. When the authorities learned of this, “the council and merchants armed themselves, put on their armour and guarded their

¹⁴ Heck, *Walki społeczne*, p. 75 ff.

city, and some of them stayed home in their armour”¹⁵. The end was tragic, the leader of the movement suffocated in prison and his corpse was dismembered, and two other leaders who fled the city did not escape similar punishment.

In Poland, a whole series of active protests by commoners against the patriciate took place in Krakow (1375, 1392, 1396, 1397, 1406, 1418), and in 1399 miners in Bochnia set fire to a mine. These social, professional, and corporate divisions were not always clearly identifiable. In Płock in the 14th century, the dividing line was between the town council and the guilds of shoemakers and salt seller on the one side, and the remaining corporations on the other. In Gdańsk in the late Middle Ages, the discontented were led by leaders of butchers, brewers, shoemakers, and coopers, and in a social conflict in that city in 1416, the economic context was combined with the ongoing Polish-Teutonic war¹⁶. Similar disputes in Lublin, Łęczycza, and Warsaw were resolved by representatives of professional or social corporations. The role of guilds was ambiguous, they usually constituted a bridge between the authorities and the society, but the policy of the authorities towards these organizations was rarely consistent. For example in Kraków, as early as the 1360s Casimir the Great decided that half of the Kraków council was to be made up of craftsmen. Disputes and disagreements did not cease, however, and after further turbulence in 1418 the king’s commissioners appointed a new body of the common people, a 16-person committee elected by the whole commune and composed of half of merchants and half of craftsmen. The new body was a part of the council and had the power of control over the adoption of taxes and the content of new *Willkürs*. The new members blended into the council and from the 1530s to the beginning of the next century the power in Kraków was stable and dominated by several patrician families and the guild elite¹⁷. When speaking about the inconsistent policy of the authorities towards guilds, it is worth mentioning the case of Charles IV of Luxemburg. In 1350 he carried out a restructuring of the city council in Prague¹⁸. It was a kind of revolution, because the ruler removed the traditional patrician families and replaced them with craftsmen, and it was the first case in the history of Prague when the latter filled most of the

¹⁵ Detmar von Lübeck, *Chronik*, [in:] *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, vol. 26, Leipzig 1899, p. 345.

¹⁶ Edmund Cieślak, *Rewolty gdańskie w XV w. (1416–1456)*, „Kwartalnik Historyczny”, 61 (1954), p. 117 ff.

¹⁷ Michał Patkaniowski, *Krakowska rada miejska w wiekach średnich*, Kraków 1934, p. 78.

¹⁸ Jaroslav Mezník, *Převrat na Starém Městě Pražském roku 1350*, „Pražský sborník historický”, 1 (1964), pp. 7–20, 111–113; Zdeněk Fiala, *Předhusitské Čechy 1310–1419. Český stát pod vladou Lucemburků*, Praha 1978, p. 220.

seats in the city council. We find there a sheepskin maker, butcher, goldsmith, knife maker, shoemaker, clothier, tailor and baker. It would seem that the monarch's goal was to strengthen the city's middle class, i.e., the wealthier artisans and middle-wealthy merchants. However, this was not the case. Already two years later a decree appeared prohibiting guilds from operating in Hradec Králové, which confirms the thesis of the lack of a long-term and consistent municipal policy of Charles IV and its dependence on many different – often immediate – circumstances. The document from Hradec Králové reads: “Also to the sons of your burghers or your city that no one should forbid them to work at the cloth craft, but that each of them, though young, should be permitted without hindrance from masters or others to practice and carry on this craft, so that they may thus adequately feed themselves. Monopolies and secret meetings of the craftsmen and any confidential meetings to conclude agreements among themselves are forbidden. We forbid the existence of any organizations in this area that are directed against the free exercise of crafts and we order that all crafts of your city and each particular craft, together with the craftsmen, be subordinated to the city council and be obedient to it just like the other inhabitants of the city. It is also necessary to establish penalties for all those who disobey these regulations in general and each individual”¹⁹. The ban on all guild regulations suggests that these institutions were to transform into voluntary religious and charitable societies. However, Charles IV of Luxembourg was far from introducing economic liberalism in the lands of the Bohemian Crown (including Wrocław, which is of particular interest here), and guilds continued to function in the cities and towns, for better or worse.

In order to complete the picture of urban dependencies and conflicts at different levels of the political, social, and professional hierarchies, one must not forget about the antagonisms that consumed guilds from within. We know numerous examples of conflicts between master craftsmen and owners of workshops versus journeymen who represented professionals in a given domain but lacked basic rights. In the statutes of Toruń, chronologically at the same time as the Wrocław incidents we are discussing, in 1420, it is ordered: “no journeyman should make meetings or gatherings against our lord, against the country, against the city, or against his guild masters... No journeyman shall make a holiday on Monday or any other working day, or walk about freely, or do any new jobs or contracts that

¹⁹ *Codex Iuris Municipalis regni Bohemiae*, ed. Jaromir Čelakovský, Praha 1895, p. 473 ff.

may cause him to leave his master's employ or receive a dismissal. Whoever breaks this resolution shall be beheaded; if anyone breaks it unknowingly, he shall not know his punishment... All servants, whatever they may be, whether they work for wages or for whatever, because they renounce all meetings, are forbidden for a year to buy any beverage to drink at meetings...whoever allows such meetings to be held in his house shall be beheaded"²⁰.

But let us return to the situation in Wrocław. The outbreak of the Hussite revolution on 30th July 1419 and the subsequent death of Wenceslas IV had a devastating effect on the inhabitants of Wrocław. His successor and younger brother Sigismund of Luxemburg was a completely different personality²¹. As far as his attitude towards cities and towns is concerned, it seems that here he followed in the footsteps of his great father Charles IV, who believed that cities and towns should be subordinated to the will of the monarch, and that a change of power in a city could only take place with the consent and under the control of the ruler. In early 1420, Sigismund arrived in Wrocław and accepted tribute from the citizens, and the city became the focus of attention as the Diet of the Reich was convened here. Unexpectedly, the question of the repercussions of the revolt of July 1418 returned. Sigismund, who was competing for the crown of Bohemia, in the atmosphere of Hussitism spreading in the Bohemian lands, initiated by the Prague defenestration, decided to send a clear signal that he did not consider any compromise with the leaders of the revolution. The "Wrocław case" was a perfect fit for that. Therefore, an investigation into the events of 1418 was initiated and a court was set up, composed of Wrocław councillors and jurors, as well as representatives of nine Silesian towns directly subordinated to the Crown of Bohemia: Świdnica, Strzegom, Jawor, Lwówek, Bolesławiec, Dzierżoniów, Jelenia Góra, Namysłów

²⁰ *Acten der Ständetage Preussens unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. Max Toeppen, vol. 1, Leipzig 1878, p. 353 ff.

²¹ Recent times have brought about many studies about this monarch: Elemér Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn 1387–1437*, Budapest 1990; *Sigismund von Luxemburg, Kaiser und König in Mitteleuropa 1387–1437*, eds. Josef Macek, Ernő Marosi, Ferdinand Seibt, Warendorf 1994; *Itinerar König und Kaiser Sigismunds 1368–1437*, eds. Jörg Hoensch, Thomas Kees, Ulrich Niess, Petra Roscheck, Warendorf 1995; Jörg Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit (1368–1437)*, München 1996; František Kavka, *Poslední Lucemburk na českém trůně*, Praha 1998; *Sigismund von Luxemburg: ein Kaiser in Europa*, eds. Michel Pauly, François Reinert, Mainz 2006; *Sigismundus rex et imperator: Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg 1387–1437*, Mainz 2006; *Sigismund of Luxembourg and the Orthodox World*, eds. Ekaterini Mitsiou (et alii), Wien 2010; *Kaiser Sigismund (1368–1437). Zur Herrschaftspraxis eines europäischen Monarchen*, eds. Karel Hruza, Alexandra Kaar, Wien–Köln–Weimar 2012.

and Środa. On behalf of the king the accusation was presented by: the Highest Bailiff of the Bohemian Kingdom Albrecht Koldic, the Starost of Wrocław Henry of Lazan and several other royal dignitaries. Some historians point to certain predilections of Sigismund of Luxembourg, evident on this occasion, who was an accomplished diplomat, cunning and cynical, but also a man who loved public spectacles²². Nothing could have suited such a show better than a spectacular trial ending in severe punishment. At the same time, the didactic aspect was not to be underestimated, mainly by showing the Prague citizens and their allies in the Bohemian lands that the monarch would not compromise with the disrupters of order and with heretics.

Seven charges were formulated against those accused of causing the Wrocław revolt²³:

1. That they overthrew the council, which is a crime against the King, because the councillors were “sworn to the king”;
2. That together with their helpers, they had armed their way into the royal City Hall and had forcibly broken down the door to the City Hall’s tower;
3. That they broke the royal chests in the tower and tore up the city privileges;
4. That they forcibly and cruelly murdered the councilors and jurors, threw them off the tower and, in some cases, ordered them to be executed;
5. That they got by force into the City Hall’s closets, broke closets and chests and took the King’s money from them, and arbitrarily seized belonged to the councillors;
6. That they robbed the King because they took from the City Hall armour and shields, which had been purchased by Emperor Charles himself, and using these armour and these shields they carried out some of their violence and murders;
7. That they broke into the jail and released people who were great detractors to the city, as well as people who owed the merchants a lot of money and were imprisoned for their debts.

The trial was concluded on 19th February 1420, and provided for the death penalty for the direct perpetrators of the rebellion in 1418, while the others who had fostered the revolt were placed at the disposal of Sigismund of Luxembourg. The monarch was also to determine the list of defendants included in the first and second

²² See e.g. Kavka, *Poslední Lucemburk*, p. 44.

²³ Heck, *Walki społeczne*, p. 77.

groups, and to hand down the sentences due by name. Already 4 days after the end of the trial the monarch decided it was time to create a new order in the city and appointed a new council composed of patricians only. The number of councillors was reduced to 8, as it had been 10 or 11 since 1390. He also restored the councillors from 1417 to 1418, who had been deprived of power as a result of the events of 1418.

The climax of Sigismund of Luxembourg's repressions towards the perpetrators of these events occurred on 4th March 1420. The exact numbers of the victims is difficult to assess. Over 100 people were found guilty, 23 were beheaded in the market square, 64 received the death penalty, but many escaped beforehand, and the rest were sentenced to banishment. The property of the fugitives passed to the monarch's treasury. Among the 83 people identified by name who were subject to repressions, we find a wide range of various crafts. Most of them were butchers, which confirms the thesis of their considerable activity. Other professions were represented by single people, most of them were knife makers (4), then weavers, shoemakers and bricklayers (3 each). The following professions were represented by one person each: needle-makers, nail-makers, carters, pillow-case makers, bathhouse workers, shield-makers, venison dealers, fishermen, maltsters, wheelwrights, glovers, furriers, cooperers. Surprisingly, there were no people from the "bottom of the society", who should have been numerously represented in the street riots; among those punished, there were only two journeymen and one apprentice. This leads us to conclude that Sigismund of Luxembourg's action was both political and didactic, aimed at pacifying all guilds by punishing their elites²⁴.

On 13th March, the monarch issued another ordinance aimed at removing the causes of possible unrest in the city. All guild gatherings and agreements were banned, popular religious and journeyman brotherhoods were dissolved, the council was also to take over the patronage of foundations and altars from the guild oath-keepers, all craftsmen were forbidden to carry or keep weapons in their homes. Particularly active butchers were punished separately; they had to reside henceforth in peripheral areas between the inner and outer city walls. Reprisals were also said to affect St. Clement's Church; according to later tradition, the church authorities planned to close it forever. The last action taken by Sigismund to "put in order" the situation in Wrocław was the issuance of statutes for 28 guilds in the city on 23th March²⁵. They practically abolished the former self-government of the crafts

²⁴ See Buśko, Goliński, Kaczmarek, Ziątkowski, *Historia Wrocławia*, vol. I, p. 178 ff..

²⁵ *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, XI, No. 40.

and placed them under the strict control of the council, at the same time liquidating the freedoms and possibilities of activity granted earlier by Wenceslas IV's statutes of 1390²⁶.

Let us now try to address the title thesis of this text in the final part of our deliberations. We can see the connection between the events in Wrocław of 1418 and the situation in the Bohemian Crown and the Prague defenestration of 1419 through a number of various situations. Sigismund of Luxemburg, surprised by such an exuberant development of the Hussite revolution, tried to oppose it by force. On 10th February 1420, he sent a circular to all the lands of the Bohemian Crown, addressed to prelates, lords, knights, subjects, burgomasters, town councils and castle burgraves, in which he announces that he is assuming power in his hereditary Kingdom of Bohemia, which is experiencing religious upheaval, something that was not seen in the reign of his father Charles, nor in the whole of Christendom. With the counsel and assistance of secular and clerical dukes, he writes, it is his royal duty to renew order and obedience to the Roman Church, as it was during the reign of the Emperor Charles. He therefore orders that the Wiclefists are to be avoided, that no aid or alliance is to be given to them, that no new faith is to be adopted, that they are to follow the precepts of the Church and that all disturbances and riots are to be avoided. Anyone who opposed it would be severely punished, up to and including loss of life and property²⁷. The spectacular manifestation of these general disciplinary decrees was the Wrocław reprisals of March 1420, as retaliation for the events of 1418. On 15th March 1420 Sigismund of Luxemburg organized a great public spectacle that, as we would say today, was meant to “entertain and educate”. Namely, he had ordered to arrest a townsman from the New Town in Prague, Jan Krása, who had come to Wrocław for the occasional fair and accused him of Hussite sympathies. The chronicler of the revolution, Vavřinec of Březová recorded: “In the same year on 15th March (1420) with the consent of the Hungarian king Sigismund... Jan of Prague, called Krása, a great lover of the truth, was condemned in the city of Wrocław, by the papal legate Ferdinand, certain bishops, doctors and masters, and other prelates and monks, to a cruel death in an impious, unjust, and ignoble manner for refusing to keep, believe, confirm, prove, and acknowledge the following articles: firstly, that the Council of Constance was

²⁶ *Ibidem*, No. 18.

²⁷ Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967, p. 332; Kavka, *Poslední Lucemburk*, p. 44.

properly assembled under the protection of the Holy Spirit. Further, that whatever the aforesaid Council decided, agreed, and decreed is just, holy, and is to be under penalty of mortal sin kept by all faithful Christians, and whatever it forbade and destroyed it did justly, holy, and rightly. Further, that the aforesaid Council of Constance, having condemned the masters John Hus and Jerome of Prague to a cruel death, acted in a just and holy manner. Further, that in forbidding communion under both kinds it acted in a generally Christian and holy manner. For these articles are false, lying, erroneous, heretical, and blasphemous, contrary to the law of God and the truth of the Gospel. As the above mentioned Krása did not want to acknowledge these articles, he was sentenced by hostile and impious monks and Pharisees, i.e. bishops, doctors, masters and monks, to the most shameful death by torturers and tormentors who dragged him around the city behind horses, showered with numerous insults and curses and burned in flames of fire²⁸. Two days after the burning of Krasa, the papal nuncio Ferdinand solemnly announced in Wrocław a crusade against the Hussite heretics promising great privileges for those who would take part in it²⁹.

The repression in Wrocław certainly reverberated throughout Bohemia, and some scholars believe that the Prague defenestration was certainly an imitation of the July 1418 events³⁰. In the subsequent complaints of the Hussites against Sigismund of Luxemburg of 20th April 1420 we can read that he exterminated the famous city of the Bohemian Crown Wrocław by beheading many people and appropriating their property to the detriment of the state³¹. In Prague the immediate reaction to the events in Wrocław in 1420 was an exodus of wealthy German and Catholic burghers, who with the consent of the city councillors moved with their families and most valuable belongings to both Prague tiny castles and some of the safer castles in the area. The departure of Sigismund of Luxemburg from the mild decrees of Wenceslas IV in Wrocław was a signal to Prague that there would be no mercy. The fear of Sigismund's army entering the capital of Bohemia must have been great

²⁸ *Vavřince z Březové Kronika husitská*, [in:] *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, 5, ed. Jaroslav Goll, Praha 1893, p. 358 ff.; cf. Stanisław Bylina, *Okrucieństwo w rewolucji husyckiej oczyma jej kronikarza*, [in:] *idem, Hussitica. Studia*, Warszawa 2007, p. 86 ff.

²⁹ Issue reviewed with references to literature in: František Šmahel, *Husitska revoluce*, vol. 3, Praha 1993, p. 36 ff.

³⁰ Petr Čornej, *Tajemství českých kronik. Cesty ke kořenům husitské tradice*, Praha–Litomyšl 2003, p. 127.

³¹ *Archiv Český čili staré písemné památky české i moravské sebrané z archivů domácích a cizích*, vol. III, ed. František Palacký, Praha 1844, p. 211.

after the spectacle in Wrocław. According to Josef Pekař³², the carnage in Wrocław was to be an indirect indication of how the recalcitrant citizens of Prague should be punished. Some scholars believe that sigismund's harsh treatment of Wrocław was a mistake, as it thwarted a compromise with Prague which had high potential³³. However, it happened otherwise, and all in all, the title statement of this sketch, that the events of 1418 in Wrocław were a prelude to the outbreak of the Hussite Wars, seems to be largely justified.

STRESZCZENIE

W 1418 r. doszło we Wrocławiu do gwałtownych zaburzeń społecznych, które znalazły tragiczny finał. Były skutkiem wielu sprzeczności i konfliktów charakteryzujących życie miasta średniowiecznego. Jednak rola Wrocławia była wyjątkowa, ponieważ w Królestwie Czeskim zajmował on drugie miejsce pod względem znaczenia, zaraz po Pradze. Konflikt i wybuch w 1418 r. nie był we Wrocławiu pierwszym tego typu zjawiskiem. Wcześniej, od początku XIV w. obserwujemy kilka wystąpień społecznych, ale na mniejszą skalę niż w 1418 r. W tym roku doszło do gwałtu na radzie miejskiej Wrocławia, zamordowania kilku rajców, a przyczyną był nadmierny ucisk finansowy pospólstwa. Podejrzewano również, że zdarzenia zostały wyreżyserowane przez dwa czołowe rody patrycjuszowskie dla własnego interesu. Zanotowano szczególną aktywność cechu rzeźników.

Sprawcy rebelii zostali okrutnie ukarani, a ocena wydarzeń nie jest prosta. Podobne wybuchy obserwujemy w wielu ośrodkach miejskich Europy owego czasu. Ich przyczyną były narastające napięcia społeczno-ekonomiczne pomiędzy patrycjatem i pospólstwem, które z kolei próbowała wykorzystywać władza monarsza. Skutkiem „powstania” była praktyczna likwidacja samorządu rzemieślników i ograniczenie swobód obywatelskich. Wypadki wrocławskie odbiły się szerokim echem i miały chyba wpływ na wybuch w Czechach rewolucji husyckiej w 1419 r.

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³² Josef Pekař, *Žižka a jeho doba*, vol. 3, Praha 1930, p. 41.

³³ Čornej, *Tajemství*, p. 128.

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THIRTY YEARS' WAR – THE UPRISING OF THE SILESIAN DUKES AND ESTATES AGAINST THE ROYAL POWER IN 1618: THE RIGHT TO ACTIVE RESISTANCE OR AN ACT OF REBELLION?

WOJNA TRZYDZIESTOLETNIA – POWSTANIE KSIĄŻĄT I STANÓW ŚLĄSKICH PRZECIWKO WŁADZY KRÓLEWSKIEJ W 1618 ROKU: PRAWO DO CZYNNEGO OPORU CZY BUNT?

ABSTRACT: The aim of the article was an attempt to answer the question whether the uprising of the Silesian dukes and estates against the Habsburg kings in 1618–1621 had a rebellious character or whether it was an action taken under the right to active resistance guaranteed to them by the Bohemian kings. The subject of consideration were also the motives of armed actions of the Silesian dukes and estates during the Thirty Years' War, both that at the beginning of the war and the second one from 1633–1635. Options were considered between the perception of conflict as a religious war (denominational motives) and the perception of it as a war conducted in the name of political reasons.

KEYWORDS: Thirty Years' War, Silesia, Silesian estates, uprising, rebellion

Despite sufficient knowledge of the military course, political and diplomatic history and social consequences of the Thirty Years' War in Silesia¹, questions are still being asked about its character. Was the renunciation of obedience to King Matthew and Ferdinand II, nominated king, by the dukes and estates of Silesia,

¹ Jerzy Maroń, *Wojna trzydziestoletnia na Śląsku. Aspekty militarne*, Wrocław 2008 – therein extensive older literature on the subject, especially in German language; *Wojna trzydziestoletnia (1618–1648) na ziemiach nadodrzańskich*, ed. Kazimierz Bartkiewicz, Zielona Góra 1993.

who in September 1618 actively joined the uprising of the Bohemian estates, which lasted from May and was undertaken in the name of defending the law against the violation of the essential elements of the state's political system by the king, or was it, on the contrary, a rebellion against the king's authority, the only one acting as legal? Was the undertaking of the war, with all the characteristics of a civil war, made by the estates in the name of a matter which was sufficiently just and of fundamental importance to qualify this bloody initiative as a "just war" – the only form of war for which Christian thinkers have for centuries sought to find arguments to justify its declaration? In the context of the religious transformations of the epoch, the next recurring question is whether this war had the characteristics of a "holy war", i.e., in defence of faith, or at least a religious war – in defence of one's denomination?² Or were its aims entirely in the struggle for political power, and religion was only a pretext or an accident resulting from historical conditions, especially from the characteristics of denomination as a factor strongly identifying the fighting parties? Although these questions seem to come from an arsenal of contemporary rational critical thought, they nevertheless belonged to the epoch: the accusation of the domination of political reasons for the actions of Protestants in Catholic arguments appeared constantly, and on the Protestant side there was a constant suspicion that religious persecution was part of the political game of Catholic rulers.

In the era in which these conflicts took place, the answers to these questions depended on both political and religious choices. The ways of answering these questions correlated both factors as modules of religious and political identity of the 17th century. One of them identified Catholicism with absolutism – and in the eyes of Protestants with tyranny. The other equated the Protestant confessions with modern parliamentarianism – and, in the Catholic eyes, with chaos and the estates' revolt against legal power. The Catholic-Monarch party assigned the attribute of legitimacy of power exclusively to the king, ignoring in political practice that the members of the estates, especially those acting within the framework of the estates' assembly, were also an entity of state power, and thus – besides the king – also a legal authority. The legal and political ability to rule with the king, acquired by the estates during the Middle Ages and in Early Modernit – *mutatis mutandis*

² Heinz Schilling, *Die konfessionelle Glaubenskriege und die Formierung des frühmodernen Europa*, [in:] *Glaubenskriege in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, ed. Peter Herrmann, Göttingen 1996, pp. 123–137; *idem*, *Konfessionelle Religionskriege in politisch-militärischen Konflikten der Frühen Neuzeit*, [in:] *Heilige Kriege. Religiöse Begründungen militärischer Gewaltanwendung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam im Vergleich*, ed. Klaus Schreiner, München 2008, pp. 127–149.

present in almost all countries of the European continent at the time³ – was confirmed by the written laws and functioning of assemblies of the estates as an organ of the estates' governing, making them an organ of state power. From the legal perspective, two legal subjects of state-public power – the monocratic (King) and the collective (Estates) – were competing to expand the spheres of rule in the 16th and 17th centuries. Early Modern royalists not only denied estates the recognition of their political-entity status in the state, but also elevated the absolute obligation of the estates to obey the monarch to the rank of a political priority, which had never before been formulated nor functioned in such a form. Members of the estates also began to be treated as part of all the subjects. Although the monarch and the estates were bound together by a relationship of superior and inferior power, it was not a relationship of subjection, as the first theorist of the Reformation period of the concept of the right to resistance of the Imperial Estates to the Emperor, Johannes Bugenhagen in 1529 noted⁴. The monarch may have demanded obedience, but the estates were not obliged to obey him unconditionally, either in the context of the fief law or the positive law of the Estates Privileges. On the contrary, the constitutional guarantees in the Empire, as well as in almost all countries at that time, included the right of resistance of the estates against a monarch who broke the law. In turn, it should be stressed that the monarch's refusal to recognise the constitutional right of the estates to the status of an entity of state power was as subversive and politically revolutionary for the existing structure of government in the state as the armed estates' uprisings. While the latter manifested themselves as a radical and ready to use military force, but conditional, denunciation of obedience to the king by the estates, the monarch, in the process of the covert and creeping process of the progressive suppression of the estates, their offices and powers, from the decision-making spheres of the State, strived for their permanent political impairment. Often it was only at the climax of the conflict, that the estates, irritated by the Monarch's policy, but usually much less capable of long-term warfare than the Monarch, would renunciate their obedience. The monarchy's proceedings in this conflict cannot be attributed solely to the fact that it defended its legitimate rights. As mentioned, it too has sought to introduce

³ *Ständische Vertretungen in Europa im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Gerhard Dietrich, Göttingen 1974.

⁴ Liuse Schron-Schütte, *Justifying Force in Early Modern Doctrines on Self-defence and Resistance*, [in:] *The European Wars of religion. An Interdisciplinary Reassessment of Sources, Interpretations and Myths*, eds. Wolfgang Palaver, Harriet Rudolph, Dietmar Regensburg, London 2016, pp. 141–144.

profound changes in the structure of the state and the exercise of power, and it has begun to treat referring to the duty of obedience as its attribute and as a means of political struggle. Both authorities found themselves in modern times on the road to a radical political change: the exclusion or serious limitation of the competences of the other authority. In this context, it also seems that, from the perspective of positive law, the king was seeking more radical solutions. Apart from the States General of the North Netherlands and the special case of the Swiss Confederation, the estates did not represent a compact concepts of the functioning of a state without a king. They focused on limiting his power, in extreme cases making it dependent on the estates.

Such tendencies in historiographic interpretations have led to a consensus, albeit differently modified, regarding the nature and thus the general causes of the Thirty Years' War, trying to explain its geographical and political breadth and the duration and persistence of conflicts. At its core is a reference to the paradigm proposed by Johannes Burkhart⁵, who sees the Thirty Years' War as an essential part of the formation of the modern state ("Staatsgründungskrieg"). According to his concept, war became a means of resolving the situation in which alternative ways of building the modern state existed within one state body: either as a dynastic-monarchic state, which in the wake of such a political priority would go to a monarchy of an absolutist type, with a hereditary nature of power, or as a state, which would go to forms of estate-land governance and electoral monarchy, with time also to republican forms. It is also possible to see the estate uprising in the Bohemian Kingdom in this perspective. It can be fully perceived as an expression of the model constitutional and systemic conflict outlined above in an Early Modern state, in which two forces with their own political agenda were confronted in competition to determine its political shape: the dynastic (monarchic) or the estate⁶. It would therefore be a war for extremely important, fundamental reasons, but at the same time such an approach would overshadow, or perhaps almost eliminate, the religious factor. This factor, present for centuries in histories, concepts, myths, and forming the framework of identification, seen as the primary and initiating of

⁵ Johannes Burkhart, *Der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, Frankfurt a. M. 1992.

⁶ Jaroslav Pánek, *Religious Question and the political System of Bohemia before and after the battle of the With Mountain*, [in:] *Crown, Church and Estates. Central European Politics in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Robert J. Evans, New York 1991, pp. 129–147; Joachim Bahlecke, *Regionalismus und Staatsintegration im Widerstreit. Die Länder der Böhmisches Krone im ersten Jahrhundert der Habsburgermonarchie (1526–1619)*, München 1994.

the conflicts of the 16th and 17th centuries, would be reduced to the role of a mere ideological radicalizing factor, of a rather accidental nature, without which the theories of the causes of the great early modern war could still be built. Even contemporaries had doubts about the religious qualification of many events and initiatives in this war. However, they themselves called it a religious war. Were they, like many generations thereafter, deluded by the value and importance of the religious factor?

In the European perspective of the interpretation of the Thirty Years' War, also this part of it taking place in Silesia can be seen as a complex political conflict between the king and the Silesian dukes and estates related to the formation of an early modern state. At the beginning of the 17th century, the alternative of the political system of the state on the monarchic-dynastic or estate-land principle was particularly conflicting in Silesia, both because of its autonomous internal system and the type of systemic functioning within the Bohemian state. The framework of separateness was created by the functioning of Silesia, consisting of 16–17 duchies, as a royal fief and not as a land directly incorporated into the Kingdom⁷. The fief relationship between the king and the dukes of Silesia, and – in the case of the royal duchies – between the king and the estates of these duchies, provided the fiefs with a much broader independent power than it was guaranteed by the average fief contract. In the case of dukes, it formally included, despite the monarch's practical efforts to limit them, almost full *regale*, along with minting the coin, accepting homage from the knights of their duchies, levying taxes, maintaining military troops and decisions about dynastic associations. Also, the king guaranteed to the estates of individual royal duchies in Silesia, who paid homage to him, among other things, the appointment of a governor of the duchy from among the local nobility, and that regular taxes could only be imposed by the Silesian Parliament. For the military assistance outside Silesia, which resulted from his initiative, the king had to bear the costs. The Silesian dukes and estates had institutions autonomous from the royal authority, with the features of executive, legislative and judiciary power, whose competences included almost full administration and rule in Silesia. The most important of them were: the general assembly of the Silesian estates, held without the participation of the king, the highest ducal

⁷ The act of incorporation of Silesia into the Kingdom of Charles IV from 1348 could not change this status.

tribunal, against whose verdicts there was no appeal to the king⁸, the office of the general starost, who was sworn both to the monarch and the Silesian estates, and according to the law elected only from among the Silesian dukes. Moreover, the establishment by the dukes and estates of an estate tax administration to collect and dispose of Silesian taxes (General Tax Office), with its own treasury and budget, as well as the land defence financed and supervised by them, operating within the framework of a general estate assembly, constitutes a picture of either significant participation or directly independent management of basic spheres of state governance by the estates. The king had poor administrative independence in Silesia and was dependent on the cooperation of the estate assembly. Thus, Silesia functioned as a country whose system was strongly determined by the participation of dukes and estates in power of a state character. Moreover, as it was mentioned, the dukes were still personally equipped with the quantum of public power under the law, i.e. contracts with the Bohemian king for the division of power on the basis of fourteenth-century fief contracts. In political practice, this power was narrowed down by the king, and its severe losses also to the knighthood of the duchies were caused sometimes by the dukes' profligate and reckless policy. However, it still remained significant until the 16th century, and after the Reformation, which was undertaken until about the middle of the 16th century by all Silesian dukes (with the exception of the prince-bishop of Wrocław) and their taking over the authority over the faith and the Church in their dukedoms, the duke's power and authority were significantly revalued and augmented. At the same time, however, the Habsburg kings intensified their efforts to centralize monarchic power and become the only source of power and law in Silesia. The position of the dukes and estates in the political system of Silesia, revealed in the existing institutions with reduced influence of the royal power and resulting from specific fief contracts providing them with significant spheres of public power, in an encounter with the new political tendency initiated by the Habsburg kings, caused a permanent conflict for power between the royal and estate parties. Developed in the 15th and the first decades of the 16th century, the political dualism, based on the principle of the balance, which

⁸ Felix Rachfahl, *Die Organisation der Gesamtstaatsverwaltung Schlesiens vor dem dreißigjährigen Krieg*, Leipzig 1894; Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju Śląska 1202–1740*, Wrocław 2005. Since 1548 the cities in The royal duchies could appeal to the Prague Appeal Chamber, Jaroslav Pánek, *Ferdinand I – der Schöpfer des politischen Programms der österreichischen Habsburger?*, [in:] Petr Maťa, Thomas Winkelbauer, *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1620–1740. Leistungen und Grenzen des Absolutismusparadigmas*, Stuttgart 2006, p. 68.

although labile, was still a balance of these powers, found itself in the last decades of the 16th and early 17th centuries on a collision with the new political aspirations of these two types of political forces.

The political antagonism between the monarch and the dukes and estates of Silesia was part of a much broader conflict in the Bohemian state. As it was pointed out, its centre was much more violent struggle between the monarch and the non-Catholic Bohemian estates, which, like the Silesians, were also joined by the Protestant political estate forces of the other countries of the Bohemian Crown. After four months of the uprising, which began on the initiative of the Bohemian estates in May 1618, the dukes and estates of Silesia provided it with military assistance on the basis of the “union”, as it was then called, i.e. the confederation of 1609. Then they established a new confederation with the Bohemian estates, signed on 31st July 1619. This time it also included the Moravian, Upper and Lower Lusatian estates, i.e. all Bohemian lands. This armed union of the estates was not only a temporary coalition to remove abuses and practices of royal power that were contrary to the law of the monarchy from the ducal-estate point of view. At the same time, it was a fundamental systemic act developing the consequences of the existing law in favour of the estates. This is what draws particular attention to the fact that the new systemic rules have evolved from the rights acquired so far by the estates. Therefore, the Confederation had a state reforming character and bound all Bohemian lands on a federative basis. The State was to become a union of land estates with equal political rights and full religious freedom of non-Catholic denominations, as defined in two Letter of Majesty from 1609, the Silesian and the Bohemian, i.e. the *sub utraque* denominations, i.e. those concentrated in “the Bohemian confession”⁹, and “the Augsburg confession”. Catholicism was allowed as a religion on the territory of the State, but its followers were supposed to have a strongly reduced ability to hold higher, lower, or even local offices. The restrictions resulted not from valuing Catholicism as a religion, but from concerns about the political loyalty of its followers. The dukes and estates of all the Bohemian lands gathered in the confederation dethroned Ferdinand II and elected Frederick V of Palatine the new King. The estates of the other Habsburg lands, especially the

⁹ Jaroslav Pánek, *Der Majestätsbrief zur Religionsfreiheit von 1609 als historiographisches Problem*, [in:] *Religion und Politik im frühneuzeitlichen Böhmen. Der Majestätsbrief Kaiser Rudolfs II von 1609*, eds. Jaroslava Hausenblasová, Jiří Mikulec, Martina Thomsen, Stuttgart 2014, pp. 239–260.

estates of the duchies of Lower and Upper Austria and of the Kingdom of Hungary, also submitted their accession to this confederation.

For a short period of time, the Bohemian uprising became a focal point for the whole central part of Europe. It was a conflict of both an internal nature, i.e. taking place within the Bohemian statehood, and crossing the borders of one state, involving almost all the political organisms of this part of Central Europe where the Habsburgs held the office of monarch or duke. The antagonism between the estates and the royal authority did not therefore arise from problems within a single Bohemian state organism, but all political entities under the Habsburg rule were covered by it, and their estates led to a supra-state agreement, largely confirming the diagnosis contained in Burkhardt's paradigm.

Seen from a long-term European perspective, the political conflict in the Bohemian state might be regarded as typical. The political dualism in most of the then European states has lasted for a long time, and its character leading to rivalry has been evident since the 13th century. In many political and territorial entities, the estates have secured their share of power: in England (Magna Cart) in 1215, in Hungary in 1222, Aragon 1283/1287, Brabant 1312/1314 and 1356 (Joyeuse Entree), the Burgundian Netherlands in 1477, Bavaria 1302/1311/1358/1392/1429, Brandenburg in 1472, Mecklenburg in 1304, Braunschweig-Lüneburg in 1392. These privileges not only defined their liberties, but also defined the political and legal position of the estates with a clause of renunciation of obedience to the king, or even deprivation of the throne in case of violation of the privileges granted. During the 16th century, these state-wide processes of writing down estate guarantees and at the same time guarantees for the legal renunciation of obedience covered the largest political-state entities in Europe, such as the Kingdom of Poland and then the Rzeczypospolita, the French Kingdom, and above all the Roman Empire of the German Nation. The struggle in these countries covered the entire 16th century: the great political settlement in the Empire in 1555, in which the monarch's authority recognised the *ius reformandi* of the estates, and thus their co-ruling status in the state system, the privileges in the Kingdom of Poland, and then in the Rzeczypospolita in 1501, 1573 and 1607, giving similar status to the "Sejm" estates, and in France eight civil wars, fought in 1558–1598, in which a Catholic-monarch camp trying to suppress the Protestant estate opposition finally had to guarantee them political autonomy with regard to religion in Nantes in 1598. These processes have not closed the phenomenon of similar struggles. In 1577, the Netherlandish estates,

due to both religious oppression and abuse of monarchy power, renounced obedience to their ruler, King Philip II of Spain, practically causing the creation of the first republican state in 1609, although the armed struggle was not ended until 1648. In 1642 the next stage of the struggle between the Crown and part of the estates in England took place, leading to a civil war, an important stage of which was the execution of the king on a charge of treason in 1649. In 1648/1649 the Fronde in France began, an armed uprising of the estates against Louis XVI¹⁰. Taking this background into account, the war started by the uprising of the Bohemian estates in 1618 and the Silesian estates supporting them militarily was situated in the middle of the monarch-estate conflicts of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe. However, the signum of conflicts in the Bohemian state – as in the Empire, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Netherlands and France in the 16th century – became the fact that mainly estates of non-Catholic faith were involved in them. The struggle was about the system, but the inherent condition of the conflicts themselves, and not only the accompanying feature, were religious antagonisms.

For the Reformation has introduced a new problem into political life: the situation when a monarch and estates of a state differ in denomination¹¹. A Catholic monarch and Protestant estates became parties to the conflict. These statements do not apply to northern European countries, especially Sweden, Denmark and England, where during the 16th century the implementation of the Reformation became a monarch policy, and to the south-western countries, where the Reformation, with its much weaker resonance, had no significant political dimension. In other states, although it took place only in part of their territory, the Reformation constituted the basis for those estates that changed their religion to demand constitutional protection for new ecclesiastical institutions and the right to public worship. Already these demands alone have led to the transformation of the religious issue into a political problem. For this purpose, the estates made use of their status

¹⁰ The following were used in the compilation: Eberhard Isenmann, *Widerstandsrecht und Verfassung im Spätmittelalter und frühen Neuzeit*, [in:], Helmut Neuhaus, Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, *Menschen und Strukturen in der Geschichte Alteuropas*, Berlin 2002, pp. 37–69.

¹¹ Eike Wolgast, *Die Religionsfrage als Problem des Widerstandsrechtes im 16. Jahrhundert*, Heidelberg 1980; Diethelm Böttcher, *Ungehorsam oder Widerstand? Zum Fortleben des mittelalterlichen Widerstandsrechtes in der Reformationszeit 1529–1530*, Berlin 1991; Robert von Friedeburg, *Bausteine widerstandsrechtlicher Argumente in der frühen Neuzeit (1523–1668): Konfessionen, klassische Verfassungsvorbilder, Naturrecht, direkter Befehl Gottes, historische rechte der Gemeinwesen*, [in:] *Konfessionalität und Jurisprudenz in der frühen Neuzeit*, eds. Christoph Strohm, Heinrich de Wall, Berlin 2009, pp. 115–166.

of state power, which was lower than the monarch's, but on whose political consensus and cooperation the monarch was dependent in almost all spheres of state governance at the time. Both in order to defend the only true faith, and in order not to weaken their political status in the state system, the estates could not allow to leave to the royal authority the previously undeveloped area of decisions on the legality and correctness of religion.

Another important political aspect of differences in denomination of faith quickly emerged: the problem of active defence of faith by the estates in the face of a higher power, i.e. the monarch. The question arose, the answer to which was the *raison d'être* of estates with a different denomination from that of the monarch: are they – as a lower power than that of the monarch – entitled to put up an active resistance to the monarch in religious matters, or not? Not building such a theory would condemn in advance every religious reform not recognised by the monarch to destruction. The problem was to find a foundation on the basis of which it would be possible to determine both the existence of conflict and its resolution. The reference to religious books was not suitable for this function. On the basis of the Scriptures, each side could only stand firm and steadfast in its own position, because it was only the conviction, the subjective factor, that decided. Moreover, the New Testament contained only scarce material to resolve such conflicts¹².

A practical way in which an attempt was made to permanently solve the problem became the juridization of religions, which transformed *causa religionis* into *causa iuris*. The denominations, their area and methods of functioning of their churches and communities of believers have become part of positive law. This first happened in the second Peace of Kappel of 1531 between the Swiss cantons, and in a developed form in the religious Peace of Augsburg of 1555, a law of the Estate Assembly of the Empire. A law was created to define the functioning of the state's political entities on account of differences in religions, outlining legally verifiable formulas about rule, obedience, defence and tyranny¹³. A similar path was taken by some of other countries of the time. Within the framework of the Bohemian state in Silesia, the juridization of religion was reflected in Rudolf II's Letter of

¹² Only three passages of the New Testament are indicated in this respect: Rom 13:1, followed by Acts 5:29 of the so-called Clause of Peter (*Clausa Petri*) and Matthew 22:21 Date of Caesari..., here compiled after Wolgast, *Die Religionsfrage*, pp. 9–10.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

Majesty from 1609¹⁴. Issued as a royal law, although written under the dictates of the estates, the letter legalized the operation of two denominations, Catholic and Lutheran in Silesia, delegitimizing *eo ipso* all the others. In the case of Catholicism it only confirmed the lack of restrictions, not specified, and for Lutheranism it wrote the formula of equality with Catholicism. It introduced full public rights for both religions, such as the right to public worship, the right to have churches, clergy and teachers. This has resulted in a standard in legal acts which determines what actions in the religious sphere are an offence and provisions on the means to be used for legal compensation. Thus, *causa religionis* was transformed in Silesia not only into *causa iuris*, but directly into *res profane*.

Although religion occupied almost the entire sphere of spiritual life until the Reformation, it was not a political factor because of the religious unity of Christianity. As a result of the Reformation it was not only incorporated into politics, but also became the most explosive and difficult part of it, which radicalized the unstable consensus in power agreements between the monarch and the estates that had lasted for several centuries.

The first stage of efforts to radically resolve the conflict with the monarch on the territory of the Bohemian state by means of armed action ended quite quickly with the defeat of the estates. After undertaking the offensive in 1620, Ferdinand II managed to efficiently divide the common front of the land estates. He also won the diplomatic struggle. Even before the start of military action, he managed to distance the members of the Protestant Union of the Empire from the uprising. He took advantage of both their religious differences – the majority represented Lutheranism¹⁵, while the Palatine Prince-Elector and the new Bohemian King were Calvinists – and the political conflicts between its members¹⁶. Ferdinand also received active military assistance from Duke Maximilian of Bavaria and financial support from the Papacy and the Spanish Habsburgs. The most important factor contributing directly to the estates' disaster was also the short period of time during which the Bohemian lands had to organise themselves for war on a new basis.

¹⁴ Paul Konrad, *Der schlesische Majeätetsbrief Kaiser Rudolfs II. vom Jahr 1609 in seiner Bedeutung für das städtische Konsistorium und die evangelischen Kirchenregiment Breslaus*, Breslau 1909.

¹⁵ Albrecht Ernst, the Saxon Elector, pretended to lead the union, *Union und Liga 1608–1609. Konfessionelle Bündnisse im Reich – Weichenstellung zum Religionskrieg?*, ed. Anton Schindling, Stuttgart 2010.

¹⁶ Also the Elector of Brandenburg was a Calvinist since 1614.

A single battle, which took place on the White Mountain on 8th November 1620, ended the existence of the confederation. The Bohemian lands were treated differently by Ferdinand returning to power. The aforementioned repression against the Bohemian estates was matched by an almost full pardon of the Monarchy for the Silesian participants of the uprising with a promise to keep all their privileges in secular and religious matters, including the Letter of Majesty from 1609¹⁷. The conditions for the restoration of peaceful relations were included in the so-called Dresden Agreement of 1621. The king's only demand towards the Silesian dukes and estates, apart from a one-time considerable gratification, became their admission that they acted rebelliously, which indicates the fundamental political and systemic importance of such a statement. It radically elevated the status of a ruler from the sphere of cooperation with estates to the sphere of full supremacy over them.

Numerous testimonies preserved from that time in the form of letters of the Silesian dukes and estates, in which they explained their arguments, make it possible to learn also the estate interpretation of the conflict. It is characterized by the complexity of reasons for their decisions. In this text it is outlined on the basis of two texts from 1619 and 1621.

The first letter entitled “Fürstentages Beschluß”¹⁸ has the features of a protocol from the Silesian Parliament of September 1619, at which the “Report” of the Silesian envoys from the course of the General Parliament in Prague was heard and, as a result, several fundamental decisions were taken to reorganise both the religious and political affairs of Silesia in relation to the whole state. The most significant feature of the letter is also its character of apologia, aimed at justifying the resolutions adopted. It was intended to present to the public the grounds for joining the confederation of 31st July 1619, to verbalize the reasons for the renunciation of obedience to Ferdinand II, as well as the decision to dethronate him and elect a new king, Frederick Wittelsbach. It also announced some of the most urgent resolutions contained in the Act of Confederation and the ways of their implementation in Silesia. They were prepared in the key period for the uprising (September/October 1619), when the dukes and estates were full of hope for the success of the

¹⁷ The exception was the Duke of Krnov, Johan Georg von Hohenzollern, Herman Palm, *Der Dresdner Accord*, “Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens“, 13 (1876), pp. 151–192.

¹⁸ *Fürstentages Beschluß, wie derselbige von den Herren Fürsten und Ständen in Ober und Nider Schlesien Augspurgischen Confession zugethan...*, gedruckt zu Prag bey Daniel Carl von Carlsberg, [1619].

action undertaken. The second document, entitled “Instruction der an Kurfürst Johann Georg von Sachsen [...] abgeordneten Gesandtschaft”, of 2nd January 1621 is a letter prepared for Silesian envoys sent to talks with the Saxon Elector, who mediated the terms of an agreement between the defeated Protestant dukes and estates of Silesia and Ferdinand, who returned to power¹⁹. The Silesians presented there their arguments and expected them to be the basis – as they initially thought – for the negotiations with the monarch. It also contained an extensive motivation that prompted the dukes and estates to the armed resistance against the Habsburg kings and the deposition of Ferdinand II.

“Fürstentages Beschluß”, although to some extent its argumentation depends on the one used in the “Act of Confederation” of 31st July 1619²⁰, also contains specifically Silesian reasons for joining the uprising. The introduction to this part of the letter, which bears the apologia of the cause of the uprising, was formulated as a kind of preamble. It declares that King Ferdinand II, now also elected Emperor, for reasons that will be presented further on, “deprived himself” of his rule in the Kingdom of Bohemia and therefore the dukes and estates of the incorporated lands, including Silesia, were freed from the obligations arising from the “homage conditionally paid”²¹ in 1617. Therefore, they became entitled to a new election of the king. Frederick V von Wittelsbach was elected at the General Assembly of the Bohemian estates and estates of all incorporated lands. These acts were made by the estates as a confederation, and the right to create a confederation was recognised by both the late Emperor and King Mathias and Ferdinand. When homage was paid to them by the dukes and estates, both swore all the Silesian privileges, including Rudolf II’s Letter of Majesty on the freedom of the Augsburg faith and the right to confederate with the Bohemian estates in defence of religion.

The immediate cause, forcing them, as the dukes and estates explained, to dethrone Ferdinand was the war. It was caused by the evil conduct towards the estates by the king’s “bad advisors”. The king’s guilt, however, was not to remove the advisors from the rule, so the matter was not settled peacefully and the war

¹⁹ *Instruction der an Kurfürst Johann Georg von Sachsen von den schlesischen Fürsten und Ständen abgeordneten Gesandtschaft*, d. d. 2. Januar 1621, *Acta Publica. Verhandlungen und Correspondenzen der schlesischen Fürsten und Stände, Jahrgang 1621*, ed. Hermann Palm, Breslau 1875, pp. 28–51.

²⁰ Winfred Becker, *Ständestaat und Konfessionsbildung am Beispiel der böhmischen Konföderationsakte von 1619*, [in:] *Politik und Konfession*, ed. Dieter Albrecht *et al.*, Berlin 1983, pp. 77–99.

²¹ *Fürstentages Beschluß*, p. 4.

was not avoided. Each of these motives, although obviously combined, also played an independent role in the argumentation. While “unbearable religious oppression” served to emphasize the contradiction of royal conduct with the biblical injunction, the core of which was the duty of the superior authorities to protect the pious (good) and punish the wicked, the latter pointed to Ferdinand’s violation of the power agreement with the estates. Both motifs were among the classic Protestant arguments justifying the use of active resistance to monarch power, and then became part of the concepts shared by the Monarchomachs. They appeared already in the oldest treaties building the theory of the right to actively defend the religious and church reforms carried out by Protestant political forces in the face of the monarch’s opposition. The logic of the first argument was that if a ruler stopped protecting the pious and punishing the wicked, as the Scriptures imposed on him, he also stopped being a Christian ruler. By this omission, he was against the command of God’s word, and by doing so, he was deprived of his office and the lower authorities were no longer obliged to obey him even in the area of temporal matters²². The second motive, the legitimacy of refusing to recognise the power of a monarch in the face of a violation of rights, was more complex. Moreover, in the thought of the Monarchomachs, it was connected with the concept of tyrannical rule, identified as the degeneration of royal power, against which active resistance must be put. Part of the tradition of feudal law contained in this argument was based on the principle that the fief law, binding the fief and feudal lord, recognized in the 16th century – at the level of state authority – as the relationship between a monarch and estates able to participate in an estate assembly, has the character of a power agreement. Its violation, and consequently its invalidation, may be done not only by a fief man, but also by a lord of fief. For fief law contained an *obligatio mutua*, i.e. an obligation on both parties to comply with the agreement. According to it, in case of a breach of contract by a lord, a fief was entitled to leave him, as well as to resist him if he wanted to force his obedience. Thus, reference was made to the *ius resistendii*, valid in the fief law, the right to resistance, the idea of which was incorporated into the 16th–17th century political relations between the two participants in state power. Law historians also see this as the source of the so-called “electoral capitulations”, as conditions for a candidate for king during negotiations

²² Schron-Schütte, *Justifying Force*, p. 142; eadem, *Gottes Wort und Menschenherrschaft. Politisch-Theologische Sprachen im Europa der frühen Neuzeit*, München 2015, pp. 36–38.

by the estates²³. The outlined approach to legal thinking has become decisive in the concepts of the Monarchomachs for the legitimacy of the right to resistance of lower authorities to higher authority in religious matters. Within this current of thought, as mentioned before, there has also been a renewal of the concept of tyrant rule, based on the ancient topos and its medieval continuation (Thomas of Aquinas and Bartolus Sassoferrato)²⁴, which considered the rule of every tyrant to be illegal and obliged to dethrone or even kill him. References to this concept were also present in the letter of the Protestant Silesians. As another circumstance, which *eo ipso*, i.e. by definition deprived Ferdinand II of his right to rule, was his having signed a pact with the 'House of Spain', which sought to bring about a tyrannical rule. This was interpreted as an act of violation of the sworn rights for two reasons. First of all, as it is written in the analysed letter, all Christian nations, regardless of their religion²⁵, abhor and fight "Absolutum Spannschen Dominatum"²⁶. Moreover, the aim of the pact was to rob the Silesian dukes and estates of their "natural" and "everlasting" rights and subject them to "extreme subjection". In pursuing such a goal, the monarch completely ignored the fact, as explained in the letter, that the Silesian dukes joined the Kingdom of Bohemia by their own and unforced will, precisely because it promised to "invariably maintain [their] liberties", in which "nature itself has embedded them"²⁷. Both the reference to historical law guaranteeing the co-reign of dukes and estates and to natural law as a source of political liberties and prerogatives of dukes belonged to the classical argumentation in the concepts of thought of the Monarchomachs. Their violation by a monarch resulted in the cessation of the obligation to obey him, because it was a violation of God's natural order by the ruler. Because of the attribute of "everlasting" to the political status of dukes, this order of nature included in a special way also their rights sanctified by their long duration²⁸.

Then, the narration of the letter again referred to contemporary events. Ferdinand II was reminded that both he and Matthias, as monarchs, sworn to maintain the freedom of religion, as recorded in the Letter of Majesty of 1609. They also confirmed the right to establish a confederation by the dukes and estates with

²³ Wolgast, *Die Religionsfrage*, p. 11.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 12–13.

²⁵ *Fürstentages Beschluß*, p. 7

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ Friedeburg, *Bausteine widerstandsrechtlicher Argumente*, pp. 146–152.

a clause on the possibility to renounce obedience to a king, who would violate the guarantees of the freedom of denominations in Silesia and Bohemia.²⁹ Such a case of necessity to defend the *legum regni fundamentalium*³⁰, according to the dukes and estates, occurred then. The estates have repeatedly reported monarchy abuses against the rules of the Letter of Majesty. They have only received assurances contrary to reality that all their privileges were scrupulously respected. They are now standing for the third year under arms and see no inclination on the part of the monarch either to peace or to rectify religious and secular abuse. On the contrary, Ferdinand's *modus procedendi* does not allow any hope of ending the conflict. Since 1617, the monarch has adopted the tactic of affirming all rights and, in practice, not respecting them. In the face of such experiences, the dukes and estates declared that Ferdinand's assurances can no longer be taken seriously, because from what he swore and what constituted *reciprocam partis obligationem ex debito*, i.e. the obligation (to comply) with the parties' mutual obligations, Ferdinand "freed himself by absolution". He was eager to confirm all privileges, but in fact he acted against them. The dukes and estates of Silesia, together with the rest of the Bohemian lands estates, are now demanding "real assurance", i.e. that the ruler confirms the sworn rights "not only by letters and stamp", but that he does not sabotage them and orders their real application. The monarch's method was clearly recognized as political hypocrisy. Ferdinand was explicitly suspected of applying the principle *haereticos pactis non servanda est*, as the letter made clear on several occasions. These accusations may be evidence of the radical frustration of the dukes and estates with the monarch's policy, which has been seen as hypocritical over the past few years. The strong emotionality in the formulation of this accusation, the almost tangible anger behind it, which appears in the letter, raises the question whether the gap between the monarch's words and actions was not one of the reasons for the radicalization of the measures taken by the dukes and estates.

The signed Act of Confederation was made *pro lege publica et fundamentalis*³¹ of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Therefore, it was required that the oath be sworn on this act by all land estates, by cities, by holders of various offices, both Catholics and Evangelicals, as well as certain groups of Catholic hierarchs under the penalty of loss of goods and beneficiaries. It was written that this would take place within

²⁹ Rudolf Stanka, *Die böhmische Conföderationsakte*, Berlin 1932, pp. 100 and 136.

³⁰ *Fürstentages Beschluß*, p. 10.

³¹ *Fürstentages Beschluß*, p. 13.

the framework of the Parliament convened for 21st October to Wrocław, and the oath was to be taken before the Collegium of Defenders. References to this new collegiate body in the Silesian conditions in this letter were scarce, completely ignoring its breakthrough and key character both religious and political, and its systemic significance for the newly formed Bohemian state³². The arguments of “Fürstentages Beschluß” drew on the already rich European tradition of thought about the right to resistance against the monarch. It includes themes already present in the oldest attempts of such concepts by Johannes Bugenhagen of 1529 and the *Confessio Magdeburgensis* of 1550, as well as in the writings of the Monarchomachs François Hotman, Theodor Beza and Junius Brutus Stephanus Celt Duplessy-Mornay/Languet³³ and in the works of Johannes Althusius systematizing these thoughts. It was also drawn from the local Silesian traditions, especially from the political privilege of Władysław Jagiellończyk from 1498 and the Letter of Majesty from 1609, as well as Bohemian traditions.

In the second letter, an instruction from January 1621, although some of the arguments presented in the “Fürstentag Beschluß” were repeated, the narrative was organised differently and, above all, even more clearly, Matthias and Ferdinand II were directly blamed for the situation. On one hand, it was to show that in order to come to the throne, Mathias used all those methods of political struggle which he now refuses to legitimize, since they have become tools of politics of the dukes and estates. On the other hand, both of them were accused of such conduct before being recognised as kings, which was intended to mislead the dukes and estates as to their political and religious intentions as later monarchs. It was extensively pointed out to Matthias³⁴, that it was the non-Catholic estates that gave him the crown – both Hungarian and Bohemian – when he declared the protection of their religious rights and made a promise that the maintenance of the political and religious freedoms of the estates would become an unchanging guideline of his policy. A detailed reference was made in particular to Matthias's support for the

³² Only the composition of this collegial office was given: the defensors were George Rudolf in Legnica (Liegnitz) Georg in Karniów (Krnov), Henry Wenceslaus in Oleśnica (Oels), Charles Frederick in Oleśnica-Bierutowice (Oels-Bernstadt), Joachim von Maltzan in Milicz (Militsch), Hans Ulrich von Schaffgotsch in Żmigród (Trachenberg), from the hereditary duchies it was supposed to be starosts, and from the cities it was supposed to be councillors: from Świdnica (Schweidnitz) Johann Wirt, from Góra (Guhrau) Elia Heldt and from Ząbkowice (Frankenstein) Nikolau Leipert; *Fürstentages Beschluß*, p. 16.

³³ Friedeburg, *Bausteine widerstandsrechtlicher Argumente*, p. 37.

³⁴ *Instruction*, p. 29, 38-39.

Hungarian estates in 1606–1607, when the politics of the then reigning Rudolf II led to the Bocskai uprising in Hungary and then to unrest in Moravia. The authors of the letter pointed Mathias out that when the non-Catholic Moravian estates established a confederation in Eibenschütz in order to protect themselves from religious persecution, he personally joined it³⁵, although he did so against the policy of Rudolf II, who ruled at that time. Not only did he declare that, as a future ruler, he would maintain religious privileges, which he confirmed with documents he issued, but he also confirmed this with military actions: he “went to fight” against the ruling Rudolph II, proclaiming that he was doing so to guarantee the estates “the maintenance of their religion and privileges”³⁶. When he ascended the throne, he legalised the act of the Bohemian-Silesian confederation of estates of 1609, which contained a provision on the possibility of refusing to obey the king in case of his violation of his sworn religious rights. Thus, the estates showed that in 1618/1619 they found themselves in a similar situation as in 1606–1609, and that they applied such methods of conducting politics which only a few years ago were introduced into the practice of political life in the Kingdom or approved by Mathias. In 1618, however, the monarch refused to legitimise such political actions. But with these very methods, the authors continued to point out, he gained the trust of the estates that deceived offered him the crown and throne. Even stronger accusations of responsibility for current unrest in the state were raised in the instruction against Ferdinand II³⁷. The blame for the political crisis in the state was laid on both his persistence in rejecting complaints about the violation of secular and religious law presented to him and his hypocrisy, which consisted, on the one hand, in verbal and written confirmation of all rights and privileges of the dukes and estates of Silesia and, on the other hand, in denying all complaints about their non-application as unjustified slander³⁸. This conduct released the dukes and estates from the conditionally paid homage to Ferdinand as future ruler in 1617.

The estates’ uprising of 1618–1621, although it brought defeat, did not end the resistance of the Protestant dukes and estates of Silesia against the Habsburg monarchs. First, however, between 1621 and 1633, there was a period in which they did not take part in the war, although it was also carried out with material and financial

³⁵ Stanka, *Die böhmische Conföderationsakte*, pp. 89 and 96.

³⁶ *Instruction*, p. 29.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 31–32.

resources from Silesia. The state in which they functioned was still involved in the war, but both the conduct of the war and the definition of its goals rested solely in the hands of the Habsburgs. It was not until 1633 that the local Silesian dukes, i.e. dukes from the Piast dynasty in Legnica and Brzeg and Podiebradowicz from Oleśnica, together with the city of Wrocław and the estates of the Duchy of Głogów, joined the Protestant Brandenburg-Swedish-Saxon coalition, including the so-called conjunction in 1634. They also joined the Heilbronn League, initiated by the Swedes, under the directorium of Swedish Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna as a Swedish attempt to seize power in the Empire. The remaining Silesian duchies were already in the hands of Catholic starosts or aristocratic dukes, appointed by the Habsburgs. The minting of their own coin by the Silesian dukes and estates allied against the Habsburg king underlined the irredentist goals of this political and military action. While the uprising of 1618–1621 was intended to reorganize the Bohemian state, the aim of the present political and war effort was to separate Silesia from the Habsburg Bohemian monarchy. This alliance turned out to be a political illusion, and this second war initiative of the Silesians was ended with the Peace of Prague in 1635, concluded without their participation. From that year on, for the next 13 years until 1648, the Silesians no longer took part in military activities as a political actor, giving their area merely as a theatre for fighting and bearing very high costs of these war clashes, both human, material and financial. However, their activity and political power came to the fore once again in 1648. They succeeded in obtaining the diplomatic assistance of Sweden, the United Provinces of the Netherlands and England and in introducing provisions on religious rights for Silesian Lutherans into the international Peace of Westphalia. They were nevertheless limited to 5 Silesian territories, 4 principalities and the city of Wrocław, but included full rights to public worship of the Augsburg Confession.

Apart from the documents written by the Silesians themselves, the reasons for the anti-Habsburg political options of the Silesian Protestant elite can be observed through the peace provisions ending their ally-military initiatives in the period called the Thirty Years' War. They were either entirely or largely made under the dictates of royal power: the Dresden Accord of 1621, the additional recession to the Peace of Prague of 1635 and the Peace of Westphalia of 1648. While the above discussed letters presented a Silesian-Protestant point of view on the causes of the conflict, in the above mentioned treaties the monarch was the instance that determined it. His diagnosis was concise and unchangeable: rebellion of the

subjects. Regardless of political reasons, in the context of such an interpretation of the action taken by the estates, the monarch placed himself above the law, even the one he issued himself. The provisions of the individual treaties have already been analysed in detail in the literature of the subject³⁹. The current task is not to attempt additional analysis of them within the limited framework of this article. What draws attention is their common feature. These treatises that ended the conflicts – in contrast to the narrative of the letters prepared by the dukes and estates who quoted extensive religious argumentation, but even more extensive and closely intertwined with it, political one – contained mainly provisions only in the religious scope, paradoxically, on the principle of a far-reaching settlement of the monarch with the Protestant dukes and with Wrocław, the only Silesian city so exceptionally treated. They were guaranteed full religious freedom, but in a practical interpretation reduced to tolerance in place of the previous equality of religions.

With regard to matters from the political sphere, however, the provisions were very concise and minimalistic, both in terms of the amount of space devoted to them and the content of the provisions. The Habsburgs' suppression of the political dimension of demands and claims was probably motivated by the fact that they did not accept the existence of a political program, represented by the estates of their ruled countries, including the Silesian Protestant estates, which was opposed to their system of rule. Maybe it was also the monarch's conscious trick to not verbalize the fundamental difference between his concessions and the dukes' and estates' efforts to place the right to religious freedom in the system of law and governance in Silesia. After the political defeat of the dukes and estates, the religious concessions granted to them – on the basis of royal grace individually to the dukes and the city of Wrocław – lost their explosive political power for royal rule. As can be seen, for the monarch who made Catholicism a *raison d'état*, the difference in religion itself was not a threat. It only became so when it was linked to the system of rule. Today there is a tendency to identify the religious factor solely with conviction and faith and to see the struggle of the 16th and 17th centuries as a struggle for freedom of conscience. In the 17th century it was also a very concrete dimension of power that was at stake. The dukes and estates had a limited control over the Catholic Church. Only the king was

³⁹ Palm, *Der Dresdner Accord*, pp. 180–192; *idem*, *Die Konjunktion der Herzöge von Liegnitz, Brieg und Oels so wie der Stadt Breslau mit dem Kurfürsten von Sachsen, Bandenburg und der Krone Schweden in den Jahren 1633–35*, "Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens", 3 (1860), pp. 227–368; Norbert Conrads, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne. Zur politischen und Geistigen Kultur eines habsburgischen Landes*, Wien 2009, pp. 53–69.

a force that cooperated in this Church. Whereas in the Protestant denominations, in Lutheranism and Calvinism, the Church was reorganized into an organ of ducal and estate governance, almost eliminating royal influence (if the king stayed with Catholicism). In such a context, therefore, the king's religious concessions were concessions from the monarchy sphere of rule in favour of the religiously privileged estates. The Bohemian monarch, after breaking the political prestige of the Protestant dukes and estates of Silesia, was not afraid to make these concessions. They did not become a part of the system law and did not concern the governance of the Silesian country. Instead, they brought a promise of peace in the lands which were one of the most important resources for the war he waged.

A rebellion of the estates or their self-defence against the provocative and disempowering monarch policy? A just war, in which religion and worship of God were at stake, or a new, politically aggressive attempt at a power struggle between political entities of the state? A war of religion or a war of reign? The timeliness of the problems presented in this article seems to lie in the fact that even today the choice of answers to these questions is made subjectively and on one's own responsibility on the basis of the represented religious, political and perhaps above all moral values.

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule na podstawie pism politycznych książąt i stanów śląskich z 1619 i 1620 r. analizowano sformułowaną przez nich argumentację wystąpienia zbrojnego przeciwko królowi w oparciu o istniejące, gwarantowane królewską przysięgą prawo. Podstawą podjęcia akcji była według nich obrona przed nadużyciami władzy i prawa przez króla. W trakcie analiz ujawnił się nierozzerwalny związek między charakterem konfliktu i jego przyczyną: uzyskanie prawa do wydawania decyzji o legalności wyznania okazywało się zmaganiem o polityczne kompetencje. Sformułowane w otoczeniu królewskim treści z aktów o charakterze pokojowym, kończące dwa stadia wypowiedzenia posłuszeństwa przez książęta i stany królom czeskim, w latach 1618–1621 i 1633–1635 oraz postanowienia w międzynarodowym pokoju kończącym wojnę trzydziestoletnią, posłużyły z kolei do próby zdefiniowania stosunku króla do charakteru konfliktu wojennego z książętami i stanami śląskimi. Królewskie warunki przywrócenia z nimi pokoju, zawarte w akordzie drezdeńskim z 1621 r., w recesie dodatkowym do pokoju praskiego z 1635 r. oraz w paragrafach dotyczących Śląska z tekstu pokoju westfalskiego z 1648 r., dążyły z jednej strony do wprowadzenia zasady pokoju augsburskiego na Śląsku. Paradoksalnie, z drugiej strony, król po zażegnaniu groźby włączenia prawa do wolności wyznaniowej książąt i stanów do konstytucyjnych śląskich praw krajowych, gwarantował na zasadzie przywileju pełną wolność sumienia i kultu na śląskich terytoriach książęcych i miastu Wrocław. Dla obydwu stron uzyskanie prawa do decyzji o wyznaniu i określanie zakresu jego wolności było polityczno-ustrojowym zmaganiem o władzę i o podmiotowy status polityczny.

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SILESIA DURING THE NAPOLEON'S CAMPAIGNS IN 1806/1807 AND 1813

ŚLĄSK W DOBIE KAMPANII NAPOLEOŃSKICH 1806/1807 I 1813 ROKU

ABSTRACT: The article presents events in Silesia during the Napoleonic Wars. They were discussed both the 1806/1807 campaign, known as the War of the Fortress, in which the Prussians defended Silesia against Napoleonic troops, as well as the Polish uprising in New Silesia, which decided the further fate of this land incorporated into Prussia in 1795. The course of the 1813 campaign in Silesia were also presented. The analyse of the source material and academic literature showed that the description of these campaigns mythologised by Prussian historiography, so effectively blurred the actual course of events that the stories about Silesian patriotism became one of the foundations of the legend of German Silesia.

KEYWORDS: Napoleon Bonaparte, Silesia, New Silesia, Prussia, Napoleonic Wars, 1806–1807 Campaign, 1813 Campaign

Although Silesia in the 1806/1807 campaign was a minor theatre of warfare for Napoleon, he could not allow himself to ignore its military significance. Therefore, after the declaration of war by Frederick William III, King of Prussia and the defeat of his troops at Jena and Auerstaedt in Thuringia, in the first days of November 1806, the troops of the *Grande Armée*, led by Hieronim Bonaparte, Napoleon's youngest brother, entered Silesia. The French could not leave this area without military control because Silesia, bordering Austria, with its 8 fortresses, could become an area of preparation for a counterattack against the main forces of the *Grande Armée* marching eastwards. Against them were marching the troops of

Tsar Alexander I, who intended to support Prussia. Napoleon did not want to allow the Russian army to outrun his troops and enter Warsaw before him. In Silesia, it would get connected with the forces of its ally through Częstochowa, which remained in Prussian hands, and then the course of the 1806/1807 campaign could take a completely unexpected turn¹.

The threat of such a development of the situation was a matter of concern for Marshal Louis Nicolas Davout, who, while staying in Poznań in early November 1806, sent his corps to Warsaw. He did not forget about the military importance of Silesia and he also did not overlook the stronghold on Jasna Góra Monastery, located near the border with the Habsburg estates. He planned to occupy the fortress and to start a Polish uprising on the eastern and southern borders of the Prussian state, which would cut Silesia off from warfare. At the same time he knew that about 30,000 Prussian troops had been deployed in the Silesian fortresses, which would lose contact with the main area of war operations in Mazovia and East Prussia, where the Russian army – the new enemy of France had just entered². Davout informed Duke Hieronim about his intention to conquer the fortress in Częstochowa on 15th November. Duke himself had already been sieging the first of the Silesian fortresses – Głogów (Glogau) since 7 November³.

Through a joint action by Polish insurgents and a French cavalry unit, Jasna Góra Monastery was seized on 19th November 1806⁴, as a result of which Silesia was isolated from the main war zone in East Prussia. Napoleon intended to use Silesia and its resources to fight against the army of Tsar Alexander I and against

¹ L.N. Davout to Napoleon dated 18 November 1806 and to H. Bonaparte, [in:] *Correspondance du Maréchal Davout (1801–1815)*, ed. Ch. Mazade, Paris 1885, vol. 1, pp. 343–345.

² L. N. Davout to H. Bonaparte dated 15 November 1806 from Poznań, and to A. Berthier dated 21 November 1806 from Sompolno, [in:] *Correspondance*, vol. 1, pp. 340, 350; J.H. Dąbrowski to A. Berthier dated 19 November 1806 from Poznań, [in:] *Dał nam przykład Bonaparte. Wspomnienia i relacje żołnierzy polskich 1796–1815*, eds. Robert Bielecki, Andrzej Tyszka, Kraków 1984, vol. 1, pp. 141–142.

³ Patrycjusz Malicki, *Wielka Armia Napoleona na Śląsku 1806–1808*, Wrocław–Racibórz 2008, pp. 67–68; Grzegorz Podruczny, *Król i jego twierdze: Fryderyk Wielki i pruskie fortyfikacje stale w latach 1740–1786*, Oświęcim 2013, p. 87; Jarosław Helwig, *Twierdza Głogów – czasy wojen napoleońskich – 1806–1814*, Oświęcim 2011, pp. 16–19.

⁴ Archive of the Jasna Góra Monastery, 759, Acta Congregationis, S-ti Pauli 1797–1807, pp. 315–316; Dariusz Nawrot, *Zdobycie twierdzy częstochowskiej i wybuch powstania na Nowym Śląsku w 1806 i 1807 roku*, [in:] *Częstochowskie Teki Historyczne*, eds. Norbert Morawiec, Robert W. Szwed, Maciej Trąbski, Częstochowa 2012, pp. 77–101; Janusz Staszewski, *Kaliski wysiłek zbrojny 1806–1813*, Kalisz 1931, p. 9; Aleksander Achmatowicz, *Epizod napoleoński w dziejach Jasnej Góry*, “*Studia Claromontana*”, 8 (1987), p. 180.

the remnants of the army of Frederick William III supporting it. The political position of Silesia was not certain, because after three wars with Austria, it was annexed more than half a century earlier to Prussia, it doubled its military potential, but its painful loss was still remembered by Austria, so far neutral in the conflict⁵. The French Emperor, after handing over the command in Silesia to his youngest brother, entrusted him with a corps of his army, consisting of 2 Bavarian infantry divisions of Generals Erasmus Deroy and Carl Wrede, a division of the Württemberg infantry of General Friedrich Seckendorff and 3 cavalry brigades of Generals Paul Mezzanell, Charles Lefebvre-Desnouettes and Louis Montrbrun. These were military contingents of the member states of the Confederation of the Rhine allied with France. He entrusted the command of the corps, which ultimately consisted of 29,000 people, and which was given number IX in January 1807, to the 22-year-old Prince Hieronim, in order to create the conditions for him to acquire commanding skills. This was to be facilitated by the presence of excellent generals at his side, including General Gabriel Hedouville, the Chief of Staff. However, the forces at Prince Hieronim's disposal did not have a high combat quality, and the most numerous Bavarians distinguished themselves in rape and robbery. What is more important, the troops sent to Silesia were not prepared to seize powerful fortresses, as could be seen in the initial lack of siege artillery and poor reconnaissance of the enemy⁶.

To defend Silesia, the Prussians have deployed over 19 thousands of people in the fortresses: Głogów, Wrocław (Breslau), Brzeg (Brieg), Koźle (Cosel), Nysa (Neisse), Świdnica (Schweidnitz), Srebrna Góra (Silberberg) and Kłodzko (Glatz) (there were infantry and cavalry depôts and two infantry regiments). They were soon joined by refugees from broken regiments as well as volunteers and recruits, bringing the number of soldiers to over 28,000. However, the morale of officers and soldiers, after the October 1806 defeats of the Prussian army in Brandenburg, was severely weakened, so aversion to service and desertion was spreading. In addition, as Tomasz Przerwa correctly pointed out, the fortresses defending Silesia were of various types and purposes. In the Sudeten line there were: Świdnica, Srebrna Góra, Kłodzko and Nysa, and in the Oder line: Głogów, Wrocław, Brzeg and Koźle

⁵ In the Napoleonic era, the project to bring the province back to the Habsburg monarchy will be revived many times: *Historia Górnego Śląska*, eds. Joachim Bahlcke, Dan Gawrecki, Ryszard Kaczmarek, Gliwice 2011, pp. 174–175.

⁶ Joseph Schmölzl, *Der Feldzug der Bayern von 1806–7 in Schlesien und Polen*, München 1856, p. 45; Eduard Höpfner, *Wojna lat 1806–1807*, Oświęcim 2016, pp. 18–19.

located in the south-east. This arrangement allowed to control the main communication artery of the region, which was the Oder River, and the Sudetes, which for a long time were intended to defend the province from the expected enemy attack. Whereas in 1806, Napoleon's troops have come from the west and north-west – from the direction where the fortress in Głogów was the only protection⁷.

Silesia was therefore not properly prepared for defence, and the situation after the defeat in the Thuringian fields overwhelmed the Silesian Minister Georg von Hoym, who was unable to control the resulting chaos. The brigadier of the Silesian fortresses, General Karl Christian Reinhold von Lindener, suggested that the commanders of the fortress should be passive and fight to a limited extent, which was right, as their garrisons accounted for only half the anticipated state for defence. He therefore ordered to leave the fortifications and to confine themselves to defending the core of the fortress. Attempts were made to save Silesia by the brothers Heinrich and Hans Lüttwitz, who set off for East Prussia in mid-November 1806 to look to Frederick William III for help for the endangered province. The King, after hearing the visitors from Silesia, appointed a new General Governor of the Province in the person of Prince Friedrich Ferdinand von Anhalt-Köthen-Pless on 21st November, giving him an unlimited power of attorney. He also ordered his adjutant Friedrich Wilhelm von Götzen to leave for Silesia immediately. At that time in Silesia, the recruitment started to complete the state of the battalions, supplies and weapons were collected. At this stage, the fortress in Koźle became the main point of forming Prussian forces and improving the defence of all Silesian fortresses. Attempts were also made to organise a manoeuvring corps for field operations, but the troops formed were not properly armed and trained, and had no experience in field operations⁸.

Głogów has been the first of the Silesian fortresses to capitulate on 3rd December 1806. Initially, the French substituted siege artillery for field artillery, which was less useful in such operations, and then, after a long wait, mortars and siege howitzers were brought to Głogów from seized Kostrzyń (Küstrin). They were used

⁷ Tomasz Przerwa, *Twierdze pruskie na Śląsku w czasie wojen napoleońskich ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem wojny 1806–1807*, [in:] *Śląsk w dobie kampanii napoleońskich*, ed. Dariusz Nawrot, Katowice 2014, pp. 38–39; Grzegorz Podruczny, *Twierdza od wewnątrz. Budownictwo wojskowe na Śląsku w latach 1740–1806*, Zabrze 2011, pp. 142–173.

⁸ Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, pp. 54–63; *idem*, “Mała wojna” w Górach Sowich i Bardzkich (1807 r.), [in:] *Twierdza srebrnogórska II: wojna 1806–1807 – miasteczko*, eds. Grzegorz Podruczny, Tomasz Przerwa, Wrocław 2008, pp. 55–75.

during the siege of the next fortresses, because the cannons captured in Głogów enabled to fire them effectively. Moreover, the capture of Głogów secured the communication lines of the *Grande Armée* fighting on Polish soil, which was – in the opinion of Napoleon – the first and principal aim of Hieronim's units⁹. The capitulation of Wrocław on 5th January 1807 was also a success, and the fact that the Prussian side failed twice in its attempts to unblock the capital of Silesia by the army of the commander-in-chief of the area, Duke Anhalt-Köthen-Pless, defeated at Strzelin (Strehlen), Ołtaszyn (Oltashin) and Wojszyce (Woischwitz) on 26th and 30th December 1806. However, when this Prussian relief came near Wrocław, the garrison of the capital of Silesia did not manage to take any major action¹⁰. The fortress in Brzeg capitulated on 16th January 1807 and the attempts of the Prussian army to take over the initiative during the siege of Świdnica failed, and the attempt to attack the forces of General Dominique Vandamme ended on 15th February with the defeat at Świerki (Königswalde), causing the capitulation of Świdnica on 16th February. Prince Friedrich Ferdinand Anhalt-Köthen-Pless, after unsuccessful attempts to reach a truce with Prince Hieronim, left for Bohemia at the beginning of February, believing that only with the support of Austria will he be able to defend the province entrusted to him¹¹.

The sieges of the Silesian fortresses usually lasted about a month, maximum two. In none of them did the Napoleonic forces have a clear advantage over the besieged, so the storming was not chosen, except in the case of Wrocław. Nor was the classic siege, which would have been severely hampered in winter, used. The

⁹ [Jacob J. Gaupp], *Belagerungsgeschichte der Festung Glogau*, Glogau 1807; Julius Blaschke, *Die Belagerung Glogaus im Jahre 1806*, Glogau 1906; Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, pp. 81, 186–187; Paweł Łachowski, *Głogów w okresie wojen napoleońskich 1806–1814*, Głogów 2006, pp. 12–17.

¹⁰ *Die Belagerung von Breslau im December 1806 und Januar 1807*, Leipzig 1807; Grzegorz Podruczny, *Twierdza Wrocław w okresie fryderycjańskim: fortyfikacje, garnizon i działania wojenne w latach 1741–1806*, Wrocław 2009, pp. 130–136; Karl Mente, *Wspomnienia z obrony twierdzy Wrocław podczas oblężenia 1806/07 roku*, [in:] *“Wojna twierdz” na Śląsku 1806–1807 świetle pamiętników*, eds. Patrycjusz Malicki, Jarosław Szymański, Chudów–Gliwice 2008, p. 67.

¹¹ [Adolf Wasner], *Gedenkblatt zur Erinnerung an die Belagerung der Stadt Schweidnitz durch die Franzosen vom 10. Januar bis 16. Februar 1807*, Schweidnitz [1907]; R. Aue, *Herzog Ferdinand von Anhalt-Cöthen und sein Austritt aus der preußischen Armee im Jahre 1806*, “Mitteilungen des Vereins für anhaltische Geschichte”, 5 (1890), p. 25; *Napoleon to Hieronim Bonaparte dated 18 and 19 January 1807 from Warsaw*, [in:] *Correspondance de Napoléon I-er; publiée par ordre de l'Empereur Napoléon III*, Paris 1857–1870, vol. 14, pp. 210–211, 215–216; A. Du Casse, *Opération du Neuvième Corps de la Grande Armée en Silésie*, Paris 1851, vol. 1, pp. 184–185; Höpfner, *Wojna*, vol. 4, pp. 89–92, 146–148.

spectacular successes of Napoleon's troops were determined not so much by the lack of fortress supplies, but by the lack of discipline in the enemy's army, i.e. the spreading desertion caused, among other things, by the large number of Polish subjects serving in the battalions of Frederick William III in Silesia and the lack of faith in the victory of Prussian commanders. Thus, after the first two months of military operations, the French took over the strategic initiative in Silesia, which was greatly facilitated by the 'attachment' of the Prussians to the fortresses. As a result, Głogów and Brzeg capitulated after a few hours of bombardment with heavy artillery, and Świdnica after three days of firing. A regular siege was carried out only at Wrocław, making use of its solid fortifications and the Oder River, but its main fortifications were not damaged. Nor have the ammunition and food stocks been exhausted in the aforementioned fortresses. However, the destruction of private buildings as a result of bombardment and fires resulted in protests from the inhabitants, influencing the commanders when deciding on capitulation. The conquest of Wrocław, Brzeg and Świdnica completed the first stage of the fights, and the most economically valuable areas of Lower Silesia, which also protected the flank of Napoleon's troops operating on the Vistula River, were taken over by the French. The war resources they acquired, including artillery and ammunition, facilitated the siege of the next fortresses¹². By order of 15th January, the Emperor commanded Hieronim to take over, by 1st March, all towns not yet occupied in Silesia.

The success of the troops and Napoleon's orders encouraged Hieronim to begin the siege of Koźle. Thus, on 18th January, General Deroy received commands to begin the blockade of the Koźle fortress, which was then in a state of reconstruction, with the forces under his control. However, its defensive qualities were strengthened by the use of the river network and floodplains. Napoleon watched closely the actions of Hieronim. He sent him instructions and urged his brother to act in order to take control of the whole province as soon as possible and use its resources in the spring campaign of 1807. Throughout the war activities, flour, grain, vodka, cloth and oxen were transported from Wrocław to the main forces of the *Grande Armée*. Yet Napoleon was convinced that the completion of the province's conquest was not essential to the final outcome of the war. More important was the strengthening the corps fighting against the Russians in the north, so he withdrew some of the troops from Silesia, and the forces remaining, with

¹² Przerwa, *Twierdze pruskie*, p. 39; Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, pp. 112–126.

around 15,000 soldiers in March, were too weak to resolve the campaign in Silesia quickly. The Prussians had comparable forces under arms, but they were broken up into garrisons and isolated from each other in defended fortresses¹³.

From 27th March 1807, the defence of Silesia against the weakened forces of Hieronymus Bonaparte's IX Corps was led from Kłodzko by Count Götzen, the new Governor of the Province. Under his command, the determination of the Prussians increased, which allowed him to prolong the defence of Nysa and Koźle, but the latter fortress was again blocked by Bavarian forces from 7th April. However, Commander-in-Chief of Koźle, Colonel David von Neumann, did not surrender the fortress, becoming a Prussian hero, as he defended it despite its advanced age and progressive disease. The Prussians' brave action, taken to seize Wrocław and break the siege of Koźle, despite their militant success on 14th May at Kąty (Kanth), ended in failure. The French victory on 15th May at Struga (Adelsbach) was mainly due the Polish uhlans who arrived from Italy¹⁴. Apart from the attempts to regain Wrocław and Major Losthin's expedition, the mobile Prussian troops did not play a major role in the campaign in Silesia.

The next phase of the fighting started on 3rd June with the capitulation of Nysa, and on 13th June the new Commander-in-Chief of Koźle decided to surrender the fortress on 16th July if he would not receive the relief by that time. At the start of negotiations, he had only over a thousand soldiers capable of fighting. Most of the garrison was in hospitals because of typhus, which caused the death of around 20 soldiers a day. Eventually, news of the peace signed in Tilsit (now Sovetsk) ended the blockade before the date of its surrender¹⁵. In the last stage of the war in Silesia, the warfare was concentrated in the region of Kłodzko and Srebrna Góra.

¹³ Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, pp. 112–129; Stanisław Michalkiewicz, *Wojna 1806–1807 r. na Śląsku*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, ed. *idem*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1970, vol. 2, part. 2: 1807–1850, pp. 18–35.

¹⁴ Jan Minkiewicz, *Ułani nadwiślańscy na Śląsku*, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", 2 (1958), p. 182; Janusz Staszewski, *Wojsko polskie na Śląsku w dobie napoleońskiej*, Katowice 1936, pp. 20–21; Karol Jonca, *Relacje francuskich i bawarskich dowódców o potyczce pod Strugą-Szczawienkiem (15 maja 1807 r.)*, "Studia Śląskie", 34 (1979), p. 126.

¹⁵ Bernhard Ruffert, *Belagerung und Einnahme der Stadt und Festung Neisse im Jahre 1807 und ihre Drangsale bis zum Abzuge der Franzosen im Jahre 1808*, Neisse 1909; Samuel Uthicke, *Historia oblężenia twierdzy Koźle, jej blokady i dziennik wszystkich smutnych i szczególnych wydarzeń*, [in:] "Wojna twierdz" na Śląsku, pp. 179–182, 201; Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, pp. 247–248, 251–253; Karol Jonca, *Wielka Armia Napoleona w kampanii 1807 roku pod Koźlem*, Opole 2003, pp. 25–46, 57–58; *idem*, *Strategiczna rola twierdzy kozielskiej w dobie wojen napoleońskich*, [in:] *Wojna i pokój w dziejach twierdzy i miasta Koźle*, eds. Edward Nycz, Stanisław Senft, Opole 2007, pp. 41–45; Schmölzl, *Der Feldzug*, pp. 403–405.

At the first of these fortresses, the operations of Hieronim Bonaparte's forces brought the Prussians the loss of their hastily fortified camp, after which Count Götzen decided to surrender. However, the Prussian historiography, which glorified Götzen's sacrifice and heroism, did not later reproach him for the fact that the fortress was surrendered without even storming the main fortification objects by the enemy¹⁶. However, the fortress in Srebrna Góra, after the first clashes on its foreground, was saved from surrender due to the end of the fighting decided on in the news of the negotiations in Tilsit. When the glory of the defenders of Srebrna Góra was later glorified – as the only unconquered Silesian fortress – it was forgotten that the fighting there lasted only a few days¹⁷.

As Patrycjusz Malicki pointed out, the actions of Prussian troops cannot be assessed positively from a military point of view. Eduard Höpfner's opinion that the efforts of the defenders of Silesia and its inhabitants, despite so many disasters, can be described as commendable, should also be rejected. The actions of the Prussian manoeuvring corps failed, and as a consequence of this state of affairs the Silesian garrisons were left to alone, as they gradually lost contact with each other and could not count on the relief¹⁸. The radical ideas that came up as early as December 1806 in the form of the Lüttwitz brothers' plan to keep only crews in Srebrna Góra and Koźle, to gather together all the other Prussian forces in Silesia and head them for the relief of Wrocław, were very risky. If they failed, the whole region and its resources would immediately fall into the hands of the enemy. On the other hand, the Prussian defence capabilities in the fortresses were significantly limited by the dispersal of the 'defenders', including their numerous desertions. Prussian soldiers, mostly peasants, were subjected to brutal discipline in the army and did not feel excessive attachment to the Prussian state. A similar distance was felt by the Polish Hohenzollern subjects, many of whom were incorporated into the Silesian regiments¹⁹.

The key to the course of the fights in 1806 and 1807 was the isolation of the Silesian theatre of warfare in New Silesia, which was mainly due to the development

¹⁶ For example: Hugo von Wiese und Kaiserwaldau, *Friedrich Wilhelm Graf v. Goetzen. Schlesiens Held in d. Franzosenzeit 1806 bis 1807*, Berlin 1902; Paul Ruffer, *Graf v. Götzen ein schlesischer Held in trüber Zeit des preußischen Vaterlandes*, Breslau 1905.

¹⁷ Grzegorz Podruczny, Tomasz Przerwa, *Twierdza srebrno-górska*, Srebrna Góra 2006, pp. 246–257.

¹⁸ Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, p. 362; Höpfner, *Wojna*, vol. 4, p. 297; Bernard Linek, *Pamięć wojny 1807 roku – obchody stulecia oblężenia twierdzy kozielskiej*, [in:] *Wojna i pokój*, pp. 103–113.

¹⁹ Jarosław Dudziński, *Dezereja w armii pruskiej na Śląsku w czasie wojny 1806–1807*, [in:] *Twierdza srebrnogórska II*, pp. 89–99.

of the Polish uprising there. At the end of the 18th century, this area still belonged to Lesser Poland (Małopolska), which was part of the Voivodeship of Cracow, and was not included in the Prussian state until after the Third Partition of Poland in 1795²⁰. However, when in 1806 the first Napoleon's Eagles appeared in the lands of the Prussian partition, and the appeal of General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski and Józef Wybicki called their countrymen to arms, New Silesia stood up to fight as one of the first Polish lands. The nobles, and also the inhabitants of towns and villages, had no doubt as to which side they should be on in the great clash of the Powers. After the capture of the Jasna Góra fortress, the nobility of Pilica and Siewierz counties signed on 21st and 26th November 1806 the "Acts of Insurrection" and started to form the troops of the *levée en masse*²¹. The Prussian attempts to pacify the uprising, made by Andreas von Witowski from the Upper Silesian cavalry inspection, at the head of the Prussian hussars, were unsuccessful. His stronghold was Koźle²², from where he undertook raids, but in response, the Poles began their expeditions to Upper Silesian towns. Then, for refusing to swear an oath of allegiance to Hieronim Bonaparte, Karol Trougotto Henckel von Donnersmarck, the "Landrat" of Bytom and Tarnowskie Góry ("Landkreis Beuthen–Tarnowitz"), was arrested and imprisoned in the fortress on Jasna Góra. However, the initiated expeditions ended in a defeat in a clash with Witowski's hussars in Tarnowskie Góry on 7th January 1807²³.

The influx of volunteers from Galicia, who did not recognise the partition of the former Voivodeship of Cracow under Prussian rule, made it possible to strengthen the insurrection that finally liberated the lands of New Silesia from the rule of Frederick William III²⁴. Interestingly, Polish expeditions to Upper Silesia showed them that this country "as far as to the Oder River is not Prussian one but Polish".

²⁰ Dariusz Nawrot, *Powstanie na Nowym Śląsku w 1806 i 1807 roku. Źródła Zagłębia Dąbrowskiego*, Czeladź 2016, pp. 9–27.

²¹ The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie) [hereafter: AGAD], Dąbrowski's Portfolios (Teki Dąbrowskiego), vol. 10, part 2, p. 130, Report of the Lelów [Lelov] County Commission to the Administrative Commission of Kalisz [Kalisch] dated 23rd November 1806; *ibidem*, pp. 112–114, Declaration of the citizens of Lelów County of 21st November 1806 in Żarki.

²² J. H. Dąbrowski to J. Murat dated 18 and 19 December 1806, [in:] *Dał nam przykład*, vol. 1, pp. 175–176; A. Nowack, *Andreas von Witowski, "Oberschlesische Heimat"*, 3 (1907), pp. 139–150.

²³ *Report of Trembicki, a Levée-en-masse Lieutenant dated 4 January 1807*, [in:] *Dał nam przykład*, vol. 1, p. 176; The National Archives in Kraków (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie), Archive of Konopka Family from Modlnica (Archiwum Konopków z Modlnicy), T. Konopka, *Pamiętniki 1793–1810*, MS. 26, p. 216–219.

²⁴ Service Historique de la Défense in Vincennes, 2 C44, Köller's Report (unsigned) dated 20 March 1807 with comments on the margins.

Its inhabitants showed confidence in the Polish soldiers, welcomed them with joyful shouts and asked for help against the Prussian requisitions. It was during these events, in the spring of 1807, that the first project to provoke a pro-Polish uprising in Upper Silesia was created. A *levée en masse* under the command of Wojciech Męciński, a landowner General Major of the Voivodeship of Cracow, existed in the area of New Silesia until March 1807, securing the area of Silesia from the east. The Polish authorities of the Duchy of Warsaw had no doubt that the two counties of New Silesia should be placed under their jurisdiction in the new circumstances. That is why the Governing Commission in Warsaw has extended its authority in this area through the Administrative Chamber of the Kalisz Department. Events in New Silesia resulted in the accession on the part of Napoleon by Jan Nepomucen Sułkowski from Bielsko, the only Silesian aristocrat. However, he did not have the financial means to form a cavalry regiment. Although he reached Napoleon and obtained his acceptance for his intentions, the expedition to Upper Silesia and the confrontation at Mysłówice on 7th April 1807 led to an event of fatal consequences for Prince Sułkowski²⁵. In Silesia, Polish lancers (uhłans) who had arrived under the command of Piotr Świdorski from Italy also fought. But before they reached Wrocław, they had to battle with Major Losthin's unit and fight at Kłodzko and Srebrna Góra²⁶. They gave rise to the Polish-Italian Legion in Silesia, and the influx of volunteers made it possible to form the Legion of the Vistula²⁷. However, they did not feel any particular fondness for the inhabitants of Lower Silesia, who were concerned about whether Silesia would return under the rule of the King of Prussia²⁸.

The 1806/1807 campaign brought Silesia not only the occupation of the French army but also the necessity to pay a great contribution imposed on the defeated Prussia. The peace with Napoleon also determined the territorial shape of Silesia. After several days of negotiations in Tilsit, the treaty between France and Prussia, concluded on 9th July 1807, remained Lower and Upper Silesia within the borders of the Kingdom of Prussia. Moreover, bearing in mind the economic value of New

²⁵ AGAD, Governing Commission (Komisja Rządząca), II 50, p. 36, Governing Commission dated 11th April 1807; AGAD, Dąbrowski's Portfolios (Teki Dąbrowskiego), vol. 11, Part. 1, p. 202, S. Fiszler to J.H. Dąbrowski from Kalisz dated 18th January 1807.

²⁶ Dariusz Nawrot, *Udział Polaków w walkach na Śląsku w 1807 r.*, [in:] *Twierdza srebrnogórska II*, pp. 76–89.

²⁷ Stanisław Kirkor, *Legia Nadwiślańska*, Londyn 1981, p. 25.

²⁸ The Scientific Library of the PAAS and the PAS in Kraków (Biblioteka Naukowa PAU i PAN w Krakowie), MS 112, p. 9, P. Fądzielski to his father, dated 29th April 1807 r.

Silesia, Prussian diplomats constructed the articles of the treaty in such a way that the area of western Małopolska, rich in natural resources, also continued to be part of their country. Ultimately, however, the Polish uprising in New Silesia and the sacrifices made in 1806 and 1807 caused the French to support the claims of the Polish authorities and in the final regulation of the borders, in the Convention of Elbląg (Elbing) of 10th November 1807, the disputed lands were incorporated into the Duchy of Warsaw²⁹. Silesia, on the other hand, was to be occupied by French troops until 1808, under the command of Marshal Edouard Mortier. Napoleon also did not forget about the importance of the Silesian fortresses, but out of the four strongholds captured in the first phase of the fights he ordered to keep only the Głogów. This fortress was to secure the connection of Saxony with the Duchy of Warsaw and, together with the fortifications of Kostrzyń and Szczecin, guard the Oder line. The remaining fortresses were ordered to be demolished in order to weaken the defensive potential of Prussia in the future³⁰.

The situation in Silesia was changed by Napoleon's defeat in the war with Russia in 1812 and Alexander I's army march westwards in 1813. The war returned to Silesia, and the province played an important role in the next war between Prussia and France. It was in Wrocław that King Frederick William III, in an appeal to his people *An Mein Volk* called, on 17th March 1813, Brandenburgers, Prussians, Silesians, Pomeranians and Lithuanians to fight alongside their Russian ally against Napoleon. The new war was to determine their future existence, independence and prosperity. Interestingly, the king did not use the term Germans and did not refer to Polish subjects. This first document in the history of Prussia addressed by the king to the people, in the opinion of Prussian and later German historiography, evoked allegedly an immediate response of a united nation, ready to fight and sacrifice. It has allegedly made a massive influx of voluntary donations and thousands of volunteers to fight the French occupier. Even those who were not of German origin took up arms and stood in line against Napoleon. They rushed to

²⁹ Jules de Clercq, *Recueil des traités de la France*. Paris 1864, vol. 2, p. 209; Angeberg [Leonard Chodźko], *Recueil des traités, conventions et actes diplomatiques concernant la Pologne (1762–1862)*, Paris 1862, p. 466; Dariusz Nawrot, *New Silesia in 1806–1807 – between Prussia and the Duchy of Warsaw*, [in:] *Slezsko v 19. století*, ed. Zdeněk Jirásek, Opava 2011, pp. 35–51; Juliusz Willaume, *Rozgraniczenie Księstwa Warszawskiego z Prusami*, “Przegląd Zachodni”, 3–4 (1951), p. 477.

³⁰ Malicki, *Wielka Armia*, p. 350 ff.; Hermann Markgraf, *Entfestigung Breslaus und die geschenkweise Überlassung des Festungsterrein an die Stadt 1807–1813*, “Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens”, 21 (1887), pp. 47–115.

Kaliningrad (Königsberg), Grudziądz (Graudenz) and Wrocław, where successive battalions and squadrons were being formed, which together with the victorious armies of Tsar Alexander I pushed Napoleon's *Grande Armée*, which was being under reconstruction after the defeat in Russia, out of Germany, to the other side of the Rhine River³¹.

As a matter of fact, Frederick William III agreed to issue this appeal (its author was Theodor von Hippel) and to its form under pressure from the circumstances, as the Prussian monarch was left with nothing but to stand by Tsar Alexander I. The decision was made in late December 1812, at the moment of the defeat of the *Grande Armée* in Russia, when General Johann von Yorck, commander of the Prussian auxiliary corps at the side of the French, after the persuasions of the former Prussian ministers Heinrich vom und zum Stein and Gen. August von Gneisenau, who stayed at that time in exile in Russia, against the will of the King of Prussia, decided to sign on 30th December 1812 the Convention in Tauroggen (now Tauragė), under which Prussian troops withdrew from the fight and this meant that they were in fact on the side of the Russians. Frederick William III did not confirm this Convention, declared General Yorck a traitor and assured Napoleon of his loyalty as an ally. However, the event in Tauroggen meant an actual rebellion of his subjects, who had already entered East Prussia with the Russian army in January 1813. These were opponents of the alliance between Prussia and France, expelled from the country at the request of the French, or Prussian emigrants who, on the eve of the war of 1812, sought refuge under the wings of Alexander I. It should be added that General Yorck, although dismissed by the king, still held command of the troops in the East Prussian province. The civil administration in Kaliningrad was headed by former Minister Baron Stein and its main task was to arm the Prussian king's subjects to fight the French³².

In Silesia, in the spring of 1813, the first unit of German allies of Russia began to form. In the area of Sobótka (Zobten), the organisation of a volunteer corps, called the Lützwow Free Corps from the name of its commander Adolf von Lützwow, began. The idea of forming a volunteer corps was presented to Frederick William III,

³¹ Thomas Stamm-Kuhlmann, *König in Preußens großer Zeit*, Berlin 1992, p. 372; Hans Dechend, *Die Befreiungskriege von 1813–1814*, [in:] *Das Erwachen der Völker. Aus dem Zeitalter der Befreiungskriege*, ed. Julius Pflugk-Harttung, Berlin 1901, pp. 231–235; Stanisław Salmowicz, *Prusy. Dzieje państwa i społeczeństwa*, Warszawa 1998, p. 243.

³² Heinrich A. Winkler, *Długa droga na zachód. Dzieje Niemiec 1806–1933*, Wrocław 2007, vol. 1, p. 71–76; Golo Mann, *Niemieckie dzieje XIX i XX wieku*, Olsztyn 2007, pp. 50–52.

who was staying in Wrocław, on 9th February and accepted on 18th February. The corps was to be formed as a unit in which those Germans who were not subjects of the King of Prussia would serve. Its aim was to fight for the creation of free and united Germany. But the Lützow Free Corps was not to mobilise the citizens of Prussia against the French, but against the presence of France in the member states of the Confederation of the Rhine. The colours of this unit, black uniforms, red piping and golden buttons, later became the colours of Germany³³.

Frederick William III stayed in Wrocław, free of the French, from 25th January 1813. He left Berlin, occupied by Napoleon's army, hoping to avoid being arrested by the French and to regain his freedom of action. In Wrocław, Baron Stein reached him and forced the King to meet Alexander I. On 28th February, in Kalisz, the two rulers once again fell in each other's arms, sealing the new alliance with kisses. The decision of Frederick William III was motivated both by the attitude of his own subjects and by the danger behind the idea of building, together with France, a united and liberal Germany in which Prussia would disappear. The reformers in Stein's circle strongly urged Alexander I to support this idea, and the Tsar was inclined to flirt with the forces that might have caused the anti-French German uprising to support his army. For Stein, this was supposed to be a struggle of the uprising nation (citizens) against despotism, and owing to his collaborator an announcement of a new free Reich with a liberal constitution was made in the "Kalisz Proclamation" by Niklas von Rehdiger. This was a response provoked, among other things, by the "Address to the German Nation" of Johann Fichte about the awakening of the nation, which was reflected in the "Catechism for German Soldiers" by Ernst Moritz Arndt, another associate of Stein. This conviction, which was terrifying Frederick William III, was the result of, among other things, the reforms of the Napoleonic times in the area of the Confederation of the Rhine and transformation of the Prussian state, which gave birth to a wave of nationalism and a desire to continue the changes promoted by the strata of enlightened nobility and was a sign of growing in strength of the modern bourgeoisie. The Austrian question was also of importance to the king. Austria's neutrality at the time and the opportunity to strengthen its cooperation with Russia created an opportunity for the Hohenzollerns in Germany to gain an advantage over the

³³ Frank Bauer, *Horrido Lützow! Geschichte und Tradition des Lützower Freikorp*, München 2000; Robert Kisiel, *Korpus Lützowa – wojsko z tradycji wrocławskiej Almae Mater*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", 57 (2002), 3, p. 373.

Habsburgs³⁴. The military importance of Silesia was determined, among other things, by the fact that it was from there that the main attack of the Allies on Saxony started in March 1813. The Russian army in Silesia was accompanied by 27,000 Prussian soldiers commanded by Gebhard von Blücher. The delay resulted from the king's fear of the fate of Berlin, where Napoleon's soldiers were stationed. Prussia intended to take active action only after Berlin would be occupied by Russians, and Kutuzov did not want to engaged his army without Prussian forces. The dispute was settled by compromise, so the Prussian troops were to accompany their ally, but initially without engaging in combat. At the beginning of 1813, Prussia had a 42,000th army (2 guard regiments and 18 line regiments), which was doubled thanks to the "Krümpersystem", i.e. training of recruits called for service by experienced soldiers and sending them back to reserve at fixed intervals. A total of 52 battalions of the reserve were thus established, but only a few took part in the battles still being fought in the spring of this year. The rest were not ready for action until the autumn. Initially, these troops did not present high military quality and their problem was the equipment.

They were largely made up of foreigners, were badly commanded, undisciplined and did not play a significant military role. However, the youth of the nobility, and of the bourgeoisie, students and even pupils, animated by the spirit of patriotism, joined these formations. The patriotism of these young people, however, was not Prussian, but German, and most importantly, it was not as many volunteers as the Prussian and then German historiography later presented. Also Lützow's Free Corps on 28th March, after a mass in the church in Rogów Sobócki (Rogau Rosenau), set off to Saxony, where the recruitment process continued. In this context, the story of the mass participation of students of the University of Wrocław in this unit is a legend³⁵. Admittedly, there were academic youth within it, but from completely different areas of Germany. In any case, they represented only 12% of its composition. There were not many Prussians, and especially Silesians, in the unit. Even if they did join it, prompted by patriotic calls, they often, like the great poet Joseph von Eichendorff, the son of an officer, resigned from service because the nature of the voluntary unit required them to provide themselves with uniforms

³⁴ Karl Heinz Schäfer, *Ernst Moritz Arndt als politischer Publizist. Studien zur Publizistik, Pressepolitik und kollektiven Bewusstsein im frühen 19. Jahrhundert*, Bonn 1974, p. 123; Mariusz Olczak, *Kampania 1813. Śląsk i Łużyce*, Wrocław 2004, p. 49.

³⁵ There were 232 matriculated students in the academic year 1811/1812, and only 25 in the summer semester 1813 and 147 in the academic year 1813/14.

and equipment at their own expense³⁶. There was a high desertion rate of 24.5% in the infantry and 8.5% in the cavalry. From 9th February 1813 onwards, universal compulsory military service was introduced, establishing the so-called “Landwehr”, following the Austrian model. However, the costs of equipping the recruits had to be covered by the recruits themselves, or by the villages from which they came from, which resulted in the disastrous state of armaments and uniforms of the units formed out of them. Therefore, also in the 1813 campaign, this formation did not play a major role³⁷.

One of the elements of the legend of a widespread rise of Prussians against Napoleon was the story of the involvement of the Silesians in the fight against the French. The sources say exactly the opposite. The mobilisation effort of Silesia was not at all the highest in the whole Prussian state, although it was assumed that a 50 thousandth contingent would be formed (in the middle of the year only 20 out of 68 planned battalions were sent to fight). This was determined by the attitude of the population, which was reluctant to submit to the wartime regulations of the Prussian administration. In Prussia, the small and medium nobility, who were painfully affected by the consequences of agrarian reforms and grain price volatility, were reluctant to engage in the war. Similar reluctance was also demonstrated by the patricians of Silesian cities, who felt they were victims of urban reform in 1812. The bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie were initially anti-French, but their patriotic zeal was quickly cooled by numerous war contributions. Also, the village did not rush into the army, recognising – interestingly – that the abolition of serfdom was thanks to France, and all the other inconveniences they suffered were the result of the Prussian authorities. Stein's reforms improved the economic situation of only a part of the wealthy peasants, and forced conscription to the army in the villages was even met with attempts at resistance. In this respect, the worst situation was in Upper Silesia, where the formation of the “Landwehr” collapsed at all, and when Napoleon's *Grande Armée* entered Silesia in June 1813, many inhabitants

³⁶ Johann F.G. Eiselen, *Geschichte des Lützowschen Freikorps*, Halle 1841, p. 9; Karl Berger, *Theodor Koerner*, Bielefeld 1912; Günther Schiwy, *Eichendorff. Der Dichter in seiner Zeit. Eine Biographie*, München 2000; Bauer, *Horrido Lützow!*, pp. 250–255; Kisiel, *Korpus Lützowa*, p. 367–368.

³⁷ Albert v. Holleben, *Historia kampanii wiosennej 1813 roku*, Oświęcim 2017, p. 153; Francis L. Petre, *Ostatnia kampania Napoleona na terenie Niemiec*, Oświęcim 2011, vol. 1, p. 36–37; Paul Pietsch, *Die Formations- und Uniformierungs-Geschichte des preußischen Heeres 1808–1910*, Berlin 1911–1913, vol. 1: *Fußtruppen (Infanterie, Jäger, Schützen, Pioniere) und deren Landwehr*; vol. 2: *Kavallerie, Artillerie, Train, generalität usw.*

welcomed it with joy. The Prussian defender of Silesia in 1807, Prince Friedrich Ferdinand Anhalt-Kothen-Pless, a great magnate, provided the Prussian army with 12 “Jägers” in 1813, but already in May, when Napoleon defeated the Prussian-Russian army, he held ceremonies in Pszczyna (Pless) in honour of the French Emperor and his recent victories, including the conquest of Wrocław. He had an influence on the participation of Upper Silesians from the Pszczyna County in the “Landwright” in 1813, as out of 721 people obliged to serve only 261 reported, of which only 244 were sent to regiments, as 17 deserted³⁸.

The spring campaign of 1813, despite the initially victorious march into Germany, ended with the disasters inflicted by Napoleon to the Allies in the battles of Lützen and Bautzen in May 1813. The march beyond the Elbe River ended, as predicted by the commander-in-chief of the coalition’ army, Mikhail Kutuzov, who died in the first days of the campaign in Bolesławiec (Bunzlau). For Napoleon, in his pursuit of the defeated, entered Silesia, and when he have captured Wrocław, the Russians even thought of leaving the province. The Prussians, on the other hand, intended to fill the fortified positions in the vicinity of Ząbkowice Śląskie (Frankenstein), at the gate of Kłodzko County, awaiting further developments. The Emperor of the French knew about the importance of the role of Silesia for the further course of the war. He remembered the possibility of using the province as a bargaining chip, especially in the context of Austria’s hesitation as to which side of the conflict it should take. Hence the repeated rumours in those months of Silesia returning to Habsburg rule. He also remembered the importance of the communication routes running through the area. However, entering Silesia by the French and reaching all the way to Wrocław, but without a final conclusion of the campaign in the general battle and the intervention of Austrian diplomacy, forced the fightings sides to establish a truce in Pielaszkowice (Pläswitz)³⁹.

³⁸ Henryk W.F. Schaeffer, *Kronika Wolnego Państwa Stanowego, a od 1827 r. Księstwa Pszczyńskiego*, ed. Bronisława Spyra, Pszczyna 1998, part 1, p. 96; Michalkiewicz, *Historia*, p. 72; Jerzy Polak, *Poczet panów i książąt pszczyńskich. Od Fryderyka Erdmanna Anhalta do Jana Henryka XV Hochberga*, Pszczyna 2007, part 2, pp. 47–51.

³⁹ Andrzej Olejniczak, *Wielka Armia na Dolnym Śląsku*, Oświęcim 2014, pp. 33–43; Petre, *Ostatnia kampania*, p. 144 ff.; Olczak; *Kampania 1813*, p. 113 ff.; Maciej Małachowicz, *Fortyfikacje Masywu Brzeźnicy i koncepcja obozu warownego z 1813 r.*, [in:] *Twierdza srebrnogórska II*, pp. 132–137; Zbigniew Aleksy, *Napoleon w Środkie Śląskiej w 1813 r.*, [in:] *Napoleon w Środkie Śląskiej (1813). Wydarzenie w kontekście epoki, historii wojskowości i pamięci historycznej*, eds. Grzegorz Borowski, Stanisław Rosik, Rościław Żerelik, Wrocław 2017; Franz Wiedemann, *Gneisenaus Feldbefestigungsplan von 1813 in Schlesien*, “Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens”, 64 (1913), pp. 175–203.

The armistice brought about the division of Silesia into two parts separated by a demilitarised zone. Napoleon left a large part of his troops on the terrain captured during the spring campaign. Although during the Congress in Prague, the conditions for peace were discussed, the armistice was used by all sides in the conflict to strengthen their forces. Eventually, it was not until the summer of 1813 that the Prussian army reached 72,000 infantry and 13,000 regular cavalry, about 170,000 infantry in the battalions of "Jägers", *Freicorps*, *Landwewer* and *Landsturm* and 18,000 cavalry from these formations. This, together with the artillery, gave more than 270,000 people, which was primarily due to the efficient administration carrying out the conscription of more than 5% of the 5 million people in Prussia. There can be no doubt that the value of this army was determined by the fact that it fought on German territory, and was encouraged to undertake the deed by the Iron Cross, a new order established by Frederick William III. A sign of the times was the fact that one of the first decorated for extraordinary bravery, after just a few weeks of fighting, was an inhabitant of the Silesian capital Meyer Hilsbach, who was also appointed, out of sequence, Second Lieutenant of the Guard⁴⁰.

After the resumption of hostilities, the French Emperor thought primarily of an offensive on Berlin and limiting the activities of his troops in Silesia to the defensive. Yet at the beginning of the autumn campaign, it was from Silesia that another strike of coalition forces began, which drew Napoleon's attention. On 20th August, its forces, commanded by Gen. Blücher, reached the east side of the Bóbr (Bober) River, opposite Lwówek Śląski (Löwenberg). Aleksander himself decided to entrust the command of the so-called "Silesian Army" to a Prussian general, called "Forward", despite the almost common criticism that the Prussian cavalry general was under-qualified. It should be remembered that this army was two thirds made up of Russians, and its name reflected not its composition but the province from which it was to launch its offensive against the French. The actions were met with the immediate contraction of Napoleon, who took back the Lwówek Śląski, but failed to destroy the forces of the Prussian general. Blücher, according to the plans of the campaign, withdrew, not deciding to fight a decisive battle based on the Bóbr line. He then took a waiting position near Jawor, behind the cover of the Kaczawa (Kaztbach) River, but the Emperor of the French had to leave the Silesian theatre of war almost immediately to repel the march of Field Marshal

⁴⁰ Bernt Engelmann, *Prusy. Kraj nieograniczonych możliwości*, Poznań 1984, pp. 245–247.

Karl von Schwarzenberg's Austrian-Russian army to Dresden⁴¹. On 24th August, Napoleon left Zgorzelec (Görlitz) opening the way to another offensive of the Silesian Army, which ended in victory over the corps of Marshal Etienne Macdonald (the so-called Bober Army) in the Battle of the Katzbach. Napoleon thought that the best plan for Macdonald would be to hit the enemy when they would launch the offensive. The offensive was started by both armies on 26th August, unaware of the enemy's steps. In the fields between the two rivers Kaczawa and Nysa Szalona (Wüthende Neisse), a battle took place which determined the fate of the 1813 campaign in Silesia. In an uneven battle, almost 80,000 Prussians and Russians took part opposite 48,000 Frenchmen. In the battles on the Janowice (Jannowitz) Plateau in a storm and heavy rain, General Blücher's troops gained the advantage. Despite the initial successes of the French, and even General Yorck's conviction of defeat, Horace Sébastiani's cavalry was scattered and thrown away towards the valley of the Nysa Szalona River. Its retreat could not be protected by the infantry, because the gun powder in its guns got damp. The violent rise of the waters of the Nysa Szalona River made it impossible to cross it, leading to a breakdown in order and discipline in the French troops. Those who could, were rescuing themselves on their own. In assessing the manoeuvres of the Silesian Army's troops, the actions of Aleksandre-Louis Langeron's left-wing corps were criticised. He was even accused of being cowardly. The command was also reproached for abandoning the vigorous pursuit of the French troops retreating from the Janowice Plateau in chaos, forgetting that most of the Bober Army was on the left bank of the Nysa Szalona River, which initially stopped the march across this river and across the Kaczawa River. The final success was only achieved by a few days' chase by the Silesian Army in heavy rain behind Macdonald's corps. It completely changed the course of the campaign in Silesia, from which, on 1 September, the Bober Army was driven out⁴².

The propaganda of the Allies, and later historiography, have taken full advantage of the success of Marshal Blücher's army. It was even said that on the

⁴¹ G. Clement, *Campagne de 1813*, Paris (n.d.), p. 322; Tomasz Szota, *Pamiętki z bitew napoleońskich pod Lwówkiem Śląskim w 1813 r.*, Lwówek Śląski 2003, p. 19.

⁴² Patrycjusz Malicki, *Bitwa nad Kacząwą i jej znaczenie dla kampanii 1813 r.*, [in:] *Śląsk w dobie kampanii*, pp. 64–87; Mirosław Bujko, *Kampania na Śląsku i bitwa nad Kacząwą*, Oświęcim 2014, pp. 270–293; Gabriel Fabry, *Études sur les opérations du Maréchal Macdonald. La Katzbach*, Paris 1910, pp. 21, 24; Friedrich Carl Müffling, *Zur Kriegsgeschichte der Jahre 1813 und 1814. Die Feldzüge der schlesischen Armee*, Berlin, Posen und Bromberg 1827, pp. 25–26.

battlefields of the Silesian Army a new way of waging war was born, which was at the root of Prussian victories in subsequent wars of the 19th century. The victory of the Kaczawa River did not end the fighting in Silesia. Once again in September Napoleon made an attempt at an offensive in Silesia, but it lasted only a few days. Still Głogów was in the hands of the French, being defended by a multinational crew led by Jean Rouger de Laplane. The fortress has played a crucial role in securing the key transport route of Napoleonic troops since the beginning of the siege in spring 1813. The garrison, weakened in number, capitulated only on 10th April 1814 and it is symbolic that the crew left the fortress only after Napoleon's abdication. Efficient command allowed the fortress to defend itself for more than a year, that is several times longer than the Prussians in 1806⁴³.

The Napoleonic campaigns in Silesia, apart from the losses suffered by the province, also left a legend about the sacrifice of the inhabitants and the role of the events in Silesia for the final victory over Napoleon⁴⁴. Prussian historiography has so effectively blurred the actual course of events in 1806/1807 and in 1813 in the consciousness of the Germans that the stories about the patriotism of the Silesians became one of the foundations of the legend of German Silesia, including the key role of the Victory of Katzbach. Napoleonic campaigns also decided about the territorial shape of Silesia, from which the so-called New Silesia was detached. From 1807 it became an integral part of the Duchy of Warsaw, and after the Congress of Vienna it became part of the Kingdom of Poland. Currently, as the Dąbrowa Basin, it is one of the industrial centres of Polish lands.

⁴³ Frank Bauer, *Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher. Der Volksheld der Befreiungskriege 1813–1815*, Potsdam 2010; *idem*, *Katzbach 26. August 1813. Kleine Reihe Geschichte der Befreiungskriege 1813–1815*, Potsdam 2005; Herman Mueller-Bohn, *Die Deutschen Befreiungskriege. Deutschlands Geschichte von 1806–1815*, ed. Paul Kittel, Berlin [n.d.], pp. 595–604; Fritz von Knobelsdorff, *Geschichte der Befreiungskriege*, Berlin 1913, p. 147; Karl August Varnhagen von Ense, *Leben des Fürsten Blücher von Wahlstatt*, Berlin 1826, pp. 213–220; Petre, *Ostatnia kampania*, p. 190 ff.; Rudolf Friederich, *Historia kampanii jesiennej 1813 roku. Od podpisania zawieszenia broni do bitwy pod Kulm*, Oświęcim 2013, vol. 1, pp. 188–189, 282–283; Helwig, *Twierdza Głogów*, p. 110 ff.; Łachowski, *Głogów*, pp. 42–46; *Relation des Blocus et Sièges de Glogau: Soutenus par les Français contre les Russes et les Prussiens en 1813 et 1814*, Paris 1827; G. Bagés, *Le Siège de Glogau 1813–1814*, Paris [1902].

⁴⁴ Andrzej Olejniczak, *Obciążenia wojenne w zachodniej części Dolnego Śląska podczas kampanii napoleońskich 1806 i 1807 roku*, Bolesławiec 2009, p. 67. German soldiers from the countries of the Confederation of the Rhine and the Cossacks during the last campaign of 1813 were particularly burdensome for the inhabitants of Silesia.

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule przedstawiono wydarzenia na Śląsku w okresie wojen napoleońskich. Omówiono przebieg kampanii 1806 i 1807 r., zwanej wojną twierdz, w której Prusacy bronili Śląska, w oparciu o 8 fortec, przed wojskami napoleońskimi dowodzonymi przez Hieronima Bonaparte. Stwierdzono, że z militarnego punktu widzenia działania wojsk pruskich należy ocenić negatywnie. Zawiodły działania pruskiego korpusu manewrowego, a konsekwencją tego stanu rzeczy były kolejne kapitulacje osamotnionych garnizonów śląskich twierdz. Zaprezentowano również wydarzenia związane z polskim powstaniem na Nowym Śląsku, które zadecydowało o oderwaniu od Śląską Zachodniej Małopolski, pozyskanej w wyniku III rozbioru Rzeczypospolitej, a utraconej już po pokoju w Tyliczu w listopadzie 1807 r. Zaprezentowano również wydarzenia kampanii 1813 r., w tym rzeczywisty udział Ślązaków w wojnie przeciwko Napoleonowi i znaczenie bitwy nad Kaczawą. Kampanie napoleońskie na Śląsku pozostawiły po sobie, poza stratami jakie poniosła prowincja, także legendę o poświęceniu mieszkańców i roli wydarzeń na Śląsku dla ostatecznego zwycięstwa nad Napoleonem. Analizując materiał źródłowy i posługując się opracowaniami historycznymi, stwierdzono, że zmytologizowany przez historiografię pruską opis wojen napoleońskich na Śląsku, na tyle skutecznie zatarł w świadomości Niemców rzeczywisty przebieg kampanii z 1806 i 1807 r. oraz z 1813 r., że opowieści o patriotyzmie Ślązaków, stała się jednym z fundamentów legendy niemieckiego Śląska.

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POLITICAL AND TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS IN SILESIA 1919–1926

POLITYCZNE I TERYTORIALNE PODZIAŁY PROWINCJI ŚLĄSKIEJ 1919–1926

ABSTRACT: The article concerns the effects of the Resolution of the Prussian Parliament of 14th October 1919, according to which, before the Plebiscite envisaged in the Treaty of Versailles, the Opole (Oppeln) district (Regierungsbezirk) was separated from the Province of Silesia and given the status of the Province of Upper Silesia, and the Province of Lower Silesia was created from the merged Wrocław (Breslau) and Legnica (Liegnitz) districts. After the Plebiscite, in accordance with the decision of the Council of Ambassadors of 20th October 1921, the Plebiscite area was divided and the portions of the Upper Silesian and Lower Silesian Provinces (from the border region of Wrocław) were assigned to Germany and Poland according to decision made on 10th July 1922. As a result of the Act of the Prussian Parliament of 25th July 1923, two separate Provinces of Upper Silesia and Lower Silesia were established, but the division of the property of the former Province of Silesia between them was decided by the Act of 26th October 1926.

KEYWORDS: Lower Silesia, Upper Silesia, Plebiscite, district (Regierungsbezirk), provincial parliament, Prussian Parliament

Silesia, the largest province of the Kingdom of Prussia, administratively divided into three districts (Regierungsbezirke): Opole (Oppeln), Wrocław (Breslau) and Legnica (Liegnitz), also known as Upper, Middle and Lower Silesia, have not suffered from any military operations on its territory during World War I¹. It

¹ About the threat to Silesia from Russian troops in the first weeks of the War see: *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas. Schlesien*, ed. Norbert Conrads, Berlin 1994, pp. 607–608; *Schlesien und Schlesier*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, München 1996, p. 121.

remained on the sidelines of the events of that time, similarly to the neighbouring Wielkopolska (Greater Poland) and Vistula River Pomerania, where Poles, as everywhere under the Prussian partition, Germanised and repressed by the anti-Polish Folk Laws were awaiting German defeat and regaining independence². The internationalization of their political and legal situation began with the declaration of President Thomas W. Wilson, announced on 22nd January 1917, in connection with the USA's accession to war. A year later, in his famous Fourteen Points, he expanded his idea by giving the ethnic factor in point 13 the highest rank in the reconstruction of the Polish state³. The European complement to the position of the President of the USA was the Versailles declaration of the Prime Ministers of France, Great Britain and Italy of 3rd June 1918. They stated that "independent and united Poland with free access to the sea is a necessary condition to lasting and just peace and rule of law in Europe"⁴.

The authorities of the Province of Silesia, represented by the state administration department in the person of the province president (Oberpräsident) and by the head of the provincial self-government (Landeshauptmann), as the representative of the local government, did not treat international discussions around Wilson's 13th point as a threat. They presented their own formal and legal standpoint, proving that in the light of international law Silesia was not annexed during the Partition, because in the 18th century it no longer belonged to the Rzeczpospolita, and from this pragmatic conclusion they drew the conviction of the inviolability of the eastern border of the Reich in the Silesian section. They were worried about the legal status of Wielkopolska, occupied by Prussia during the Second Partition of Poland in 1793, and were prepared for the possibility of losing it. They therefore made a confidential request to the State government to force the Regency Council of the Kingdom of Poland in Warsaw, occupied by the Germans, to provide formal guarantees on the preservation of the German-Polish border after the War according to the state of 1st August 1914⁵. These efforts were made obsolete by the outbreak

² Marian Seyda, *Polska na przełomie dziejów. Fakty i dokumenty*, vol. 1, Poznań 1927, pp. 200, 460. See also: *Spółeczeństwo polskie na ziemiach pod panowaniem pruskim w okresie I wojny światowej (1914–1918)*. Zbiór studiów, ed. Mieczysław Wojciechowski, Toruń 1996.

³ Adam Basak, *Argument etnograficzny przy rozstrzygnięciu sprawy granicy polsko-niemieckiej w 1919 roku*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", 23 (1968), 4, pp. 527–559.

⁴ *Powstanie II Rzeczypospolitej. Wybór dokumentów 1866–1925*, eds. Halina Janowska, Tadeusz Jędruszczak, Wrocław 1981, p. 410.

⁵ Manfred Laubert, *Die oberschlesische Volksbewegung. Beiträge zur Tätigkeit der Vereinigung Heimattreuer Oberschlesier 1918–1921*, Breslau 1938, p. 5.

of the revolution in Berlin on 9th November 1918 and the seizure of power by the social democrats, who – after the dethroning of Emperor William II – proclaimed a republic, and end the War with a truce signed on 11th November in Compiègne.

Also in the capital of Silesia, on 9th November, the two social democratic parties, SPD and USPD, as well as the newly formed liberal-left Deutsche Demokratische Partei (DDP), made a political upheaval by creating the People's Council in Breslau (Volksrat zu Breslau), which on 15th November declared itself the Central People's Council for the Province of Silesia⁶. After calling on the German inhabitants of Silesia and Wielkopolska to form volunteer corps to fight the Poles, the Council received support from the previous Silesian (i.e. Imperial) local government authorities (Provinzialverwaltung Schlesien), headed by the provincial self-government (Landeshauptmann) Georg von Thaer. Since his election in 1916, he held an office in an alliance with representatives of Upper Silesian industry and Silesian aristocracy representing great land ownership, organized after the War in the far-right Deutschnationale Volkspartei (DNVP)⁷. The cooperation between the new and old authorities in the Silesian province was disrupted by the initiative of Father Carl Ulitzka, the Upper Silesian leader of the Catholic Centre Party, who appealed in early December 1918 with the separatist slogan “Upper Silesia for the Upper Silesian people”⁸, hostilely received by the Silesian local authorities⁹. They considered that his concept of separating Upper Silesia in the form of an independent administrative and economic unit was a political and economic threat to the province. The War caused a catastrophic decline in production in the districts of Wrocław and Legnica¹⁰, so they did not want to lose Upper Silesia, which was in a better economic situation. Especially from 1915, when the Germans occupied a large part of the Dąbrowa Basin, with its natural resources and labour force. The local authorities were convinced that the members of the Centre Party, politically linked to the representatives of the

⁶ Edmund Klein, *Rada Ludowa we Wrocławiu. Centralna Rada Prowincji Śląskiej*, Warszawa–Wrocław 1976, pp. 70–76.

⁷ Franciszek Biały, *Z dziejów ugrupowań burżuazyjnych na Śląsku. Rola i działalność Deutschnationale Volkspartei 1918–1921*, “Studia Śląskie. Seria nowa”, 15 (1969), pp. 89–130.

⁸ Franciszek Hawranek, *Polityka Centrum w kwestii górnośląskiej po I wojnie światowej*, Opole 1973, pp. 12–16; Edmund Klein, *Śląskie koncepcje separatystyczne (listopad 1918 – kwiecień 1919)*, “Studia Śląskie”, 23 (1978), pp. 27–65.

⁹ Helmuth Neubach, *Teilung der Provinz*, [in:] Winfried Irgang, Werner Bein, Helmut Neubach, *Schlesien. Geschichte, Kultur und Wirtschaft*, Köln 1995 (Historische Landeskunde. Deutsche Geschichte im Osten, 4), pp. 210–212.

¹⁰ Edward Nabel, *Gospodarka wojenna Niemiec 1914–1918*, Warszawa 1959; Romuald Gelles, *Gospodarka Wrocławia w czasie I wojny światowej*, “Studia Śląskie”, 28 (1975), pp. 74–111.

Upper Silesian industry, aware of the economic disintegration of the Province of Silesia, aimed at loosening the existing relationship with it and obtaining provincial autonomy within the framework of Prussia, or provincial autonomy at the scale of the Reich¹¹. Alarmed about these plans, they acted against the division and condemned, as a separatist, the conference organised on 31st December 1918 in Breslau under the leadership of Cardinal Adolf Bertram, with the participation of representatives of the Centre Party, the authorities of Berlin and the Army, during which a fierce discussion broke up between supporters and opponents of the separation of Upper Silesia. However, in the decisions adopted at that time, referred to in the literature as “Breslauer Beschlüsse”¹², the view of the government and local government administration has prevailed, as the indivisibility of the Silesian province was recognised. Only the possibility of introducing cultural autonomy in Upper Silesia (limited to learning religion in the Polish language¹³) was allowed, in order to calm the sentiments of the local Polish population. On 6th January 1919, the Republican authorities additionally introduced a state of siege in all “Polish counties” of Upper Silesia.

From 18th January 1919, the matters of Germany’s post-war borders passed into the competence of the Paris Peace Conference of the Main Allied and Associated Powers, i.e. France, Italy, Great Britain and the USA, to which the delegation of the Republic of Poland presented the territorial postulates, prepared in the Polish National Committee in Paris¹⁴. Taking into account the results of the census of 1910 for Upper Silesia¹⁵, which had 1,258,186 Poles and 884,045 Germans, Poland demanded the eastern part of the Opole district and 4 northeastern counties: Góra (Guhrau), Milicz (Militsch), Syców (Groß Wartenberg) and Namysłów (Namslau), where Polish population lived in the borderland with Wielkopolska¹⁶. Polish

¹¹ Hawranek, *Polityka Centrum*, pp. 102–110.

¹² Klein, *Śląskie koncepcje*, pp. 27–65; See the minutes of the meeting in: *Źródła do dziejów powstań śląskich*, vol. 1, ed. Henryk Zieliński, Wrocław 1965, pp. 77–88.

¹³ According to the stance of the Prussian government of 28th October 1918. Cf. Przemysław Hauser, *Niemcy wobec sprawy polskiej. Październik 1918–czerwiec 1919*, Poznań 1984, p. 26.

¹⁴ Marian Leczyk, *Komitet Narodowy Polski a Ententa i Stany Zjednoczone 1917–1919*, Warszawa 1966, pp. 175–177; Eugeniusz Romer, *Pamiętnik paryski (1918–1919)*, eds. Andrzej Garlicki, Ryszard Świątek, Wrocław 1989, pp. 175–176.

¹⁵ I’m omitting here the efforts made by Czechoslovakia. See Dan Gawrecki, *Československo a Horní Slezsko 1918–1921*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 r. Okoliczności i następstwa*, eds. Teresa Kulak, Andrzej Brożek, Wrocław 1996, pp. 85–106.

¹⁶ *Akty i dokumenty dotyczące sprawy polskiej granic Polski na Konferencji Pokojowej w Paryżu 1918–1919*, collected and issued by the General Secretariat of the Polish Delegation, part 1: *The territorial programme of the Delegation*, Paryż 1920, pp. 25, 30–55.

territorial demands were accepted by the Polish Affairs Committee and included in the proposals for the Peace Treaty, presented to the German delegation on 7th May 1919. The German delegation rejected them on 29th May, with the justification of the impossibility of paying off the war reparations imposed on Germany if Upper Silesia was incorporated into Poland. This blackmail resulted in the amendment of the draft treaty on 4th June and the imposition of a Plebiscite on Poland, which was sanctioned in the Article 88 of the Peace Treaty, signed on 28th June 1919 in Versailles. Out of 22 counties in the Opole district, with 13,640 km² and 2,112,700 people, 15 counties were separated to form a Plebiscite area covering 10,782 km², with a predominantly Polish population. The Plebiscite also covered 4 border counties from the Breslau district.

The announcement of a Plebiscite in Upper Silesia resulted in the first of the post-war political and territorial divisions of the Silesian province, signalled in the title of this text. The Prussian Landtag, by the Resolution of 14th October 1919, separated the Opole district from the Province of Silesia, and transformed it into the Province of Upper Silesia. Meanwhile, from the previous districts of Wrocław and Legnica, the Province of Lower Silesia was established¹⁷. The Landeshauptmann Georg von Thaer, who, from the perspective of several years¹⁸ regretted the permanent “fragmentation” of the Silesian province, then recognised the need for separate administrative-political and propaganda preparations in both Plebiscite territories. He took into account the socio-political differences between the inhabitants of industrialized Upper Silesia and the agricultural counties on the border of Silesia and Wielkopolska. He considered these operations only in “tactical” categories, hoping for a “return to the previous state” after a win in the Plebiscite¹⁹. However, there were serious fears in Wrocław about a possibility of losing part of the Silesian province and the economic potential of Upper Silesia. Thus, the Provincial Committee (Provinzialausschuß), the self-governing executive body of the province, subordinate to Thaer, adopted a directive on 14th August 1919, in order to “maintain joint management in key areas of territorial and self-governing administration” in case of the creation of a separate Upper Silesian province²⁰. One

¹⁷ Zdzisław Surman, *Sprawa Górnego Śląska w Sejmie Pruskim w latach 1919–1922*, “Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Śląska”, 10 (1970), p. 70 ff.

¹⁸ Georg von Thaer, *Die Provinzen Ober- und Niederschlesien*, Breslau 1924, p. 11.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ It is revealed by the print: Der Landeshauptmann von Oberschlesien, *Niederschlesien gegen Oberschlesien*, Ratibor 1925.

could see in this initiative an intention of the Wrocław self-government administration to interfere in the activities of the Upper Silesian authorities, as well as to limit their administrative and economic independence²¹. It could also have been a manifestation of their resistance against the policy of the Prussian state authorities, but the literature on Upper Silesia²² after World War I takes these issues into account only to a small extent. The limited size of this article makes it possible to signal only some of the initiatives of the then Lower Silesian authorities trying to protect the Silesian province from a definitive division.

In the intention of the Prussian authorities, the newly created Province of Upper Silesia was to fulfil propaganda tasks towards the Polish Catholic population in order to win it for Germany. At the same time, as the Prussian Constituent Assembly in Berlin openly stated in the course of the debate in Berlin, they tried to “save Upper Silesia and the billions invested there” for the State²³. However, the Centre Party did not receive its support for its idea of autonomy, in the face of the resistance existing in Prussia against the transfer of power to Catholics and the transformation of “the Prussian Upper Silesia into a separate German land”²⁴. The Polish Legislative Parliament, when passing on 15th July 1920 the *Organic Statute of the Silesian Voivodeship*, was the first to provide the Upper Silesian people with a distinct legal status within the future Polish state²⁵. Whereas in Germany, in view of the reluctant position of the Landtag, the Upper Silesian Autonomy Act was passed on 25th November 1920 by the Reichstag. However, it could not enter into force because, according to the Treaty of Versailles, since 11th January 1920, the Plebiscite area has passed from the sovereignty of Prussia and Germany to the French-Italian-British Commission Interalliée de Gouvernement et de Plébiscite, based in Opole²⁶. For this formal reason, the implementation of the Law on Autonomy was officially suspended until 2 months after the division of the Plebiscite territory.

The resulting legal state caused an extension of the time of formation of the internal structures of the Province of Upper Silesia, because the first post-war

²¹ Hawranek, *Polityka Centrum*, pp. 43–44.

²² Ewa Wyględa, *Górny Śląsk w latach 1918–1922. Bibliografia*, Opole 1981. See also: Adam Galos, *Literatura historyczna o dziejach Górnego Śląska w latach 1918–1922. (Próba ogólnego przeglądu)*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 r.*, pp. 7–28.

²³ Surman, *Sprawa Górnego Śląska*, pp. 74–75.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 87.

²⁵ Józef Ciągwa, *Autonomia Śląska (1922–1939)*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 r.*, pp. 157–174.

²⁶ Jan Przewłocki, *Międzysojusznicza Komisja Rządząca i Plebiscytowa na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1920–1922*, Wrocław 1970, p. 28.

elections to the provincial parliament, ordered in Prussia on 20th February 1921, could not take place there. Thus, by the Act of 14th January 1921, it was decided to continue to hold joint meetings of the Provincial Parliament in Wrocław, during which the Province of Upper Silesia was to be represented by the “Imperial” MPs, as “substitute MPs”, from the Opole district, elected to the Silesian Parliament in 1917²⁷. The joint Parliament still had 160 delegates, including 52 Upper Silesian and 108 Lower Silesian from both districts (67+41), who in total represented 10 national and regional parties²⁸. The Parliament elected the members of the other local government bodies: the Landeshauptmann and councils: the provincial and three district, and also appointed representatives of the province to the Berlin State Council²⁹. Despite the republican system, the powers of the Provincial Parliament, conferred by the Local Government Law in 1875, were maintained. These included the adoption of the provincial budget, the tax levied on county and municipal council associations, matters of provincial property management and the organisation of social welfare. The Provincial Parliament also decided on regional education, culture and arts. It supervised crafts and agriculture and the condition of local roads and railways.

Further territorial changes in both provinces were caused by the results of a Plebiscite held on 20th March 1921, which was attended by 1,186,234 people in Upper Silesia. 706,820 (59.7%) votes were given in favour of Germany, including 182,288 emigrants, i.e. people born in Upper Silesia and coming from the Reich to maintain the area. Poland received 479,414 votes (40.3%), including 10,120 emigrants³⁰. The mechanical treatment by the British and Italians of the significant difference in the global number of votes cast in favour of Germany and Poland resulted in their proposal to divide the Plebiscite territory unfavourably for Poland and depriving Poland of a part of the industrial district. On 3rd May 1921, the Poles reacted for the third time with an uprising, after which the division of the Plebiscite area was determined on 20th October 1921 by the Council of Ambassadors³¹. However,

²⁷ Tomasz Kruszewski, *Sejm prowincjonalny na Śląsku (1824–1933)*, Wrocław 2000, pp. 392–393.

²⁸ Teresa Kulak, *Propaganda antypolska dolnośląskich władz prowincjonalnych w latach 1922–1933*, Wrocław 1981, pp. 22–30, party composition, Tab. 1–3.

²⁹ *Verhandlungen des 60. gemeinsamen Provinziallandtages der Provinzen Nieder- und Oberschlesien*, 4. Tagung, Anlagen no. 2, no. 3.

³⁰ Andrzej Brożek, *Sposoby regulowania zmian granicznych w Europie po I wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Podział Śląska w 1922 r.*, p. 68.

³¹ Teresa Kulak, *Parlament Rzeszy Niemieckiej wobec decyzji Rady Ambasadorów i postanowień konwencji górnośląskiej*, “*Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Śląska*”, 11 (1971), p. 142 ff.

sovereignty over the areas granted to them was not obtained by both Poland and Germany until 10th July 1922, after the Upper Silesian Convention, signed on 15th May, came into force, the implementation of which was to be controlled for 15 years by the League of Nations³².

The newly established Province of Upper Silesia, as a result of the Plebiscite division, lost 10.2% of the area and 18.5% of the population. The losses of the Province of Lower Silesia were small, as they accounted for 2% of its area (511.56 km²) and 1% of its population, i.e. 26,248 people³³. The Plebiscite covered agricultural districts inhabited by the population, which was Polish, but subject to the large landownership dominating in the border area, which economically affects the political positions of the dependent inhabitants³⁴. Thus, only scraps of the Counties of Góra, Milicz, half of the County of Syców and the County of Namysłów have passed from the Wrocław District to Poland³⁵.

Whereas in the German part of Upper Silesia, only after gaining sovereignty over the assigned territory from the Plebiscite area, the Prussian Landtag, by laws of 11th and 25th July 1922, granted to the Province of Upper Silesia local government bodies, creating its Provincial Department and Provincial Parliament, and at the same time expanded their powers. For this reason, the Centre Party abandoned its efforts to create an autonomous province of the Reich³⁶, in favour of which only 8,8% of the population voted at a referendum (previously postponed) held on 3rd September 1922. Upper Silesia thus remained a province of Prussia³⁷, and then the Plebiscite part, by a resolution of the Parliament of 27th September, was merged with Prussia³⁸. Furthermore, on 19th November 1922, elections to the Upper Silesian Provincial Parliament were held, also postponed in 1921. It was only afterwards that the Prussian Parliament adopted an executive law on the division of the

³² Jerzy Krasuski, *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie 1919–1925*, Poznań 1962, pp. 151–164.

³³ Karl Werner, *Niederschlesien*, [in:] *Staatslexicon*, ed. Hermann Sacher, vol. V, Freiburg i. Br. 1929, p. 386.

³⁴ Marian Orzechowski, *Ludność polska na Dolnym Śląsku w latach 1922–1939*, Wrocław 1959, p. 10.

³⁵ *Akty i dokumenty dotyczące sprawy polskiej granic Polski na Konferencji Pokojowej w Paryżu 1918–1919*, collected and issued by the General Secretariat of the Polish Delegation, part 2: *Granica polsko-niemiecka*, Paryż 1925, pp.174–178; *Merkblatt für den Regierungsbezirk Breslau*, Breslau 1927, p. 3.

³⁶ Karl Ulitzka, *Der Deutsche Osten und die Zentrumspartei*, [in:] *Nationale Arbeit*, ed. Karl Anton Schulte, Berlin 1929, p. 149.

³⁷ Michał Lis, *Górny Śląsk. Zarys dziejów do połowy XX wieku*, Opole 2001, p. 156.

³⁸ Surman, *Sprawa Górnego Śląska*, p. 102.

Province of Silesia and the delimitation of the border between the new provinces on 25th July 1923³⁹ The result of the vote was a great blow to the Breslau authorities, which had previously hoped that the Upper Silesian MPs would abstain from voting, as the Lower Silesian MPs did.

However, the new province was still not legally independent as there was no separation of powers of the existing joint administrative authorities and economic structures, so the two-day meetings of the joint provincial parliament were continued in Wrocław. However, having obtained the status of a province, the Upper Silesians were already able to create commissary forms of their provincial authorities, which were filled by members of the Katholische Volkspartei (KVP), i.e. the Upper Silesian branch of the Centre Party. Carl Ulitzka was appointed interim deputy of the Landeshauptmann, and the function of Commissary Oberpräsident and then President of the Province was held from 1919 by Joseph Leo Bitta, and since 1924, by Dr. Albert Proske. This new, temporary configuration of the legal-administrative coexistence of the two provinces took the name Provinzialverband Schlesien⁴⁰. It was not satisfactory for the KVP, which was seeking to achieve an independent government, which is evidenced by the meeting of 52 members of the Upper Silesian Provincial Parliament, chaired by Graf Hans von Praschma, held on 23rd May 1924 in Wrocław, in order to elect the provisional Upper Silesian Landeshauptmann. Hans Piontek, Mayor of Racibórz (Ratibor), was elected and the result of the efforts made in Berlin was the administrative separation of the province. Its division was carried out on 7th June 1924 by Carl Severing, Prussian Minister of the Interior, but there were still many common institutions⁴¹. This did not hinder the Landeshauptmann Hans Piontek from taking up his office in Racibórz on the 1st August and creating the Provincial Department subordinated to him.

In Wrocław, where such a hasty election of the Landeshauptman of the Province of Upper Silesia was not expected⁴², after that event, activities inhibiting the process of separation of the provinces began. The press recalled the propaganda

³⁹ The Law in: *Verhandlungen des 60. gemeinsamen Provinziallandtages der Provinzen Nieder- und Oberschlesien*, 4.Tagung, Anlagen no. 2.

⁴⁰ Gerhard Webersinn, *Die Provinz Oberschlesien. Ihre Entstehung und Aufbau der Selbstverwaltung*, "Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau", 14 (1969), p. 286.

⁴¹ *Verhandlungen des 60. gemeinsamen Provinziallandtages der Provinzen Nieder- und Oberschlesien*, 5.Tagung, Anlagen no. 2, no. 3.; Hawranek, *Polityka Centrum*, pp. 112, 117.

⁴² There is no clear evidence of this in the files, but judging by the reactions, the meeting, albeit announced, was held in secret from the authorities of the Province of Lower Silesia.

character of the Resolution of 14th October 1919 and considered it to have fulfilled its purpose and the Centre Party gained power in the new province. The “Schlesische Zeitung”, the DNVP’ organ, had already proposed to remain at the political level of the provincial authorities and to give up the creation of costly local government, but in Upper Silesia it was not approved⁴³. Thus, it initiated press attacks, tactically bringing to the fore information about the expenses incurred in creating the official structures of the new province. For in Opole the seat of the Oberpräsident was located, in Racibórze the local government and in Nysa (Neisse) – Landesfinanzamt. It also informed about the numerous office staff, recruited mainly from among the officials of the Province of Silesia⁴⁴. The public reacted to these press releases, due to the statutory requirement of self-financing of the province. It was therefore concerned about the costs and the increase in taxes due to the crisis that followed the French occupation of the Ruhr after 11th January 1923⁴⁵.

In order to signal to all members of the Parliaments and the supreme authorities how complicated the financial and legal regulations related to the division of official structures would be, the Provincial Department of the Lower Silesian Parliament published *Denkschrift über die Folgen einer Teilung der Landesversicherungsanstalt Schlesien* (Memorandum on the consequences of a division of the Silesian Provincial Insurance Institution), informing about future operations related to the division of this oldest insurance institution in Silesia⁴⁶. The Landeshauptmann Piontek, touched by this speech, wrote an article entitled *Die Schlesische Einheitsfragen* (Questions of Unity of Silesia) in the “Schlesische Zeitung”, referring to its recommendations on the need to maintain “the unity of Silesia”. He openly stated there that the relationship between his province and Lower Silesia is unfair⁴⁷. As the justification, he stated that the representatives of Upper Silesia are outvoted by Lower Silesian members, and the budget for both provinces treats their needs equally, although Upper Silesia has been more affected. The Lower Silesian part of the Provincial Parliament, mainly from the DNVP faction, reacted to the revealed resentment, presenting on 10th November 1924 the Memorandum

⁴³ “Schlesische Zeitung”, 172, 10th April 1924.

⁴⁴ “Schlesische Volkszeitung”, 366, 12th August 1924; Hawranek, *Polityka Centrum*, s. 90–93.

⁴⁵ Jerzy Krasuski, *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie 1919–1932*, Poznań 1975, p. 17.

⁴⁶ Cf.: *Denkschrift über die Folgen einer Teilung der Landesversicherungsanstalt Schlesien*, Breslau 1924.

⁴⁷ “Schlesische Zeitung”, 477, 15th October 1924.

Zur Frage der Zukunft Schlesiens (On the question of the future of Silesia)⁴⁸, also sent to Berlin, in which the need to maintain a uniform area of Silesia was justified by arguments included in two groups of issues: economic and political.

Regarding economic matters, the need for joint actions on provincial electrification and electricity supply management was brought to the fore. A joint undertaking was also supposed to be the regulation of the Odra riverbed, in order to rationally use the only natural communication route in Silesia. The regulation was to be combined with the construction of retention reservoirs, which would eliminate the annual flood hazard and the development of arable land. As the crowning of the joint activities, instead of the division of the provinces, it was proposed in the Memorandum to establish the Silesia Wholesale Economic Union (Grosswirtschaftsverband Schlesien), in the sense of a macro-region that would combine the interests of both provinces, for an effective (as a “Zweckverband” – a special purpose union) solution to these problems⁴⁹. Obviously, it was clear in these proposals that there was a need for the province to return to the territorial *status quo ante bellum*, i.e. the belonging of Upper Silesia⁵⁰, necessary also with regard to the presented common political problems. According to the Lower Silesian part of the Parliament, the need for the unity of the German forces was dictated by the border location of the Silesian province (called: Grenzland Schlesien), because after the war the Slavic threat doubled, due to the Polish and Czech state neighbourhood, so the separation of the Upper Silesian province could result in its actual separation from Prussia. This fuelled the anxiety about the Upper Silesian separatism, which had existed since 1918 in the Lower Silesian political and economic circles. There was no concealment of the negative opinion about the administrative independence of Landeshauptmann Piontek and the Katholische Volkspartei who supported him, as the Memorandum’s conclusion contains a significant statement that “the Lower Silesian fraction of the Centre Party sympathises also with its critical content”⁵¹.

After the Memorandum *Zur Frage der Zukunft Schlesiens* was published, Hans Piontek made his appearance in the “Oberchlesische Volksstimme”, the Upper Silesian organ of the Centre Party, with a press counterattack under the eloquent title

⁴⁸ *Zur Frage der Zukunft Schlesiens*. Preface: 16th December 1924; *Verhandlungen des 60. gemeinsamen Provinziallandtages der Provinzen Nieder- und Oberschlesien*, 5. Tagung, Anlagen no. 2.

⁴⁹ Separate print: *Zur Frage der Zukunft Schlesiens*, Breslau 1924, p. 6; date of Preface 16th December 1924.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 2–3.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*; cf. Hawranek, *Polityka Centrum*, p. 103.

Niederschlesien gegen Oberschlesien [Lower Silesia against Upper Silesia]⁵². In the article, he reiterated that accusations of the unjust relationship between Upper Silesia and Lower Silesia and the its representatives were outnumbered in the Parliament. He also pointed out the lack of equal distribution of the budget, although his province was affected by “three Polish uprisings, which Lower Silesia did not experience”. After this initial press attack, he promised an official response in the form of a memorandum. A separate edition appeared with the same title: *Niederschlesien gegen Oberschlesien*⁵³, and its co-author was said to have been Robert Tauche, director of Landesfinanzamt in Nysa. The main attack was directed against the Grosswirtschaftsverband ‘imposed’ on the Province of Upper Silesia and then focused on the aforementioned issues which, according to the Wrocław authorities, were supposed to determine the need for an organisational union of both provinces. The issue of the joint development of the Oder river, which was put forward by Wrocław, was declared to be of no use, as its management is under the competence of the state authorities. The electrification of the provinces did not require any cooperation, as both parts of the province have separate relay networks, and in the case of local arable land development there was no need for supra provincial institutions. The final conclusions of the memorandum of Landeshauptmann Piontek led to the rejection of the idea of “Grosswirtschaftsverband Schlesien”, with an indisputable assessment of it as a concept “hindering the Upper Silesian economy” and “an obstacle to provincial development”⁵⁴. Some diplomacy was required to address the issue of the Slavic neighbourhood raised by the Wrocław authorities and to their suggestion of a politically dangerous accusation of “weakening the German front against them”. The Upper Silesian Landeshauptmann responded by asserting that his primary task is to regain the Polish (lost) part, so it is important to have a well-functioning local government that will be able to counteract the Polish irredentism⁵⁵.

The growing conflict culminated on 8th May 1925 with the end of the four-year term of office of the Provincial Parliament. During this last joint session, there were demonstrative speeches by Robert Tauche, KVP representative and Josef Cyrus from the SPD. Both declared that the Upper Silesian Provincial Parliament was given its seat in Racibórz, so their factions will no longer participate in the

⁵² Reprint in: “Oberchlesische Volksstimme”, 16, 16th January 1925, 17, 17th January 1925.

⁵³ Landeshauptmann von Oberschlesien, *Niederschlesien gegen Oberschlesien*, Ratibor 1925, p. 3.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*; *Niederschlesien gegen Oberschlesien*, “Oberchlesische Volksstimme”, 17, 17th January 1925.

session in Breslau⁵⁶. This meant a sudden end to the previous cooperation, whose backstage was revealed on 21st August by Ulrich Burmann, a representative of the Lower Silesian SPD, acting as a rapporteur of the Main Commission (Hauptkommission) of the outgoing Provincial Department. He did not hide his disappointment with the attitude of the Upper Silesian MPs and their provincial separation, practically since 1923, during the vote in the Prussian Landtag, when the Lower Silesian MPs expected a revision of the Parliamentary resolution of 1919 and a return to the unity of Silesia. They had been and still were convinced that a close economic relationship between the two provinces, i.e. the proposed “Zweckverband”, would be beneficial for their future and for regaining their former economic significance. Burmann described the efforts of Upper Silesians towards independence as “anti-national and dangerous for the German people in the East”. Because it is only in a “united province” that there is adequate potential to “fulfil the important economic and political tasks that fall on this part of Germany”⁵⁷. In the conclusion of the session, the representatives of Lower Silesia rejected the possibility of full separation, but this was done by the Prussian Parliament on 26th October 1926, separating the Silesian offices and institutions according to their current state of provincial territorial affiliation. However, due to the long-time official practice, some common institutions were left to the Wrocław authorities, including the issues of provincial insurance (social and fire insurance), electrification and regulation of the Oder river mentioned in the Memorandum *Zur Frage der Zukunft Schlesiens*. During the parliamentary debate in Berlin, Karl Ullitzka was disappointed to note that Upper Silesia, “contrary to the expectations of its inhabitants, became a province with limited rights and an incomplete organizational structure”⁵⁸. Undoubtedly, he was right, because the province was considered to be an artificial creation and the underdevelopment of its structures resulted from the fact that, as a small area, it formed a single region, so the functions of the Oberpräsident and the President of the Province were performed by the same person. It received a provincial

⁵⁶ Statements in *Verhandlungen des 60. gemeinsamen Provinziallandtages der Provinzen Nieder- und Oberschlesien*, 4. Tagung.

⁵⁷ *Vorlage des Provinzialausschusses betreffend Stellungnahme zu dem von der Staatsregierung zur Äusserung übersandten vorläufigen Gesetzentwurf über die Trennung und Auseinandersetzung der Provinzen Ober- und Niederschlesien*, 20th August 1925, [in:] *Verhandlungen*, 5. Tagung, Drucksache No. 73.

⁵⁸ Ullitzka, *Der deutsche Osten*, p. 149.

parliament, but due to the top-down reduction of administrative costs after the War, not all offices and local government institutions were established there.

The separation of the two provinces proceeded in an atmosphere of mutual accusations and disputes, but for Lower Silesia, economic issues and the need for State aid were the most important. Upper Silesia, after the division of the Plebiscite area in 1922, received support from a special fund *Treudank und Abstimmungsfonds* and similar “gratitude for loyalty” received other provinces, among them largest amount was granted to The Frontier March of Posen-West Prussia (loss of 69.4% of the area and 78.1% of the population). Due to the minimal losses, Lower Silesia was omitted, so in Wrocław it was considered that the association with Upper Silesia, as a Provinzialverband, would increase the joint losses to 10,2% of the territory and 18,5% of the population, placing Silesia, after the March, in second place in applications for State aid. As no such agreement was reached, the animosities of the Lower Silesians soon increased, as their predictions proved to be correct. In 1927, as part of the “Osthilfe”, i.e. the government aid programme for the 6 eastern provinces of Prussia, Upper Silesia received aid in the amount of 2,500 thousand marks, and Lower Silesia the least of them, i.e. 1,500 thousand marks⁵⁹.

The authorities of Wrocław sought also prestige, because until 1918 Wrocław was an Imperial-Royal residence town, the Silesian province had 40,382 km² and was the largest of all the provinces of the Kingdom of Prussia. The Act on Partition of 25th July 1923 was perceived as a political catastrophe, also because the Lower Silesian province with an area of 26,615.83 km² and a population of 3,126,373 people, according to the 1925 census, had fallen to 4th place in Prussia⁶⁰. The Upper Silesian people were blamed for this “degradation of the province” because it was expected that after the Plebiscite – in view of the diminished area of the Upper Silesian province – its leaders would give up the division of Silesia for fear of the administrative costs of its maintenance. Meanwhile, for them, the Act of Partition of the province became politically enticing, as they obtained rule in Upper Silesia and freed themselves from Wrocław.

Summarizing the events in Silesia between 1919 and 1926, it should be emphasized that the inhabitants of Wrocław received with grief the division of Upper Silesia between Germany and Poland, in June 1922 as a result of a Plebiscite, but they accepted the loss of the area caused by an international decision. Yet the

⁵⁹ Alojzy Targ, *Opolszczyzna pod rządami Lukaszka i Wagnera*, Katowice 1958, p. 89

⁶⁰ *Merkblatt für den Regierungsbezirk*, p. 3.

partition of the Silesian Province in 1923 was received differently, as the earlier provincial separation of Upper Silesia in 1919 was treated as a tactical measure to save it for Germany. However, in 1923, despite the fierce protests of Lower Silesians, the implementing law of the Prussian Parliament on the partition of the Province of Silesia was adopted by the votes of the members of the Centre Party. Whereas in Wrocław it was planned that the resolution of 1919 would be revised together. This problem, called by U. Burmann as an “unused opportunity” for Silesian unity, appeared on 21st August 1925, during the last meeting of the General Commission of the Provincial Parliament. It was an accusation of the Upper Silesian members because in his opinion, the revision of the 1919 act was possible and necessary to restore not only the former economic significance of the province. He stressed that thanks this significance Silesia would become “an administrative unity and a defence against the threat of a German from the East”⁶¹. Thus, the Upper Silesians’ efforts to own their own province were described by Burmann as “anti-national and deliberately endangering the German population in the East”. In the idea of the “Zweckverband”, he saw the condition “to fulfil the important economic and political tasks of which this part of Germany was responsible”.

The disputes were to be settled by a Law of the Prussian Parliament of 28th October 1926, which divided the provincial property of Silesia, but still left some common institutions, so the Lower Silesia was blamed by Upper Silesia for causing them to have a province with “limited rights”. Lower Silesia, on the other hand, accused Upper Silesia of their ambitions to pursue political separateness, which led to the “degradation of the Silesian province”. Moreover, in their pursuit of separation, they did not take into account the overriding requirement of cooperation in matters of common provincial interests and national security.

The controversies that arose at the beginning of the independent start of both provinces generated disputes in the following years and created tense mutual relations, which were additionally hampered by the need for both sides to seek State aid. The atmosphere of competition and mutual bidding in the effectiveness of the arguments used and the proposed methods of action remained between the two provinces until the top-down merger of the two provinces on 21st March 1938.

⁶¹ *Vorlage des Provinzialausschusses betreffend Stellungnahme zu dem von der Staatsregierung zur Aeusserung übersandtes vorläufigen Gesetzentwurf über die Trennung und Auseinandersetzung der Provinzen Ober- und Niederschlesien, 20.08.1925, [in:] Verhandlungen, 5. Tagung, Drucksache No. 73.*

STRESZCZENIE

Podziały obszaru prowincji śląskiej zapoczątkowała uchwała Sejmu pruskiego z 14 X 1919 r., w związku z zapowiedzianym w traktacie wersalskim plebiscytem, przeprowadzonym 20 III 1921 r. Z prowincji śląskiej wydzielono rejencję opolską, z przewagą ludności polskiej, którą chciano pozyskać dla Niemiec, przez utworzenie odrębnej prowincji górnośląskiej. Równocześnie powstała prowincja dolnośląska, z dwoma rejencjami – wrocławską i legnicką, jednak władze wrocławskie akceptowały to rozwiązanie, tylko jako doraźne i propagandowe, starając się nie utracić regionu przemysłowego. Po plebiscycie i podziale Górnego Śląska między Niemcy i Polskę w 1922 r. oczekiwały, że Górnoślązacy, z powodu pomniejszonego obszaru prowincji, zrezygnują z jej podziału. Bezskutecznie protestowały przeciw podziałowej ustawie wykonawczej z 25 VII 1923 r. oraz ustawie z 28 X 1926 r., dzielącej zasoby materialne i uprawnienia urzędowe b. prowincji śląskiej. Podział Śląska na 2 prowincje: Śląsk Górny i Śląsk Dolny istniał do 1938 r., kiedy zostały one połączone ponownie w jedną administracyjną całość.

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THE EVENTS OF 1938 IN SILESIA AS A PRELUDE TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

WYDARZENIA 1938 ROKU NA ŚLĄSKU JAKO PRELUDIUM DO WYBUCHU DRUGIEJ WOJNY ŚWIATOWEJ

ABSTRACT: The article presents the genesis of the Second World War in Central and Eastern Europe from the perspective of 1938, highlighting in particular the area of Silesia, which in the 20th century belonged to the German Reich, the Czechoslovak Republic and the Republic of Poland. The text focuses primarily on the diplomatic situation in which Silesia became an object of a political game, both of the great powers and of the actions taken by small and medium-sized Central European states (including Poland), seeking to guarantee their sovereignty in the new geopolitical conditions. The main role in these events was played by Nazi Germany, which occupied Czechoslovak Silesia, treating this fact as a preliminary to future territorial conquests during the Second World War.

KEYWORDS: Silesia, Second World War, Munich Conference, Anschluss of Austria, Opava

The outbreak of the Second World War is inextricably linked in Poland with the date of 1st September 1939, which has a unique character in the history of our country, comparable to: the Baptism of Poland, the Grunwald and Vienna victories, the years of the Three Partitions and Poland's regaining of independence after the First World War and the creation of "Solidarność" ("Solidarity"). However, in universal history textbooks, the date marking the outbreak of the Second World War does not necessarily indicate 1st September 1939. In the Far East, it was more likely 1937, when Japanese troops occupied much of China. Historians from the Soviet Union (and later also from Russia) claimed that the War began only after

the German aggression against the USSR in June 1941. Similarly, in the history of the USA, this date is determined by the attack of the Japanese air force on the American naval base at Pearl Harbour in December 1941. We may risk a thesis that in many countries and regions the beginning of the Second World War was conditioned in historical interpretations by the beginning of hostilities on their territories. Silesia in the 20th century was not a homogeneous whole, and the inhabitants of this region belonged to 3 different states: the German Reich, the Czechoslovak Republic and Poland, and therefore events in Europe were assessed differently from the political perspective of these states.

In the introductory article to a book defining the historical perspective of the Second World War and its consequences for the Czechoslovak Republic, the Czech historian Jindřich Dejmek leaves no doubt that, in the analysis of international relations in the area of Central and Eastern Europe, the Second World War – as seen from the European capital cities lying along the Danube – had two distinct phases: the first, which began with the annexation of Austria in 1938 and ended with the attack on the USSR in 1941, and the second, between 1941 and 1945. He justifies it as follows: “If in the 1930s Europe [peace in Europe – R.K.] was secured by a series of peace agreements of 1919–1921, this is how Czechoslovakia and its neighbours, among others, existed, then more or less in a period of 3 years, from March 1938 to spring 1941, this system was completely broken up and at the same time these states, either came under occupation or were divided, and most of the smaller states, at least, were territorially truncated. Gradually, 16 medium-sized and smaller states of Central, Northern, Eastern and Western Europe became victims of the aggression of the great powers, above all of Nazi Germany”¹. Taking into account other factors, not geopolitical but national, this conclusion is shared by Philipp Ther, because according to him, 1938 and the decisions taken in Munich marked a definite departure, not only from the letter of the Treaty of Versailles and the “splatter treaties” of 1919-1920, but also an abandonment of the idea of self-determination which had been accepted there as a principle for the defence of small and medium-sized historical nations. The Munich Agreement of Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy was a clear signal that the international European order,

¹ Jindřich Dejmek, *Malé státy a velké výzvy třicátých let: příklad Československa, Polska a Norska (obrysy komparace)*, [in:] *Československo a krize demokracie ve střední Evropě ve 30. a 40. letech XX. století*, eds. Jan Němeček *et al.*, Praha 2010, p. 11.

which was the starting point for the creation of a new order based on ethnic criteria throughout Central and Eastern Europe, was disintegrating².

Looking more broadly, therefore, at the differences concerning the reasons for the involvement of the great powers and small and medium-sized European states in a war conflict, the question arises as to whether the events of 1938 were for Germany a prologue to the War (1938 as part of a longer historical process), or whether it was only in 1939 that a sudden turn in European politics occurred, resulting from Poland's negative stance towards the German proposals made after the Munich Conference. This question is particularly relevant to the history of Silesia, which at the end of the 1930s remained mostly outside Polish borders, but was at the centre of events taking place in Central and Eastern Europe. The following is an analysis of issues, which seem to be key to answering the research question posed, concerning the place of Silesia in the diplomatic negotiations in 1938, the preparations for war in German Silesia and the military situation in the area.

According to Eberhard Jäckel, Hitler was already determined on a war, not one limited to a local one and a revision of the Versailles borders, in 1938, although he did not share the details of his plan with the military or even with some of his close associates. At the time, the most important thing for him was the realisation of his ideological goal, namely the acquisition of "living space" (*Lebensraum*) for the German Reich. According to Jäckel, the stages of his plan were already designed by Hitler in the 1920s in Landsberg when he wrote *Mein Kampf*³. After 1933, it was only for the sake of current political tactics that he emphasised the need to revise the Treaty of Versailles, fearing that revealing his political objective might be shocking even to his supporters. It was only during the famous meeting with senior military commanders in November 1937 that he no longer concealed his wish to achieve his political goals in the future⁴. The pretext for the November meeting was economic, but the most important for Hitler's war plans was the subjugation of Central and Eastern Europe, where he planned to find "living space" for Germany.

² Philipp Ther, *Ciemna strona państw narodowych. Czystki etniczne w nowoczesnej Europie*, Poznań 2012, pp.171–172.

³ See Eberhard Jäckel, *Panowanie Hitlera*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1989, pp. 74–75.

⁴ *Aus Hitlers Ansprache vor dem Reichskriegsminister, dem Reichsaussenminister, den Oberbefehlshabern des Heeres, der Marine und der Luftwaffe sowie Oberst Hoßbach am 10.11.1937*, [in:] *Dokumente und Berichte aus dem Dritten Reich*, ed. Günther von Norden, Frankfurt am Main 1970, p. 20.

Among the Central European states, Czechoslovakia became increasingly important in Hitler's aggressive plans, because, unlike the Balkan states and Austria, it was not willing to subordinate its national economy to German interests. In contrast to other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, already in the mid-1930s the Czechoslovak economy was least linked to the German economy. In the years 1929–1937, Czechoslovak imports from Germany fell sharply from 25% to 15.5%, and exports to Germany from 19.4% to 13.7%⁵. For Hitler, this meant the necessity of annexing both Austria (in this case not only for economic reasons, but also for ideological and sentimental ones) and Czechoslovakia, in order to realise his plans for a “large area” economy. It was supposed to ensure, at the latest between 1943 and 1945, the self-sufficiency of the German armaments industry and the start of a war for “living space”. At the meeting, most of the military commanders (even Hermann Göring) regarded both Hitler's long-term plans and the prospect of a possible local war in Central Europe with caution. Because of this reluctance of some senior officers to his plans, Hitler brought about a brutal change in the Wehrmacht command a few months later, deciding on the dismissal of Field Marshal Werner von Blomberg and General Werner von Fritsch⁶.

The gradual change in Germany's foreign policy goals at the turn of 1937/1938 is also evidenced by the situation in the Foreign Ministry. A month before his appointment as head of German diplomacy, Joachim von Ribbentrop, then still ambassador in London, assessed that Hitler was already convinced that a change of the status quo in the East could only be achieved by force⁷. At the same time, Ribbentrop was fully aware that the aim of his mission, i.e. to convince London to be neutral in such a conflict, had not been achieved. He wrote to Hitler that England, contrary to Berlin's hopes triggered by the signing of the Naval Treaty in 1935, would enter the war alongside France, and might even draw the United States into it as well. So Germany had no choice but to enter into an alliance with Italy and Japan⁸.

⁵ Václav Průcha, *Včlenění českých zemí a Slovenska do nacistického velkoprostorového hospodářství*, [in:] *Československo a krize demokracie ve střední Evropě ve 30. a 40. letech XX. století*, eds. Jan Němeček et al., Praha 2010, p. 361.

⁶ Walter Bussmann, *Zur Entstehung und Überlieferung der “Hossbach-Niederschrift”*, “Viertjahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte”, 16 (1968), 4, p. 385.

⁷ Cf. Jäckel, *Panowanie Hitlera*, pp. 74–77.

⁸ Michael Bloch, *Ribbentrop*, Warszawa 1995, pp.126 ff.

Hitler, when deciding in March 1938 to aggress first against Austria and then to formulate an ultimatum towards Czechoslovakia, was taking a great risk, not having the support of the army and the public surprised by the decision. He was aware of the reluctance towards a new war of the majority of Germans, to whom he had been repeating for 5 years that his aim was to ensure a lasting peace. He risked aggression, correctly assessing the decision paralysis of the Western powers and the readiness of Great Britain and France to continue the appeasement policy and ensure the security of their own countries at any cost, even for agreeing to overthrow the system of collective security that had existed in Europe since 1919. From the point of view of the interests of small and medium-sized European states, this meant reopening the discussion on how to guarantee the security of their countries. It could no longer rely solely on the military alliances signed after the First World War. This was later demonstrated by the fate of Czechoslovakia, although the country had not yet been liquidated in 1938. However, pressure from Berlin and later from French and English diplomats on Prague in 1938 forced the ceding of part of the territory of the sovereign state (including Silesia), in the hope that the tactic adopted would allow the remnant of the Czechoslovak state to survive. These hopes were expressed not only by Western diplomats but also by some Czech politicians, above all by agrarians (Republikánská strana zemědělského a malorolnického lidu), led by the new Prime Minister Rudolf Beran, appointed after the Munich Conference. It was not until March 1939, after the occupation of Prague and the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, that it became clear how groundless these calculations had been. The Germans had not even envisaged for Czechoslovakia the same place as for other satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe, i.e. the status of Hungary or Romania⁹.

The lack of real guarantees from the Western powers was also noticed by Polish diplomacy. According to Stanisław Żerko, in Warsaw, despite a sober assessment of the international situation, they were unable to find adequate answers to the challenges posed by the events of 1938, and their attempts at manoeuvring ended in a fiasco. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was aware of the plans for German expansion in Central and Eastern Europe. Hermann Göring informed Józef Beck about them in general terms, so the head of Polish diplomacy did not let himself be drawn into a formal anti-Czechoslovak alliance. He also firmly refused

⁹ Stanisław Żerko, *Polska a kryzys sudecki 1938 r.*, [in:] *Československo a krize demokracie*, p. 122.

Poland's entry into the Anti-Comintern Pact, although he had already sent a warning to the Czechoslovak government in March that Poland would not tolerate the hostile activity of the Comintern in Prague. Beck's hopes at that time to build, apart from the weakening political-military agreement with France of 1921, a Romanian-Hungarian-Polish alliance securing Poland against both the USSR and Germany had no chance of being achieved. Economically and militarily weak, Poland was not an attractive partner for the Central European states, and could not provide them with the security that Germany was realistically offering. This prompted Józef Beck in 1938 to form a temporary alliance with Berlin, in order to obtain Zaolzie from already non-sovereign Czechoslovakia. According to S. Žerka, at the end of the 1930s, Beck realistically assessed the danger from the USSR and Germany. However, by deciding to occupy Zaolzie, "Poland took an extremely risky path, leading to far-reaching isolation from the Western powers, and the Polish ultimatum to Prague was met with unanimous condemnation in the democratic world"¹⁰.

The great diplomatic game played out in European capitals in 1938 led to territorial changes in Silesia, the first since 1922. They were initiated by the Munich Conference. The decision taken there on 25th November 1938 resulted in the incorporation of Hulčín Region and the districts of Bílovec, Bruntál, Frývaldov and Krnov from the historic Silesia within the boundaries of the Czechoslovak Republic into the German Silesian Province (Provinz Schlesien). They were included in the Opava region (obvod Opava), in the Reichsgau Sudetenland incorporated into the German Reich. From the pre-1938 Czech Silesia, the Frýdek district remained within the borders of the Czechoslovak Republic only temporarily, until it was incorporated into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in 1939, when the Czech Republic was completely occupied by the German army.

The reaction of the inhabitants of the Opava Silesia at that time to the invading Germans depended on their nationality. Czechs openly displayed their bitterness and helpless anger in the streets of cities. Nor were there any signs of enthusiasm when German soldiers arrived in the villages with a predominantly Czech population¹¹. But when the *Freikorps*, led by the former local councillor, entered Opava, it was enthusiastically welcomed by the Mayor Reinhart Kudlich (he remained the Mayor and was appointed the head of the Opava NSDAP).

¹⁰ Dejmek, *Malé státy*, p. 11.

¹¹ Dan Gawrecki, *Opava za nacistké okupace*, [in:] *Opava*, esd. Karel Müller, Rudolf Žáček, Praha 2006, p. 289.

Local Germans, upon seeing the volunteers and the Wehrmacht soldiers marching behind them, raised shouts of *Sieg Heil* in euphoria.

The border changes in Silesia after the Munich Agreement in 1938 also concerned Poland, although the first decisions to change the attitude of Polish diplomacy towards Czechoslovakia were taken as early as on 12th May, at a meeting with President Ignacy Mościcki. The Polish Government was determined not to get involved in the German-Czechoslovak conflict, and at the same time, accurately assessing the danger from the USSR, it rejected the demand to let the Red Army pass through Poland to help the Czechoslovak Army. According to Warsaw, the agreement to provide external assistance to Czechoslovakia could only concern the military involvement of France¹². However, it was not until the betrayal of Czechoslovakia by the Western powers in Munich that Poland made its own territorial demands. They were officially presented to Germany in a note of 20th September, and at the same time a similar note with Polish demands concerning Zaolzie was sent to Prague and other European capitals. The principle of reciprocity was applied, i.e. receiving the same guarantees for the Polish minority as the German minority obtained in the Sudetenland. The Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 25th September rejected Polish demands for the cession of Zaolzie, but expressed readiness to provide additional guarantees for the Polish minority. In a letter from President Edward Benes, attached to the Czechoslovak government's stance, the possibility of border adjustments was nevertheless admitted, which was confirmed by the French and British ambassadors in Warsaw, yet at the same time they warned Poland against carrying out independent military action.

After the Munich Conference Czechoslovakia yielded to the dictates of the superpowers, renouncing also its alliance with the USSR, which, according to today's perspective of Russian historiography, was to ultimately induce Moscow to ally with Berlin in order to avoid war with Germany and Japan¹³. Poland was not invited to the Munich Conference, so, in order to achieve immediate political effects in Zaolzie, after a meeting of the Polish Foreign Minister with President Ignacy Mościcki and Chief Inspector of the Armed Forces Marshal Edward Śmigły-Rydz, it was decided on 30th September 1938 to issue Poland's 24-hour ultimatum to the ČSR, demanding the cession of Zaolzie. With no possibility of

¹² See Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914–1989*, Warszawa 2010.

¹³ Ю.В. Иванов, *Очерки истории российско (советско)-польских отношений в документах. 1914–1945 годы*, Москва 2014, p. 205.

resistance, Prague accepted the ultimatum and two Czechoslovak districts were annexed to Poland: Český Cieszyn and Fryštát (total area 1871 km²), which became part of the enlarged Silesian Voivodship. The new Polish-Czechoslovak border, after long negotiations conducted in two phases until November 1938, ran along the line: Vrčice – Heřmanice – Rychvald – Petřvald – Šenov – Bludovice – Žermanice – Domaslavice – Vojkovice – Lhota – Moravka¹⁴.

In Polish Cieszyn Silesia, on 2nd October 1938, after hearing the radio address of the Polish Commander-in-Chief, which ended with the order “March!”, soldiers from the Independent Operational Group Silesia, under the command of General Władysław Bortnowski, crossed the border on the Olza River. To take over the functions in the occupied territory¹⁵, a temporary Polish administration was prepared already at the end of September. However, the entry of Polish troops into Czech Silesia was a political mistake, which was particularly emphasised by the anti-*Sanacja* opposition, including the Christian Democrats influential in Polish Upper Silesia. Its leader, Wojciech Korfanty, repressed by the *Sanacja* and who had found refuge in Czechoslovakia since 1933, regarded the Polish decision as short-sighted¹⁶. His assessment was shared by Wincenty Witos, leader of the People’s Party (PSL), residing in Rožnov in the Czech Republic, the other main Polish political émigré. He warned his supporters at home against the occupation of Zaolzie, seeing it as a collapse of the principles of collective security and the creation of a deadly threat to Polish sovereignty, as well as making it impossible to reach a lasting agreement with Prague in the future¹⁷.

The Polish troops, on the border bridge in Cieszyn, were greeted with applause by Polish officials and politicians, led by Silesian Voivode Michał Grażyński, Polish Mayor Rudolf Halfar and Leon Wolf, leader of the Polish minority in Zaolzie (later Starost of Frysztat). It was a day of triumph for the Silesian voivode, who

¹⁴ Cf. Mečislav Borák, *Zábor Těšínska v říjnu 1938 a první fáze delimitace hranic mezi Československem a Polskem (výběr dokumentu)*, “Časopis Slezského zemského muzea”, series B, 46 (1997), pp. 206–248; *idem*, *Druhá fáze delimitace hranic mezi Československem a Polskem na Těšínsku v listopadu 1938 (výběr dokumentu)*, “Časopis Slezského zemského muzea”, series B, 46 (2000), pp. 51–94.

¹⁵ Krzysztof Nowak, *W przededniu II wojny światowej (październik 1938 – sierpień 1939)*, [in:] *Dzieje Cieszyna od pradziejów do czasów współczesnych*, vol. 3: *Cieszyn od Wiosny Ludów do III Rzeczypospolitej*, ed. Idzi Panic, Cieszyn 2010, pp. 383 ff.

¹⁶ Jan F. Lewandowski, *Wojciech Korfanty*, Katowice 2009, pp. 144–145.

¹⁷ Andrzej Zakrzewski, *Wincenty Witos, chłopski polityk i mąż stanu*, Warszawa 1978, pp. 370–371.

expected the soonest possible integration of the annexed territory into Poland. He did not agree to the merging of German organisations from the Polish part with their counterparts in Zaolzie, including the creation of German minority schools¹⁸.

However, the cost of the spectacular success of Polish diplomacy was high, as the annexation of Zaolzie had been interpreted in European capitals as a political “leaning” towards Berlin and dependence on Germany. Whereas in Berlin, after agreeing to the Polish annexation, the additional demands of Warsaw were received with growing impatience already from the beginning of October. The Germans were surprised by the accession of Bogumin, which was seen as an attempt by Poland to regain the diplomatic initiative and the desire to construct an independent alliance of Central European states. The coming turn in German policy towards Poland was already visible during Warsaw’s efforts to obtain a common border with Hungary. The Chief of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht (General Wilhelm Keitel), in a letter to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 5th October 1938, strongly protested against yielding to pressure from Warsaw and Budapest in this matter. He stressed that it was not in the German interest to rebuild a common bloc of Central European states, all the more a one influencing the mood in the Balkans, and especially “it is undesirable for military reasons to create a common Polish-Hungarian border”. He believed that this would jeopardise the expected future subordination of Czechoslovakia to the German Reich, as it would create for them an illusory vision of an alternative alliance¹⁹.

The Munich success paved the way for the Reich Chancellor to implement plans that, as late as in the spring of 1938, might have seemed unrealistic, and which – both among the military and in German society – were regarded with distrust. The Munich success paved the way for the Reich Chancellor to implement plans that, as late as in the spring of 1938, might have seemed unrealistic, and which – both among the military and in German society – were regarded with distrust. From then on, the opinions of officers who had been sceptical about the new war no longer mattered²⁰. As one of them (Anton Detlev von Plato) wrote

¹⁸ Krzysztof Nowak, *Leon Wolf (1883–1968). Biografia polityczna*, Katowice 2001, p. 208; *idem*, *Wojewoda śląski Michał Grażyński wobec Zaolzia i pogranicza polsko-słowackiego*, [in:] *Michał Grażyński. Wojewoda na pograniczu*, ed. Krzysztof Nowak, Cieszyn 2000, p. 31.

¹⁹ *Document no. 39: Der Chef des OKW an das Auswärtige Amt, Berlin, den 6. Oktober 1938*, [in:] *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918–1945. Aus dem Archiv deutschen Auswärtigen Amtes*, Baden–Baden 1951, p. 39.

²⁰ Cf. Jäckel, *Panowanie Hitlera*, pp. 74–77.

after the war, the Munich Agreement was greeted with relief and cheers. The confidence of most Germans in Adolf Hitler had risen extremely because he had overturned, without war, the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles and enlarged Germany by Austria and the Sudetenland²¹. The Führer of the Third Reich could already afford to show not only his close associates but also the general public his new vision of the already imminent war for “living space”. This, in any case, is how it is interpreted today his speech at a meeting with more than 400 members of the press on 10th November, after his triumph in Munich. He admitted that previously, only tactical foreign policy considerations made him talk about peace. Now this had to be ended, because peaceful means had been exhausted and it was necessary, in his view, to make all Germans aware that war awaited them²².

In Silesia, changes in German domestic policy were perhaps most noticeable because a large part of the international conflict that almost led to war as early as 1938 was played out in this area. In the areas annexed to the Silesian province, the German administration tested, in a sense, scenarios for the future annexation of new territories. In the area of Austria and the Sudetenland, a completely new administrative model was adopted – the so-called Reichsgaue (districts of the German Reich). In these, the civil and party administration was merged under the authority of newly appointed party leaders – the Gauleiters²³. The position of Reichsgau Sudetenland Gauleiter (*Říšská župa Sudety*) with the regional (Gau) headquarters in Liberec was taken over by Konrad Henlein, the former leader of the Sudeten German Party. In the former Czech Silesia, the so-called East Sudetenland (Ostsudetenland/Východni Sudety) was established with its seat in Opava as part of the Reichsgau Sudetenland. The Opava District covered only 1/3 of Czech Silesia (i.e. 7 of the 15 municipalities), the rest belonged to historical Bohemia. The state administration in Opava was headed by the Reich Commissioner plenipotentiary – Fritz Zippelius, who from November was replaced by Ferdinand von Planitz with the title of President²⁴. A separate solution was found for Hulčín, which was incorporated into the already existing Prussian Province of Silesia, so no special administration was established. Both

²¹ Anton Detlev von Plato, *Die Geschichte der 5. Panzerdivision 1938 bis 1945*, Regensburg 1978, p.1.

²² *Ausschnitt aus einer Rede Hitlers vor 400 nationalsozialistischen Journalisten und Verlegern am 10. November 1938*, [in:] *Dokumente und Berichte*, p. 22.

²³ Cf. Magnus Brechtken, *Die “Reichsgaue”. Kommentar und Forschungsforderungen*, [in:] *Die NS-Gaue Regionale Mittelinstanzen im zentralistischen “Führerstaat”?*, eds. Jürgen John, Horst Möller, Thomas Schaarschmidt, Oldenburg 2007, pp. 406 ff.

²⁴ Gawrecki, *Opava za nacistké*, p.290.

models would later find application in the various territories incorporated into the Third Reich after 1939.

As head of the civil and party administration, Henlein represented a new quality in the German administrative system. He implemented the principle of chieftainship and therefore had no need to concern himself with the German and Prussian official tradition. He created a new power elite. Lower-level party activists were interested in such a solution, as it opened up a career in civilian administration, combined with a number of benefits, even though they did not have the relevant education and experience to hold such positions. This was an attractive vision, above all for the leaders of the German minority in the occupied territories, who previously, in the course of normal civil service promotion, could not dream of reaching high positions with real power. The promotion took place under the control of the Party Chancellery in Berlin, and the Silesian NSDAP played a rather secondary role in this process, limited before the Munich to the border areas²⁵. At that time it was a direct resource base for the activities of the Sudeten Germans. Under the idea of mass events uniting Germans living in the German Reich and those abroad (Auslandsdeutsche), Wrocław (Breslau) became the centre of political support for Konrad Henlein and his supporters from the Sudeten German Party (Sudentendeutsche Partei – SdP), which was very strong in Czech Silesia. According to the results of the parliamentary elections of 1935, the SdP prevailed especially in the Opava part, from the Javorník judicial district (68%) to Opava (51%) and Hulčín (58%). Only in the east the range of German influence was smaller, because in Klimkovice and Bílovec and Frýdek, also in the Ostrava-Karviná districts, the Social Democrats and Communists had the advantage. Poles prevailed in two districts: Český Těšín (26%) and Jablunkov (43%), where they were represented by a collation of Polish minority organisations²⁶. The apogee of the cross-border cooperation between the SdP and the NSDAP in Silesia occurred on the occasion of a sports meeting organised for Sudeten Germans in Wrocław in July 1938. During the growing crisis in German-Czechoslovak relations, it turned into a rally of Sudeten Germans and was meant to show their enthusiasm and desire to join Germany²⁷. It was attended by the leading leaders of the Third Reich, above all

²⁵ Miroslaw Węccki, *Fritz Bracht (1899–1945). Nazistowski zarządca Górnego Śląska w latach II wojny światowej*, Katowice 2014, p.111.

²⁶ Marie Gawrecká, *Politické poměry ve Slezsku v letech 1815–1939*, Opava 2011, pp.130–133.

²⁷ Węccki, *Fritz Bracht*, p.109.

Hitler and Joseph Goebbels, who met with representatives of the Sudeten Germans on the eve of crucial talks with the Western powers on the future of Czechoslovakia, which, after the failure of the “last chance” mission of the British Prime Minister’s envoy Walter Runciman, led to the Munich Conference.

The NSDAP in Silesia in 1938 was only just preparing for a change in its tasks and the wartime mobilisation of the hinterland, which would become its main task when hostilities began. Before the peak of the Munich crisis in September, Rudolf Heß, as Hitler’s deputy in the NSDAP, sent out a detailed directive on that matter (it was implemented in Silesia by Fritz Bracht, then deputy to Gauleiter Josef Wagner, responsible for party organisation). The main task of the party structures in case of the outbreak of war was to maintain production and supply for the civilian population (it was feared that the situation from World War I, when food supplies collapsed, would be repeated). NSDAP-affiliated organisations were also mobilised to carry out tasks in the area of protecting the hinterland against sabotage, diversion, and air attacks. In principle, the party structures were thus handed over supervision of the entirety of what during First World War was called the Home Front (*Heimatfront*). In 1939, when preparations for the attack on Poland began, no new regulations were introduced in the NSDAP, but only the preparations of 1938 were repeated²⁸. In 1938, in Silesia, changes in the German terror apparatus triggered by the aggression against Czechoslovakia can also be observed, especially the creation of paramilitary organisations. Despite the conciliatory attitude of the Czechoslovak authorities towards the German minority in the Sudetenland (the mass emigration of Sudeten Germans to Silesia was not prevented), Henlein issued a proclamation to the paramilitary *Freiwilliger Schutzdienst*, which had been created by his party even before the Munich Conference, calling on its members to be ready to take part in the “incorporation into Germany” campaign. The SdP press organ even stated that from now on the *Schutzdienst* would no longer be an organisation just parading in the streets, but would become the “sharpened knife of our movement”²⁹. After Henlein’s failed putsch on 12th September 1938 and the dissolution of the SdP, the *Sudetendeutsches Freikorps* was formed in the German province of Silesia ready to launch a diversion in Czechoslovakia, just as in Poland a year later. Hitler issued an order to the SA (*Sturm Abteilungen*) to this effect on 17th September 1938, ordering the use of Sudeten Germans staying in camps in Silesia for the formation of volunteer units. Two

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp.123–124.

²⁹ Tomáš Pasák, *Český fašismus 1922–1945 a kolaborace 1939–1945*, Praha 1999, p. 202.

days later, Fritz Bracht gave the SA order in Silesia, which even includes a name “Konrad Henlein’s *Freikorps*”. It was to be formed in four areas (one of which was Wrocław), and help (organisational, personnel and material) was to be given to the “Sudeten volunteers” by the Silesian SA³⁰. The number of *Freikorpslers*, positioned along the entire German border, was to reach 34,500 men, grouped in 41 battalions. Their commanders became officers delegated from paramilitary organisations affiliated to the NSDAP. Wrocław was at first the base of one group of Henlein’s *Freikorps*, the so-called *Gruppe I*, later divided into two separate groups: V – Wrocław and VI – Jelenia Góra (Hirschberg). The groups were divided into sections (*Abschnitte*) with the strength of a battalion. Both Silesian groups recruited refugees and German volunteers delegated to them (a total of 6,851 people, 11 battalions). They took part in provocations and fights in the Silesian borderlands. *Freikorpslers* attacked Czechoslovak border and customs posts, and the climax of the whole action took place on 22nd–23rd September³¹. It had numerous similarities with an analogous diversionary action in September 1939, as Grzegorz Bębniak writes about in his study, and among the commanders of the *Sudetenland Freikorps* were Wilhelm Pisarski and Karl Rolle, also known from September 1939³².

The formation of the *Sudeten Freikorps* was preceded by the taking over of repressive tasks in the occupied territories by the police and SS, which did not happen without conflict with the Wehrmacht. An example was the dispute over the command of the *Sudeten Freikorps*. When the Chief of Wehrmacht High Command, General W. Keitel, issued orders (28th and 30th September 1938) to subordinate the volunteer units to his command, Himmler opposed it, as he had already subordinated the *Freikorps* to the leadership of the Silesian SS senior-district on 26th September. The dispute had to be settled personally by Hitler, who, on 30th September, gave the command of the *Freikorps* to the *Reichsführer SS*, thus deciding that it would perform police tasks (this remained the case until the *Freikorps* was disbanded on 10th October 1938)³³. This was still far from an “SS state”, but in retrospect it is

³⁰ Węccki, *Fritz Bracht*, p. 110.

³¹ Dušan Janák, *Akcje terrorystyczne na pograniczu śląskim we wrześniu 1938 roku (z działalności Nadzwyczajnego Sądu Ludowego w Opawie)*, [in:] *Układ monachijski jako przykład prawnomiędzynarodowej kapitulacji wobec agresji*, eds. Stefan M. Grochański, Michał Lis, Opole 2009, pp. 70 ff.

³² Grzegorz Bębniak, *Sokoły kapitana Ebbinghaus. Sonderformation Ebbinghaus w działaniach wojennych na Górnym Śląsku w 1939 r.*, Katowice–Kraków 2014, pp. 55–58.

³³ Rudolf Absolon, *Die Wehrmacht im Dritten Reich*, vol. 4: 5. Februar 1938 bis 31. August 1939, Boppard am Rhein 1979, p. 271.

possible to see this acceleration in the taking over of repressive tasks from the hands of the civil administration, which had been reluctant to do so due to the still living tradition of legal legitimacy. When preparations were made for the entry of German troops into Austria and later Czechoslovakia, the police and SS units were already responsible for securing the rear and temporarily administering the occupied territory. As special task forces (*Sonderkommandos*), they were first created in the spring of 1938, during the annexation of Austria. They were the forerunners of the SS and SD special groups (*Einsatzgruppen*), known from the September campaign and from the genocidal actions of the SS and SD special groups on the Eastern Front in 1941.

A turning point in the activities of the political police was also the radicalization of anti-Jewish policy, which in many cases is attributed precisely to the annexation, especially of Austria and the reappearance, as it seemed already solved in the German Reich, of their question after the passing of the Nuremberg Laws. If the *Kristallnacht* and its consequences in the form of the so-called “Aryanization” were to be part of the process of radicalization of this policy, then its next stage meant getting rid of the Jews from the area of the German Reich through forced migration, deportation or a decision to murder. Even from the perspective of Silesia, according to Franciszek Połomski, the *Kristallnacht* meant the final conviction of German society of the purposefulness of the policy of institutionalised and police-led persecution of the Jews as a separate social group³⁴.

The elimination from political and social life of other groups judged hostile to the Reich, and the conviction of the majority of Germans to this, also opened the way to a confrontation in the eastern territories over the aims of national and racial policy. The annexation of Silesia entailed not only the incorporation of a certain territory, but also posed the crucial question of the legal status of the new inhabitants of the expanding German Reich. The simple implementation of revisionist policy was not a cause for controversy among most Germans about the legitimacy of occupying these territories lost after the First World War. The lands that were returned to the German Reich were still inhabited (except for the immigrant population) by former German citizens and their descendants. However, this point of view was no longer so obvious in the context of racial policy objectives. It became necessary to answer the question that was first raised in Germany with the introduction of the

³⁴ Franciszek Połomski, *Ustawodawstwo rasistowskie III Rzeszy i jego stosowanie na Górnym Śląsku*, Katowice 1970, p. 212.

Aryan paragraph and later with the Nuremberg Laws: who deserved to be included in the so-called German national community (*deutsche Volksgemeinschaft*). This was because the connecting element was not only ethnic and political unity, but above all racial origin. Perhaps this is also the reason for the intensification of agitation in 1938, which reached back to the genesis of the post-war German-Polish conflict over Silesia. The expiry of the Polish-German Upper Silesian Convention (Geneva Convention) not only led to the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws in the eastern part of Upper Silesia, which had not been in force until 1937, but also contributed to apologia of the German sacrifice during the fights with Polish insurgents in 1921. Those who fought in the Silesian German Self-Defence (*Selbstschutz*) were treated as the first fighters of the Nazi movement, and a symbol of this was the unveiling of the monument of the German Self-Defence next to St Ann's Mountain on 22nd May 1938³⁵. Gauleiter Josef Wagner, who was present at the ceremony, heralded an ideological "border struggle" in the Polish-German border area, which would be led primarily by the *Bund Deutscher Osten*. Ernst Thiele, one of its leaders, explained the purpose of this action in Opole in late 1938: "When the call 'nation to arms' reappears one day, then the whole nation will move together with Upper Silesia"³⁶.

The agitation brought results. According to official German data, in January 1939 in Hulčín Region more than 95% of the population declared their German nationality and, on the basis of the German Nationality Act of 1938, were granted citizenship of the Third Reich. Thus, the principles of the former Wilhelminian policy of Germanization were accepted in this small area, recognising (more or less forced, but nevertheless subjective) accession to the German nation. In the part of former Czech Upper Silesia that became part of the Reichsgau Sudetenland, the solution to the problem of German citizenship was already different, close to what would happen in the Polish territories incorporated after 1939. Not everyone became a full-fledged German citizen and initially this issue was resolved on the basis of the Czechoslovak-German agreement of 26th November 1938, according to which one could opt for German or Czechoslovak nationality (but then had to leave Opava Silesia). After the annexation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, German officials automatically qualified those who had lived in the Sudetenland before

³⁵ Kai Struve, *Nationalismus und Minderheitenforschung*, [in:] *Historische Schlesienforschung. Themen, Methoden und Perspektiven zwischen traditioneller Landesgeschichtsschreibung und moderner Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Köln u.a. 2005, pp. 311–312.

³⁶ Karol Fiedor, *Bund Deutscher Osten w systemie antypolskiej propagandy*, Warszawa–Wrocław 1977, p. 230.

1910 as German citizens. Others, who opted to belong to the Czech or Slovak nation, were considered “Reich citizens of Czech nationality”, under the “protection” of the German Reich (*Schutzangehörige*). They were allowed to remain in their places of residence, but without the political rights of members of the German national community and with significantly reduced civil rights in comparison to the so-called citizens of the German Reich (*Reichsbürger*).

The measures taken in 1938 foreshadowed the problems that would confront the German authorities a year later in occupied Polish Upper Silesia, where a similar solution was initially adopted. It was only after the police census in December 1939 that Himmler pressed for the application of racial theory in place of an approach derived from the tradition of the nation-state. In this approach, Upper Silesians could no longer opt for national belonging, but were included in a group that would be assessed as to whether they could be included in a racial community³⁷. As it was impossible in the 1930s to empirically determine their hereditary traits, the only way to decide was to observe their mentality, attitudes and characters, and on this basis, decide whether they belonged to a national community. This became the basis for the introduction of the German People’s List (*Deutsche Volksliste*) in 1941³⁸.

In 1938, also in the German army in Silesia, it was easy to see the rapid changes preparing the Wehrmacht for aggression. After the dismissal of Blomberg and Fritsch and the liquidation of the War Minister’s office, Hitler, as Commander-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht, handed over the command of the armed forces to the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht – OKW*), whose head was General W. Keitel³⁹. The annexation of Austria was followed by the dismissal of General Ludwig Bock as Chief of Staff and the taking over of his duties by General Franz Halder⁴⁰. All these personnel changes eliminated from the German army those senior officers who had been critical to Hitler’s aggressive plans in 1937. At the same time, the occupation of Austria resulted in a significant increase in the Wehrmacht’s numbers and strength, reducing the hitherto unquestioned military advantage of the Western powers. After the taking of Vienna and the incorporation

³⁷ The first to bring this subject into German discussions was Alfred Beck, *Schwebendes Volkstum im Gesinungswandel: eine sozial-psychologische Untersuchung*, Stuttgart 1938.

³⁸ The State Archives in Katowice (Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach), NSDAP Gauleitung Oberschlesien Kattowitz, Ref. 603, Redner-Information anlässlich der Stossaktion im Gau Oberschlesien, Kattowitz, 18–21.02.1943, p. 50.

³⁹ Władysław Kozaczuk, *Wehrmacht*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 205–206.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 221.

of soldiers from the Austrian army, the size of the Wehrmacht on 1st July 1938 was almost 1 million soldiers. These were: ground troops (*Heer*) 25,000 officers, 175,000 NCOs, 584,000 soldiers (784,000 in total, and of the 50,000 or so reservists not conscripted before March 1935 hastily trained in two-month courses, 834,000); in the air force (*Luftwaffe*), 6,000 officers and 15,000 NCOs and privates served; in the navy (*Kriegsmarine*), 3,200 officers, 40,000 NCOs and sailors⁴¹. This process was further accelerated after the annexation of Czechoslovakia, whose army, when mobilisation was announced in September 1938, numbered 1.5 million soldiers (including: 300,000 Sudeten Germans who deserted en masse by fleeing across the border into Germany). This army was well equipped, which was due to a well-developed arms industry. It had at its disposal 348 light tanks, 70 tankettes, 75 armoured cars and 568 combat aircraft⁴². The infantry increased by 124 battalions, the artillery by 41 divisions and the armoured units increased from 24 to 34. By the end of 1938 the German ground forces already numbered: 35 divisions (32 in 1937), 4 motorised divisions (no change), 5 armoured divisions (3 in 1937), 4 so-called light infantry divisions (none in 1937), 3 mountain divisions (none in 1937) and 1 cavalry brigade (no change). In total, the German land army after the annexation of Austria, the Sudetenland and Czech Silesia increased by 10 divisions, reaching 52 divisions already by the end of 1938⁴³.

In the new German mobilisation plan, the German army was divided into 4 so-called army group commands (*Heeresgruppenkommandos*):

- 1) in Berlin (*Feldmarschall* Gerd Rundstedt, *Feldmarschall* Fedor Bock),
- 2) in Kassel (*Feldmarschall* Wilhelm Leeb, *Feldmarschall* Wilhelm List, *General d. Inf.* Erwin Witzleben),
- 3) in Dresden (*General d. Inf.* Johann Blaskowitz),
- 4) in Leipzig (*Feldmarschall* Walther Brauchitsch, *General d. Inf.* Walter Reichenau),
- 5) After the annexation of Austria, the 5th Group command in Vienna was taken over (*Feldmarschall* Wilhelm List),
- 6) At the turn of 1938/1939, Group 6th group command was established in Hanover (*Feldmarschall* Günther Kluge)⁴⁴.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 217–218.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 222.

⁴³ Herbert Schottelius, Gustav-Adolf Caspar, *Die Organisation des Heeres 1933–1939*, [in:] *Handbuch zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1648–1939*, vol. 4, eds. Friedrich Forstmeier et al., München 1979, p. 315.

⁴⁴ Kozaczuk, *Wehrmacht*, p. 218.

To the commands of these groups were subordinated corps commands (at the same time they were territorial commands – *Wehrkreis*). The number of German military districts was gradually increased from the initial 6, at the time of the adoption of the law on general conscription, to 10 in 1935, another 2 were added in the spring of 1936, and Silesia was added at the end of 1937 as the 8th military district.

Alfred Konieczny presented in detail the organisational transformations, increase in the number of units and trained soldiers in Silesia before the outbreak of the Second World War. At the beginning, in 1935, the core of the Wehrmacht in the Province of Silesia consisted of two infantry divisions (the later 8th ID, whose units were stationed in Upper Silesia, and the 18th ID deployed in Lower Silesia), which in 1936 were joined by a third division (the 28th ID in Wrocław). These divisions had already been included in the mobilisation plans before the outbreak of war, forming the 8th Army Corps, which at the turn of 1938/1939 numbered 52,471 thousand soldiers⁴⁵. These units, especially the 8th DP, had already been actively involved in the occupation of the Sudetenland in 1938. After the incursion into Czechoslovakia they were deployed in local garrisons: 3 battalions of the 28th infantry regiment in Opava, Šternberk/Místek, Nový Jičín, and the 8th artillery regiment in Opava⁴⁶.

The strongest military unit in Silesia was the 5th Panzer Division (Armoured Division), formed only after the Munich Crisis, by order of 24th November 1938. Its creation was directly related to the annexation of the Sudetenland, where new German units began to be formed, including the 31st Panzer Regiment in Krnov. The division was prepared extremely fast, and it was used already during the occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic in March 1939, directed to shield operations in the area of Olomouc. The author describing its history had no doubts that this most modern unit in Silesia was already “a child of 1938, which was a turning point in the history of the German army, not only preparing for war, but then already waging it, although still without spectacular victories on the battlefields”⁴⁷.

In concluding the reflections on the significance of 1938 for Silesia from the perspective of the coming war, it seems possible to summarise them with a few conclusions of a more general nature. In Silesia in 1938, the “hot war” was not yet

⁴⁵ Alfred Konieczny, *Administracja wojskowa Trzeciej Rzeszy na Śląsku i jej rola w rozbudowie Wehrmachtu w latach II wojny światowej*, Wrocław 1992 (Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, 1247, Prawo CXCV), p. 150.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p.151.

⁴⁷ Plato, *Die Geschichte*, p. 7.

underway, but if we are looking for the beginnings of the Second World War in Central and Eastern Europe, it certainly began with the events of that very year, above all the annexation of Austria and part of Czechoslovakia. These events cannot be regarded as a continuation of previous policies, not only of Germany, but also with regard to international relations in Europe. Referring once again to the Czech historian J. Dejmek, it should be concluded that as a result of the aggressive German policy, the independence of small and medium-sized European states came to an end already in 1938, when the Western powers definitively abandoned the defence of the Versailles order. Looking more broadly at the Second World War as a whole and its aftermath, most Central European small and medium-sized states from 1938 onwards were no longer able to defend their full sovereignty, first against Germany and then against the Soviet Union⁴⁸.

At the moment of this geopolitical turn, Silesia became for Germany a place of experiment and gathering of experience for conducting policy in the occupied territories of the former borderland. Of particular importance was the experience used in 1939–1945 in the so-called lands incorporated into the Third Reich. On the territory of the former Czechoslovak Silesia, the Germans could test the capabilities of the civil administration and emergency offices, as well as those of the terror apparatus, which were small in number in the vast occupied area due to permanent shortages of human resources. Perhaps most important, however, was the confrontation between theoretical ideological assumptions and the practical implementation of racial policy. In Silesia, in 1938, the problem of how far the German national community would be based on the assumptions of a crime racial ideology, which was to lead Germany to a policy of genocide, emerged in full force for the first time. Germany would pay a huge price for this, as Detlef Brandes pointed out when he wrote that the beginning of the expulsion of Germans after 1945 was already in Munich. From that moment on, it became clear in both Poland and Czechoslovakia, and was tragically reinforced by the Nazi occupation, that Germans could not live in one country with Czechs and Poles⁴⁹. As a result, almost the entire German population living on almost two thirds of the territory of Silesia was expelled, and only in Upper Silesia did the native population remain. From

⁴⁸ Dejmek, *Malé státy*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ Detlef Brandes, *Der Weg zur Vertreibung 1938–1945. Pläne und Entscheidungen zum "Transfer" der Deutschen aus der Tschechoslowakei und aus Polen*, München 2000 (I used the Czech translation of this book: *Cesta k vyhnání 1938–1945. Plány a rozhodnutí o "transferu" Němců z Československa a z Polska*, transl. Petr Dvořáček, Praha 2002), pp. 367–368.

today's perspective, 1938 was thus the beginning of events that triggered migration movements in Silesia on a scale unmatched by any other that had swept through the region, including the Hussite Wars, the Thirty Years' War and the Silesian and Napoleonic Wars.

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule przedstawiono genezę II wojny światowej z perspektywy 1938 r. oraz losów Śląska, jednego z regionów na obszarze Europy środkowo-wschodniej. Jego mieszkańcy, zróżnicowani etnicznie, należeli wtedy do Rzeszy Niemieckiej, Republiki Czechosłowackiej i Polski, dla których Śląsk w 1938 r. stał się przedmiotem gry politycznej, w której główną rolę przejęły jednak nazistowskie Niemcy. Należący do Czechosłowacji Śląsk Opawski, potraktowały jako miejsce politycznego eksperymentu, będącego wzorem dla wprowadzenia przyszłych okupacji, na tzw. ziemiach wcielonych do III Rzeszy w latach 1939–1945. Tam Niemcy mogli testować możliwości działania ich administracji cywilnej, urzędów nadzwyczajnych i aparatu terroru. Tam, po raz pierwszy, nastąpiła konfrontacja teoretycznych założeń ideologicznych polityki rasowej III Rzeszy z praktyką wprowadzania jej w życie. Ich skutkiem były ruchy migracyjne, które po II wojnie światowej spowodowały zniknięcie z mapy politycznej Europy niemieckiego Śląska, po włączeniu jego części do Czechosłowacji i Polski oraz przesunięciu granicy państwowej do linii Nysy Łużyckiej.

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**THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR IN THE MEMOIRS
OF THE PARISH PRIEST OF KRZEWINA,
MARTIN BALTZER (D. 1785)**

**WOJNA SIĘDMIOLETNIA WE WSPOMNIENIACH PROBOSZCZA
Z KRZEWINY MARTINA BALTZERA (ZM. 1785)**

ABSTRACT: The subject matter of this miscellaneum are accounts of the Seven Years' War written by Martin Baltzer, a Catholic parish priest from Krzewina on the Lusatian Neisse (d. 1785). They are contained in a diary he wrote down, known only from an autograph stored in the Library of the Oberlausitzische Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften in Görlitz. The first part of this work presents Martin Baltzer's biography and his work, in which he recounted the history of the years 1756–1782. Krzewina and its immediate surroundings remain in the centre of his accounts. From this perspective he also presented the course of the Seven Years' War, to which he dedicated about 200 pages of his diary. He described in detail the consequences of the war for the inhabitants of Krzewina and Upper Lusatia. Warfare in this region was presented against the background of events in neighbouring countries, particularly in Silesia and Saxony.

KEYWORDS: Upper Lusatia, Seven Years' War, history of Church

One of the most important chapters in the military history of Silesia was the Seven Years' War, also known as the Third Silesian War (1756–1763). Its operations reached far beyond the borders of the region, to such an extent that it is generally

treated as the first ever armed conflict of a global dimension¹. The epoch in which it took place was the time of the growing popularity of the so-called ego-documents (personal testimonies), which are an excellent supplement to the “classical” sources commonly used in historical research². Probably the most popular, also due to its literary value, are the memoirs of a Swiss peasant son, Ulrich Bräker (1735–1798), who presented the initial period of the Seven Years’ War from the point of view of a private soldier³. From an entirely different perspective, the operations of this war were perceived and described by Martin Baltzer, whose memoirs (*Diarium ab anno 1756 usque ad annum 1781*, hereafter: *Diarium*) were until recently considered lost⁴. He described it as a parish priest of a small Catholic parish in Krzewina (Grunau), about 18 km south of Zgorzelec (Görlitz) and situated on the eastern bank of the Lusatian Neisse.

The biography of the author of the memoirs is relatively well known⁵. Martin Baltzer (in Upper Sorbian: Měrcin Bałcar) was born in Storcha (Upper Sorbian:

¹ Marianus Füssel, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg. Ein Weltkrieg im 18. Jahrhundert*, München 2012. On the global dimension of this war, see most recently: *Der Siebenjährige Krieg (1756–1763). Ein europäischer Weltkrieg im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, ed. Sven Externbrink, Berlin 2011; *The Seven Years’ War. Global Views*, eds. Marc H. Danley, Patrick J. Speelman, Leiden–Boston 2012. From the point of view of the subject matter of this miscellaneum, the works are important: Robert Kisiel, *Lużyce w działaniach zbrojnych pierwszych kampanii wojny siedmioletniej 1756–1757*, [in:] *Z dziejów Górnych Łużyc i Górnołużyczan*, eds. Jerzy Maroń, Łukasz Tekieła, Lubań 2007 (Lubańskie Studia Historyczne, 2), pp. 143–155; Jerzy Maroń, *Operacyjna rola Górnych Łużyc*, [in:] *Górne Łużyce na przestrzeni wieków*, eds. Jerzy Maroń, Łukasz Tekieła, Lubań 2007 (Lubańskie Studia Historyczne, 1), pp. 80–92; *Macht und Ohnmacht. 250 Jahrestag der Zerstörung Zittaus am 23. Juli 1757*, Zittau–Görlitz 2007 (Zittauer Geschichtsblätter, 34).

² See e.g. Stanisław Roszak, *Ego-documents – some remarks about Polish and European historiographical and methodological experience*, „Biuletyn Polskiej Misji Historycznej”=„Bulletin der Polnischen Historischen Mission“, 8 (2013), pp. 27–42.

³ Ulrich Bräker, *Lebensgeschichte und natürliche Ebentheuer des Armen Mannes im Tocken-burg*, ed. Heinrich Füßli, Zürich 1789; latest edition: *idem, Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 4: *Lebensgeschichte und vermischte Schriften*, ed. Claudia Holliger-Wiesmann et al., München 2000, pp. 355–558. From the rich literature on the work of U. Bräker see *Schreibsucht. Autobiographische Schriften des Pietisten Ulrich Bräker (1735–1798)*, eds. Alfred Messerli, Adolf Muschg, Göttingen 2004 (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Pietismus, 44). See also Füssel, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg*, pp. 97–98.

⁴ Wojciech Mrozowicz, „Non habui panem pro domo...“ *Die Aufzeichnungen des Oberlausitzer Pfarrers Martin Baltzer (1756–1781)*, [in:] *Die Nieder- und Oberlausitz – Konturen einer Integrationslandschafts*, vol. 2: *Frühe Neuzeit*, eds. Heinz-Dieter Heimann, Klaus Neitmann, Uwe Tresp, Berlin 2014 (Studien zur brandenburgischen und vergleichenden Landesgeschichte, 12), pp. 169–179.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 171–173; *Der Kirchort Grunau*, [in:] *Die Oberlausitz als besondere Abtheilung von Sachsens Kirchen-Galerie*, 3. Fortsetzung, Lieferung 79–80, Dresden 1837, pp. 324–326; Měrcin Bałcar, „Katolski Posoľ”, 14 (1876), pp. 85–88, 93–96, 101–104; Jurij Delan, *Měrcin Bałcar*,

Baçon, i.e. Stork) near Budziszyn (Bautzen) on 8th November 1712⁶, hence he signed his name as *Lusata Ciconiensis* (from the Latin *ciconia*-stork) or sometimes *Storchensis* (from the German word for stork – der Storch). He came from a family of cotters. He was first educated at the Latin school in Cheb (Eger), where he stayed from 1724 to 1728, and then at the Jesuit seminary in Chomutov (Komotau) from 1728 to 1729. It is also known that he studied in Olomouc. Around the mid 1730s he was ordained a priest. He served first as vicar in Lubań (Lauban), then in Jawornik (Jauernick bei Görlitz). On 16th March 1749 he became parish priest in Krzewina an office he held for 36 years, until his death. He died in Krzewina on 5th March 1785 at the age of 74. There he was buried next to the church of St. John the Baptist, where he ministered. His tombstone has survived to this day, but in a condition that leaves much to be desired.

Apart from the above-mentioned manuscript *Diarium*, Martin Baltzer also wrote down other versions of diaries. These were the diaries for the years 1749–1785 in three volumes *in quarto* format, the diary for 1757 *in octavo* format, and the *Book of Matters Worthy of Commemoration (Liber memorabilium) in quarto*, covering the years 1749–1785⁷. Traces of them have disappeared.

The *Diarium*, on the other hand, is kept today among the manuscripts of the Oberlausitzische Bibliothek der Wissenschaften (Upper Sorbian Scientific Library) in Görlitz under the shelf number L XI 460. It was donated to this Library in 2003 by Hanna Barbara Majewska, a mathematics teacher from Zgorzelec, who purchased it on the Polish antiquarian market⁸. The manuscript was written on paper in 32.5 x 21 cm format. It consists of 286 pages, paginated from 1 to 644 (with errors, e.g. a skip in numbering from p. 293 to 394, without loss of text). Its binding is cardboard, partly covered with leather. The manuscript requires conservation due to damage to the binding and the text block. Due to ink pitting some pages are difficult to read or even unreadable in places.

„Časopis Maćicy Serbskjeje”, 81 (1928), pp. 9–21; Rudolf Kilank, *Balcar, Měrcin*, [in:] *Nowy biografiski słownik k stawiznam a kulturje Serbow*, eds. Jan Šořta, Peter Kunze, Franc Šěn, Budyšin 1984, p. 36; *Měrcin Balcar*, [in:] *Wikipedija. Swobodna encyklopedija* (https://hsb.wikipedia.org/wiki/Měrcin_Balcar) (access: 20 XI 2018).

⁶ As Mrozowicz, *Non habui panem*, p. 171 – based on *Diarium*, pp. 540 and 313, in the works cited above, there is the date 9 November 1711.

⁷ *Der Kirchort Grunau*, p. 325; Mrozowicz, *Non habui panem*, pp. 172–173.

⁸ On the history, appearance and content of the manuscript of L XI 460, see Mrozowicz, *Non habui panem*, pp. 169–171. For the purposes of this miscellaneum, I use the copy of the manuscript made available to me by Hanna Barbara Majewska.

The language of the notes in *Diarium* is mostly Latin, sometimes German appears as well⁹. The narrative of the diary is usually written in the first person singular, but if the persons participating in the events were mentioned, the author used the third person singular when writing about himself. There are also fragments written in impersonal form, most often when referring to events taking place far from Krzewina or when describing e.g. weather or economic phenomena. The diary entries were recorded by Martin Baltzer on an ongoing basis over a quarter of a century – from 7th May 1756 to 3rd September 1782, although there are longer intervals between them, sometimes even up to several months. Almost all entries are precisely dated, and some are also numbered.

Martin Baltzer considered the writing of the diary as his duty (*obsequium*) towards his successors at the Krzewina parish. Already in the first sentences, he declared that he undertook “the writing of this book for the benefit and advantage of the [future] parish priest of Krzewina, to whose convenience, kindness and happiness I dedicated my pen”¹⁰. He wrote that he counted on the favour of his “grateful and ungrateful descendants”, whom he wanted to inform about the achievements of their ancestors¹¹. He believed that “it will be best for the parish priest to leave to his successor many writings”¹². But he wrote not only about his own deeds¹³. He dedicated a great deal of attention to everyday life, focusing on Krzewina, a small village in Upper Lusatia, for whose inhabitants he not only celebrated the liturgy and looked after their church, but also experienced with them natural disasters, crop failures, famine, theft etc. He was interested in the situation in Upper Lusatia, especially the events in the life of the Church, at the Electoral Court in Dresden or in his home village of Storcha.

Martin Baltzer was a watchful, critical but also sensitive observer of his times, which were abundant in events of European and even world importance. These

⁹ As a side note, it should be noted that at the end of the volume of *Diarium* there are studies titled *Oeconomia Grunensis mixta...* of 1778 and *Notae speciales*, dedicated to the activities of the parish priest and the rules of order in force in the parish of Krzewina, as well as Latin proverbs, an alphabetical index and a list of funerals of local priests.

¹⁰ *Diarium*, p. 1: „vado librum hunc, forte ut nomen & omen contineat in usum ac utilitatem Parochi Venerabilis Domini Grunensis, cujus commoditati, inclinationi ac felicitati calamum meum impendo“.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 72: „Volui tamen notare, ut sciat posteritas, quid fecerimus antecessores“.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 509: „Optimum est, si Parochus multa scripta post se relinquat successori suo“.

¹³ On the subject matter of M. Baltzer’s diary entries see Mrozowicz, *Non habui panem*, pp. 173–177.

events included, above all, the Seven Year' War, to which the parish priest of Krzewina dedicated almost 200 pages of his diary. He described them from the perspective of Krzewina, which, as a small village, could not have been an important point on the political map of the time, but important events taking place in its vicinity made it an excellent observation point. Referring to his own observations, to information provided to him by direct witnesses of the events, postal messengers, and above all by wandering peasants, as well as to rumours circulating, and much less frequently citing some documents, he presented the incidents accurately, although often not without emotional involvement (as will be discussed later).

With noticeable anxiety, he depicted the tension preceding the outbreak of hostilities and the increasing cost of living. Seeing the preparations for war – the gathering of Maria Theresa's Austrian army on the border with Moravia and Frederick II's Prussian army across Silesia – he still did not give up hope for peace. He repeated then, and later, after Vergil, "Nulla salus bello, pacem deposcimus omnes" ("No hope from war: for peace we sue")¹⁴. At the end of August 1756, with an inevitable conflict looming, the Austrian and Prussian armies were almost facing each other in tension. Martin Baltzer, although he observed their movements from a Krzewina perspective, was able to see them against a much broader, European background. He was, for example, aware of the changes in the balance of power and alliances in Europe at the time, which he characterised as follows: "in July, the French took the island of Minorca from the English by force of arms. That year France and Austria entered into an alliance (incredible), while before they were constantly at war against each other. This alliance arose from the fact that the Prussian and the Englishman (in contravention of Austrian interests) had agreed that the Englishman would give the Prussian possession of Silesia, occupied under the law of war, together with Kłodzko"¹⁵. In

¹⁴ *Diarium*, p. 6, see also pp. 14, 98, 187; Vergil, *Aeneis* XI, 362. English transl.: Vergil, *Aeneid*, transl. John Conington, London 1866, s. 381. Probably by coincidence, Arnold Teicher, librarian of the monastery in Lubiąż, wrote an identical opinion about the situation in Silesia in 1741, at the time of the First Silesian War, see *Kleinere Beiträge zur Geschichte Schlesiens im 18ten Jahrhundert*. Arnold Teicher's, *Bibliothekars und Archivars des Klosters Leubus, Nachrichten über dieses Kloster*, [in:] *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 5, ed. Gustav Adolf Stenzel, Breslau 1851, p. 581.

¹⁵ *Diarium*, p. 7: „Galli Anglis Insulam Minorcam armata manu abriperunt in mense Julio. Gallia et Austria hoc anno foedus (inauditum) inierunt, ubi antea continuo contra se proelia gesserunt. Hoc foedus inde factum est, quoniam Borussus cum Anglo (laesa per hoc Austria) foedus iniiit, ita ut Anglus asseruit Borusso possessionem Silesiae, jure bellii occupatae una cum Glacio”. On the Anglo-Prussian so-called Westminster Convention of 16th January 1756 and the European shift in the balance of power see, for example, Stanisław Salmonowicz, *Prusy. Dzieje państwa i społeczeństwa*, Poznań 1987, pp. 244–245; Füßel, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg*, pp. 27–28.

contrast, the author could not understand why, at the end of August 1756, Frederick II decided to launch an attack on Saxony, which was not at all prepared for war¹⁶. He marvelled at the role that this land had to play in the war: “Who would have thought that Saxony would become a theatre of warfare”¹⁷. Another proof of the diarist’s good awareness of the changes in the international situation is his knowledge of Russia’s turnabout, which after the death of Tsar Elisabeth (d. 1762) was withdrawn of the anti-Prussian coalition by the new Tsar Peter III (here called Holstein, d. 1762) – a fact maintained by Tsarina Catherine II, despite a temporary renewal of the old alliances. Martin Baltzer was pained by this because it weakened the Austrian party. When he wrote about it in September 1762, he could not yet have known that it would make a major contribution to Frederick II’s victory in the Seven Years’ War¹⁸.

To return to Saxony – as a consequence of its seizure by Prussia, the occupation of Lusatia also began. Martin Baltzer devoted much attention to it. He described above all the plight of the terrified inhabitants, unable to cultivate their land because their draught animals had been requisitioned, suffering as a result of the contributions and taxes imposed and of the looting¹⁹. This was compounded by natural disasters, such as a hailstorm in September 1756, which destroyed the crops, and a plague of mice which struck at the same time²⁰. He was pained by the enormous destruction caused mainly by the Prussians, such as in and around Dresden, where: “The Prussians burned to the ground and most pitifully the beautiful suburb of Dresden [...]. O, Dresden! Where is your glory? Already the misery of poverty has gripped the whole of Saxony. The filth of calamities spills over and torments all the Saxons. The Prussian Volcano swallowed up many districts in Saxony, as well as in Lusatia”²¹. The descriptions became more and more dramatic as the subsequent years of war

¹⁶ *Diarium*, p. 8: „Nemo satis capere potest, qua ratione Borussi fecerint irruptionem in Saxoniam, a bellicositate longe alienam”.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 10: „Wer hätes gedacht, daß das *theatrum belli* in Sachsen seyn sollte?”.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 177. It should be added, however, that Martin Baltzer “announced” prematurely Catherine II “as dead” by making Ivan VI (d. 1764) her successor, who, however, did never ascend the Tsar’s throne, see Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, Mark D. Steinberg, *A history of Russia*, New York 2018, pp. 213, 226; Ludwik Bazyłow, *Historia Rosji*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1983, pp. 335–336.

¹⁹ *Diarium, passim*. For descriptions of the problems of everyday life during the Seven Years’ War, see e.g. Füssel, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg*, pp. 27–28.

²⁰ *Diarium*, p. 12.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 89: „Borussi pulcherrimum suburbium Dresdense combusserunt totaliter & lamentabilissime [...]. O, Dresda! Ubi decor tuus? [...] Jam luctus paupertatis totam Saxoniam occupat. Calamitatum squallor diffusus torquet Saxones universos. Multos pagos in Saxoniam, uti & in Lusatia Vulcanus Borussicus consumpsit”.

passed. In the autumn of 1762, he wrote about the situation in his village: "We sit in fear, in the shadow of death, hoping for peace, but it does not come. Oh, what misery and lamentation among the people!" And further on, "Horses, carriages, servants, bread, wheat, hay, oats, potatoes, salt, meat, sheep and cattle so useful to the people are robbed"²².

In his accounts of the Seven Years' War, Martin Baltzer focused on events taking place in Lusatia and the eastern part of Saxony, which he called his neighbouring world (*orbis vicinus*)²³. He was well acquainted with the situation in the Krzewina area, also in the Lusatian towns – from Lubań, through Żytawa (Zittau), Ostrowiec (Ostritz), Zgorzelec, to Budziszyn and Dresden. In fact, it was these regions that he devoted most attention to, for example, depicting the artillery bombardment of Zittau on 23rd July 1757 by the Austrians, which led to a fire and enormous destruction of the town²⁴. It reverberated throughout Europe at the time, especially as there was no military justification for such actions²⁵. Martin Baltzer, however, regarded them as the effect of "unusually great blindness and hardness of the inhabitants of Zittau"²⁶. He also described the marches of troops, their types (infantry, cavalry), origin and numbers. He repeatedly describes the actions of Croats (*Croati, Panduri, Banduri*) and Polish uhlans (*ulani*) operating on the Austrian side. There is not much information on weaponry, and when there is, it is limited to general terms such as *sclopetum* (rifle), *tormentum* (cannon; possibly *tormentum parvum, magnum* – small, large cannon). As far as military engineering is concerned, the mentioned pontoon bridges (*pontes navales*) across the Elbe and the Lusatian Neisse or the digging of entrenchments (*fossa*) are noteworthy.

Among the interesting facts observed by Martin Baltzer, elements of war propaganda are also deserving of attention. As mentioned, he often referred to hearsay information that was difficult or impossible to verify. In the tense anticipation of the confrontation at the beginning of September 1756, he wrote of their multitude: "The mixed rumours from the various accounts somehow agitated everyone's heads, as numerous fabrications, fictions, opinions, arguments, lies and

²² *Ibidem*, pp. 179, 180: „Sedemus in timore, ex umbra mortis sperantes pacem et non obtinentes. O, quanta miseria et eulatio inter plebem!"; „En! quanta hic miseria! Equi, currus, famuli, panis, siligo, foenum, avena, cyclamina, sal, carnes, oves et boves hominibus uti & pecuniae abripiuntur, ut incolae nihil inveniant in manibus suis”.

²³ *Ibidem*, pp. 44, 46.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 44–45.

²⁵ See e.g. FüsseI, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg*, pp. 38–39, 89.

²⁶ *Diarium*, pp. 44–45.

jokes were all rolled into one pot”²⁷. The situation was different on 9th September 1756, when a messenger came to Krzewina and brought news spread around Lubań about the arrival of Polish uhlans. Martin Baltzer had no problems with assessing it as fictitious²⁸, but he expressed hope that the uhlans should really come. It probably seemed all the more likely to him, since at that time the Elector of Saxony, Frederick August II, was also King of Poland as August III. Half a year later he no longer had such illusions and criticised the Polish king for choosing neutrality towards military action²⁹. However, he did not mention the later accession of August III to the anti-Prussian coalition.

To the extent that he was able to, Martin Baltzer observed and reported on the situation in neighbouring Silesia, which had been occupied by Prussia. This proximity meant that warfare in both regions was often linked. Aware of this, Martin Baltzer described Prussian troops passing through Krzewina, for example on 18th August 1757, when “the Prussians started to move very quickly through Ostritz and Krzewina, and were accompanied by numerous shots from Austrian muskets. They were undoubtedly heading for Silesia [...]. In Krzewina they trampled all the fields with horses”³⁰. He was pleased with the Austrian advances in Silesia, where “the Austrians increased their possessions quite considerably, although they did not yet chase away the Prussian, they tormented their with numerous and severe blows”³¹. He followed the situation of Świdnica (Schweidnitz), which was besieged and then captured by the Austrians in October 1757. And when the Prussians recaptured it in April of the following year, he worried that “the Austrians have no further foothold in Silesia” and that the Prussians had the whole of Silesia in their hands³². He described preparations for another siege of Świdnica in the summer of 1760, which the Austrians did not seize until 1st October 1761. Rejoicing at this success, Martin Baltzer called the commanding general Gideon

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 10: „fama mixta multitudinibus relationum omnia omnium capita quodammodo turbavit, quia multae falsitates, fictiones, opinioniones, argutiones, mendacia et joci in unum amulum conflabantur”. On war rumours see also p. 31.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 10: „nuntius fiete nuntians Polonos venisse”.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 13, 19, 31. See also Jacek Staszewski, *August III Sas*, Wrocław 1989, pp. 249–251.

³⁰ *Diarium*, p. 52: „inceperunt Borussi per Ostricum et per Grunam citissimo passu migrare, quos Austriaci multa sclopetorum explosione comitati fuerunt. Migratio haec ad Silesiam indubie tendit [...]. Hic Grunae per omnes agros equitarunt”; see also e.g. p. 83.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 60: „In Silesia Austriaci venerunt ad fortunae augmentum satis magnum, licet Borussum nondum expulerint, tamen multis vel magnis sauciationibus affligerunt”.

³² *Ibidem*, pp. 60, 69: „Jam ergo nullam amplius stationem Austriaci habent in Silesia”, also p. 72.

Ernst von Laudon (d. 1790) *the new Gideon*, in reference to the biblical figure of the vanquisher of Midianites and Amalekites³³. And when a year later, on 9th October 1762, the Prussians besieged and recaptured Świdnica, he posed the question: “Why didn’t the Imperial soldiers come to rescue the Świdnica commandant named Wasko?”, to which he replied with the excuse: “The imperial soldiers were five miles away from Świdnica and could not counteract the Prussians besieging him, nor come to the relief of the besieged city”³⁴. It is not clear why Martin Baltzer omitted the Austrian defeats in the most important battles of the Seven Years’ War in Silesia, such as at Lutynia (Leuthen) on 5th December 1757, Państwów (Pantzen) on 15th August 1760, or Burkatów (Burkersdorf) on 21st July 1762.³⁵

In any case, there is no doubt about his emotional commitment – as a Catholic, Martin Baltzer was firmly on the Austrian side. He marvelled, for example, at the Austrian soldiers, whose camp he personally visited on 8th August 1757, and – as he writes – found it most beautifully ordered according to the divisions, and “the soldiers of each are well organised and in well attitude, supplied and ready to fight”³⁶. He was greatly impressed by the sounds that rang out from the camps of all the Austrian forces (*totus Mars Austriacus*) that arrived in the Krzewina area in August 1758: “When they were playing a call at ten o’clock in the evening, drums and pipes were thundering simultaneously from all sides, so that one’s throat was squeezed with delight”³⁷. He rejoiced over Austrian victories, such as the one at Hochkirch on 14th October 1758, a village 30 km from Krzewina, where the sounds of a seven-hour battle could be heard. Martin Baltzer considered this victory an excellent gift for Maria Theresia on the occasion of the feast of her patron saint Therese³⁸. He constantly referred to Maria Theresa as Empress and wrote about her with noticeable respect. On the occasion of that battle of Hochkirch, he praised the imperial commander Leopold von Daun (d. 1766): “Long live the lucky

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 136; cf. *Book of Judges* 7–9.

³⁴ *Diarium*, p. 186: „Hic quaeritur: Cur Caesarei non venerint in subsidium commendatori Swidnicensi Wasko nominato? Responsum: Quinque milliaribus aberant Swidnicio Caesarei, nec poterant [obicere] obsistentibus Borussis, obsessae civitati ferre auxilium”.

³⁵ See e.g. Tomasz Karpiński, *Bitwa pod Burkatowem i Lutomią (21 VII 1762 r.)*, [in:] *Wojna siedmioletnia w Sudetach i nowożytnie fortyfikacje górskie*, eds. Tomasz Przerwa, Grzegorz Podruczny, Wrocław 2013 (Twierdza Srebrnogórska, 4), pp. 22–37.

³⁶ *Diarium*, p. 51: „perustravi omnia et integra castra Caesarena. Inveni illa pulcherrimis ordinibus distincta. [...] Sunt milites omnis ordinis bene dispositi ac animati, apti & parati ad proelium”.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 51: „Cum sonaret horam decimam vespertinam, sonuerunt simul omni ex parte tympana & fistulae, ita ut prae admiratione os faucibus haerescit”.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 84.

General Daun!”, even calling him an “immortal victor”³⁹. He did not spare any praise for the already mentioned conqueror of Świdnica, Commander-in-Chief of the Austrian army, General von Laudon, in the context of the great victory over the Prussians at Kamienna Góra (Landeshut) on 23rd June 1760⁴⁰. On the other hand, Martin Baltzer criticised the Prussians for the destruction they inflicted, took satisfaction in their defeats and desertions⁴¹, treated them as enemies (*hostes Borussiae*)⁴², called their occupation a yoke (*jugum*)⁴³ or likened them to the Hydra against which Hercules fought⁴⁴.

The parish priest of Krzewina was vitally interested in the fate experienced by Catholics during the Seven Years’ War. He expressed this for example in 1759: “It is noteworthy and regrettable that when the [Prussian] army wintered in Silesia, it turned its arms against the Catholic parish priests. Even until today, when I am writing this, namely until 16th February, 60 churches have been taken away from Catholics in unfortunate Silesia, while parish priests do not receive even a penny from Lutherans as church taxes”⁴⁵. He regarded the policy of the Prussian King, who in 1761 forbade Silesians to enter monasteries, and ordered that deceased parish priests be replaced by administrators, as “an insidious way of eradicating all monasteries from the whole Silesia”⁴⁶. He also believed that it was high time to come with help to the oppressed Church in Silesia, before the Catholics were gradually eliminated from Silesia with this *viper-like way (serpentino modulo)*⁴⁷.

Martin Baltzer’s diary remains an unknown historical source for the history of Upper Lusatia, especially the part of Upper Lusatia situated on the Lusatian Neisse, in the second half of the 18th century. Among other things, it contains outstanding information on the operations of the Seven Years’ War, of which

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 84: „Vivat Daun Generalis felicissimus [...] Victor immortalis“.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 113: „retulit strenuissimus Generalis Laudan [!] in Silesia ad viciniam Landshut de Borussiae memorabilem victoriam“.

⁴¹ See e.g. *ibidem*, p. 43, where there are reports of defeats in Bohemia in June 1757.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 197.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 103.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 114.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 91: „Notabile est ac lamentabile, quod dum arma sunt in hybernis in Silesia, ibi arma acuuntur contra Catholicos Dominos Parochos. Jam usque hodiernam diem, qua haec scribo, nempe die 16 Februarii, Catholicis sexaginta Ecclesiae in infelici Silesia abruptae sunt & Parochi a Lutheranis nec obulum stolae taxae accipiunt“.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 137: „Ecce subdolum modum exstirpandi omnes religiosos ordines per totam Silesiam“.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 137.

Martin Baltzer became a watchful and sensitive commentator. This is evidenced by the accounts presented in this contribution of selected aspects of the operations of this war, which, although seen from a local perspective, make numerous references to events in other countries, above all in Silesia and Saxony, neighbouring Upper Lusatia. The memoirs of Krzewina's parish priest reveal a wide range of problems related to the war, mainly the everyday life of the inhabitants of the affected lands, but also about the participating armies and war techniques. The publication of the diary, or at least of the fragment referring to the Seven Years' War, which I postulate, will significantly enrich our sources for its history.

STRESZCZENIE

Przedmiotem niniejszego miscellaneum są opisy działań wojny siedmioletniej autorstwa Martina Baltzera, katolickiego proboszcza z Krzewiny nad Nysą Łużycką (zm. 1785). Mieszczą się one w spisany przez niego diariuszu, znanym tylko z autografu przechowywanego w Bibliotece Oberlausitzische Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften w Görlitz. W pierwszej części pracy została przedstawiona biografia Martina Baltzera oraz jego dzieło, w którym opisał dzieje lat 1756–1782. W centrum jego opisów pozostaje Krzewina i jej najbliższe okolice. Z tej perspektywy przedstawiał też koleje wojny siedmioletniej, której poświęcił około 200 stron dziennika. Szczegółowo ukazywał konsekwencje wojny dla mieszkańców Krzewiny i Górnych Łużyc. Działania wojenne w tym rejonie przedstawiał na tle wydarzeń w krajach sąsiednich, zwłaszcza na Śląsku i w Saksonii.

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ARTYKUŁY RECENZyjNE I RECENZJE REVIEWS

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Volker Arnke, „Vom Frieden” im Dreissigjährigen Krieg. Nicolaus Schaffshausens „De pace” und der positive Frieden in der Politiktheorie, Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018 (Bibliothek Altes Reich, 25), 294 pp.

The 400th anniversary of the outbreak and 370th anniversary of the end of the Thirty Years' War have inspired many historians to undertake research on a wide range of issues related to the longest-lasting and most serious conflict in Europe in the modern era. Both came in 2018. The result has been a number of publications published in many countries, highlighting various aspects of the war, its course in Europe¹ and in specific regions², analyzing the more important battles³, as well as the social consequences of the conflict⁴. Among them were missing new monographic studies of the Thirty Years' War prepared by Polish historians.

¹ Cf. e.g.: Johannes Burkhardt, *Der Krieg der Kriege. Eine neue Geschichte des Dreissigjährigen Krieges*, Stuttgart 2018; *Dynamik durch Gewalt? Der Dreißigjährige Krieg (1618–1648) als Faktor der Wandlungsprozesse des 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Rohrschneider, Anuschka Tischer, Münster 2018; Radek Fukala, *Tricetiletá válka 1618–1648*, České Budějovice 2018; John Matusiak, *Europe in flames. The crisis of the Thirty Years War*, Stroud 2018; Georg Schmidt, *Die Reiter der Apokalypse. Geschichte des Dreissigjährigen Krieges*, München 2018.

² *Der Dreißigjährige Krieg in Schwaben und seinen historischen Nachbarregionen: 1618 – 1648 – 2018. Ergebnisse einer interdisziplinären Tagung in Augsburg vom 1. bis 3. März 2018*, ed. Wolfgang Wüst, Augsburg 2018; *Krieg – Pest – Schwedennot. Der Dreißigjährige Krieg in Regensburg. Begleitband einer Ausstellungsreihe zur Geschichte des Dreißigjährigen Krieges in Regensburg*, ed. Bernhard Lübbers, Regensburg 2018; Patrick Milton, Michael Axworthy, Brendan Simms, *Towards a Westphalia for the Middle East*, London 2018; Alexander Zirr, *Die Schweden in Leipzig. Die Besetzung der Stadt im Dreißigjährigen Krieg (1642–1650)*, Leipzig 2017.

³ Dušan Uhlíř, *Bitva na Bílé hoře 8.11.1620*, České Budějovice 2018.

⁴ See e.g.: Mary Elizabeth Ailes, *Courage and grief. Women and Sweden's Thirty Years' War*, Lincoln 2018.

A publication that is part of this trend, but at the same time different in that it focuses on legal contributions to the discussion of the nature of peace during the Thirty Years' War, is the work of Volker Arnke. It was published by the De Gruyter publishing house. The subject of the analysis was Nicolaus Schaffshausen (1599–1657), who was associated with Wittenberg and Hamburg. His pen yielded treatises on the theory of peace in relation to the Holy Roman Empire. Arnke's monograph is a revised version of his dissertation, written under the supervision of Professor Siegrid Westphal and defended in the winter 2016/2017 semester at the University of Osnabrück. The author of the publication under review was also involved in research on the issue of the Westphalian Peace as a co-investigator of the project "Frieden als Kommunikationsprozess. Die Dritte Partei des Westfälischen Friedenskongresses", carried out at the Institute for Cultural History of the Modern Period (Institut für Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit).

Arnke's initial thesis is that during the Thirty Years' War, political theory was dominated by a negative understanding of peace. The preference for the law of war over the law of peace was influenced by the publication in 1625 of Hugo Grotius' outstanding, highly regarded and best-known work *De iure belli ac pacis* (pp. 2–3). However, during the final phase of the Thirty Years' War, which brought an exceptionally heavy toll of death and destruction on the territories of the states that made up the Holy Roman Empire, more and more treaties on peace began to be written. A treatise known under the abbreviated title *De pace*, which came from the pen of Nicolaus Schaffshausen, a little-known jurist and chancellor at the Saxon court, has so far remained outside the broader stream of research interest. Arnke, subjecting Schaffshausen's oeuvre to analysis, raised questions about how the positive conception of peace contained in his treatises stood against the background of the theory of ideas and the theory of law in the first half of the 17th century.

In an extensive first introductory chapter, Arnke presented the state of research and the source base, discussed the comparative method he used, aiming to analyze historical peace in combination with semantic approaches, and discussed the research questions posed in later sections of the monograph.

The second chapter reveals the context of the creation of Schaffshausen's eponymous treatise on peace in two aspects. First, Arnke discussed the historical formation of the idea of "ius publicum Imperii" (public law of the empire) in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, including the understanding of the concept of "German freedom" ("Deutsche Freiheit") and peace (pp. 53–57). The author then

recalled that in addition to Schaffshausen, the idea of the law of peace was also taken up during the Thirty Years' War by Christoph Besold in a treatise published in 1624 (pp. 57–60)⁵ and Franz David Bonbora in a work published at the end of the Thirty Years' War comparing the art of waging war with the effort to establish peace (pp. 60–63)⁶. After this outline of the prevailing understanding of the concept of the law of peace in the 1720s, Arnke moved on to the biographical context. The task was all the more important because the figure of Schaffshausen had, until then, remained little known. He did not even live to see a biography in the monumental and comprehensive *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, nor in its later continuation in the form of the *Neue Deutsche Biographie*. Arnke managed to establish that Nicolaus Schaffshausen was born on 29th May 1599, as the son of the mayor of the town of Kuressaare (German: Arensburg) on the Estonian island of Sarema formerly known as Osilia (Ösel). However, nothing is known about his childhood. Information about him appears only from the time he came to study in Wittenberg in 1619. Already the following year, at the side of professor of rhetoric Johannes Avenarius, he took up the issue of the destruction of war and possible remedies in a political context (pp. 81–82)⁷. In the following years, his interest focused on the political view of the public law of the Empire and the making of peace as the best of solutions according to the maxim of “pax optima rerum” (p. 83). Later in the text, Arnke analyzed the circumstances of Schaffshausen's subsequent works. Particularly much space was taken up by a discussion of the motivation for continuing to address issues related to the “ius publicum Imperii” (pp. 89–97). According to Arnke, the key to the formation of legal-political concepts related to the law of peace became Schaffshausen's flight to Hamburg, which, while maintaining neutrality during the Thirty Years' War, became a diplomatic center, and at the same time a key center of political thought and literary life conducive to the drive to end the war and conclude a peace (pp. 99–104). Schaffshausen's move to this Hanseatic city was due to several factors. Hamburg's city councilor and city clerk was his uncle, Hans Schaffshausen. Nicolaus himself found a place of refuge here from 1638 after the Swedish army

⁵ Christoph Besold, *Spicilegia Politico-Iuridica, De Legatis, (2) De Sessionis praecedentia, ac item (3) De Pacis Iure: (4) deque Arcanis Rerumpublicarum*, Straßburg 1624. In the context of considering the law of peace in this work, the third dissertation is most important (*Diss. III. De Pace Pacisque Iure: [De Pace]*, s. 169–207).

⁶ Franz David Bonbora, *Ars belli et pacis sive de bello feliciter gerendo et pace firmiter stabilienda libri duo*, Straubing 1643.

⁷ Johannes Avenarius, Nicolaus Schaffshausen, *Dissertatio politica de causis conversionum et eversionum rerumpublicarum*, Wittenberg 1620.

occupied Wittenberg (pp. 96 and 105). Nicolaus Schaffshausen not only married in Hamburg a second time and took up clerical service, but published the treatise *De pace* here again in 1640, in a revised version, entering the circle of the intellectual elite advocating a rapid end to the Thirty Years' War (p. 112).

The main part of the monograph is a chapter devoted to a multifaceted analysis of Nicolaus Schaffshausen's main work quoted under the common title *De pace* (pp. 115–239). It was published three times, in revised versions, at an eleven-year interval. The first two editions were published in Wittenberg. In 1629, Nicolaus Schaffshausen published *Dissertatio iuridico-politica, de pace in tenere*, and three years later, in 1632, the *Discursus academicus de pace constituenda, firmanda & conservanda* was published. Published in 1640 in Hamburg, the text functions as *Tractatus de pace*. Subsequent editions differed not only in content, but also in the scope and nature of the text itself. Arnke's detailed analysis and comparison of the two Wittenberg editions with the treatise published in Hamburg in terms of form and content (pp. 117–146) clearly shows the path and evolution in the formation of Schaffshausen's political thought. The original scientific and legal treatise published in Wittenberg transformed into a contribution to political theory in the 1640 edition. Arnke analyzed in turn Schaffshausen's understanding of the concept of peace (pp. 146–177), the cause of peace (pp. 177–220) and the possibility of maintaining peace (pp. 221–249). He also explained Schaffshausen's understanding of the concepts of “pax” and “pactum”, based on his knowledge of the works of earlier authors, ranging from the ancients, including the Roman jurist Ulpian, Titus Livius or Cicero, to his contemporaries. From Arnke's insightful analysis of *De pace*, a picture emerges of Schaffshausen's original pacifist political thought, at odds with the common discourse in the first half of the 17th century, which focused more on the law of war than on a theoretical account of the meaning of peace.

The publication under review has been prepared extremely carefully. The author's familiarity with the legal and philosophical sources on the theory of war and peace created in the late 16th and first half of the 17th centuries and the literature on the subject is commendable. Volker Arnke's special merit is the introduction of the previously practically unknown work of Nicolaus Schaffshausen into scholarly circulation. In turn, the publication of a monograph devoted to him by the De Gruyter publishing house coincided perfectly with the commemoration of the round anniversaries of the outbreak and end of the Thirty Years' War.

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Włodzimierz Borodziej, Maciej Górny, *Nasza wojna, [Our War] vol. 1: Imperia 1912–1916 [Empires 1912–1916]*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo wab, 2014, 479 pp.; vol. 2: *Narody 1917–1923 [Nations, 1917–1923]*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo wab, 2018, 622 pp.

World War I occupies an important place in Polish historiography, since as a result of which Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed, Russia plunged into revolutionary chaos, and Germany ceased to be an empire. Despite many decades of the Partition era, only thanks to these events was it possible to rebuild the Polish state. However, for many years they were not reflected in the synthesis, because only Janusz Pajewski described the history of the whole conflict four decades ago¹, and also he separately presented the issue of reconstruction of the Polish state². Earlier, in the 1960s, a book by Jerzy Holzer and Jan Molenda on Poland during the war years was published³. To these can be added multi-volume publications on Polish or world history, but without a separate monograph on World War I. The authors of *Our War* – Włodzimierz Borodziej, an expert on Polish-German relations and Grzegorz Górny, a specialist in social history and history of historiography in the 20th century – in their “Commentary to the References” (vol. 1, pp. 425–436) even stated that the Polish literature on the subject causes disappointment. All the more so as one cannot complain about the multitude of different kinds of memoir sources. Poles, who gained frontal experience in the Russian, German and Austro-Hungarian armies and survived the years 1914–1918 under German occupation in the Kingdom

¹ Janusz Pajewski, *Pierwsza wojna światowa 1914–1918*, Warszawa 1991.

² *Idem*, *Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1914–1918*, Warszawa 1980.

³ Jerzy Holzer, Jan Molenda, *Polska w latach pierwszej wojny światowej*, Warszawa 1967.

of Poland, willingly wrote diaries and memoirs. The reason for the lack of greater interest of historians in World War I (not only in Poland, but also in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe) the Authors connect with World War II – with all its consequences: the enormity of tragedy, political consequences and many years of influence of communist ideology on scientific research. Interestingly, the deficits in this respect continue and the participation of historians from this region in the European renaissance of research on the period 1914–1918 is not visible. Therefore, this evident gap should be filled by the monograph reviewed here.

Its title, the event caesuras of the study and the geographical scope of the authors' interest require comment. Let us start with the title. *Our War* suggests that earlier this conflict between the Powers was, from a Polish or, more broadly, Central European point of view, considered a “foreign” war, which did not affect the smaller nations in the region. Ultimately, these nations – from the Finns in the north to the Romanians and the Serbs in the south – benefited territorially from the war, or even entirely by gaining / regaining their sovereignty. Some have failed (Hungarians, Bulgarians). However, until November 1918 it was a conflict of Great Powers. Nevertheless, the Authors are in favour of recognizing this war as “ours”. What is the reason for this? Two convincing arguments have been brought up: the mass (forced) participation of individual nationalities in the armies of Central States and Russia and the fact that warfare was taking place precisely in this area, with all its consequences: “Contrary to legend”, we read, “the fighting on the Eastern front was at least as bloody as in the West. Most prisoners were taken and their mortality rate in the camps was the highest” and the civilians “were also dying, striking, getting ill and starving not for the national cause – as histographers after 1918 often explained their tragedy – but simply because they ran out of food, fuel, hygiene products and medicines” (pp. 9–10).

The year 1912 was chosen as the beginning of this world conflict, thus clearly emphasizing both the importance of the Balkan wars for later events in Europe and the need to include the events on the Balkan Peninsula in general in the picture of the situation in the entire Central and Eastern Europe after 1914. The search for links between the military activities in the Balkans and the Polish territories or in Russia raises questions. I would see the rationale for this rather in the little knowledge of the course of the war on the southern front and the possibility of comparing similar phenomena in different parts of the wider region. The end of the narrative is 1923, so again referring to events in the Balkans and Turkey (the Treaty of Lausanne ending the Greek-Turkish war).

Volume 1 was divided into three parts: *Fronts*, *Rears* and *Occupation*. Already the titles of the individual parts indicate that the narrative's focus is primarily on social issues. Military history and international relations are only a (not very extensive) background. The war breaks out as a result of decisions made by politicians, but "Feedback is being created: the masses are easily aroused, and politicians and journalists calling for a crackdown on the enemy treat the result of their efforts as further proof that they are acting in accordance with the interests and views of the people". (vol. 1, p. 41). The Authors are sure that if the politicians at the head of the Empires knew what would happen next, the war would never happen. They could have observed the atrocities of the Balkan Wars, but ignored them because – as Borodziej and Górny write – it was about the conflicts in the Balkans, treated as an area with a lower level of civilisation.

The authors used primarily the output of European historiography. The catalogue of references includes works in English, German, French, Russian, Polish and also Czech, Croatian, Ukrainian and Hungarian. The most recent literature dominates among the works, which testify to the value of the book. Right away, it should be pointed out that the Authors abundantly quote diaries and memoirs of the military, intellectuals, doctors and nurses, which makes the picture more colourful, gives it reality and is attractive to the reader. Pictures appear in moderation, rather as a supplement to the text (photographs from trenches, ruins of bombed cities, corpses, the sick and wounded in hospitals, prisoners in camps, civilians in towns and villages, caricatures from newspapers). They discussed a whole spectrum of issues related to everyday life during the war years. Among them were: the control of society and rationing of goods, the power of war and occupation gossip, propaganda, repressions and the life between loyalty and collaboration, as well as the growing role of self-governments trying to remedy the growing problems of victualling. The Authors follow the emotions of soldiers and civilians of that time – from enthusiasm, through anxiety, to fear and resignation.

Volume 2, like the previous one, was divided into three parts, this time with more mysterious titles: *Giants and Pygmies*, *Kaleidoscope* and *Mafias*. Part 1 develops the topic of ethnicisation of the Russian army, which in fact led to its disintegration. The Authors also drew attention to the growing aversion between soldiers of the Allied armies. In any case, it is shown here the process of transition from the War of Empires (Giants) to the War of Nations (Pygmies), when the region of Central and Eastern Europe turns "into a field of chaotic battles of everyone with everyone"

(vol. 2, p. 80). The wars for independence and borders were also reviewed according to the key of the emerging countries: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, a transforming Hungary, a resurgent Poland. The Authors penetrated the everyday life of new armies (which were the emanation of new statehoods) exposing fatal supplies and “widespread exhaustion” (vol. 2, p. 155). The contrast between the peaceful coexistence of soldiers and civilians captured in the photographs and the much more gloomy reality in which “the difference between requisitioning and robbery became fluid” was emphasized. (vol. 2, p. 158). At the same time, the Authors showed that the conflicts after 1917 were about attracting and not terrorizing the civilian population. It was different for the Jewish population, because the violence against Jews in Central and Eastern Europe remained a constant, obstinately recurring ritual that spread over more and more areas (vol. 2, p. 209). They also challenged the myth of the general mobilization of Polish society during the war with the Bolsheviks. The analysis of sources shows that the news about the announced conscription to the army “almost always” induced young men to migrate (vol. 2, p. 169). They took into account the importance of railways in conducting military campaigns and spreading the activities of local warlords (*watażkas*). Part 2 refers to social conflicts, the source of which should be seen in malnutrition or even starvation: “Common misery – the Authors state (vol. 2, p. 263) – did not consolidate the societies of the fighting countries. On the contrary, it has exacerbated already deteriorating relations between particular groups”. Strikes, demonstrations, riots have become a common phenomenon. A problem has become a mass of refugees, treated as a threat to the local population. The Authors stress that the level of lawlessness has increased during this time, they write about the “gigantic wave of crime” and the “serious wave of robbery” (vol. 2, p. 329). New countries tried to control the situation through monetary and agricultural reforms. Part 3 focuses on the problem of delimiting borders, and then the supporters of the principle of self-determination of nations found out that it “creates new conflicts without closing the old ones” (vol. 2, p. 500).

All in all, *Our War* is an interesting, innovative study that brings back the memory of World War I from the perspective of Central and Eastern Europe. It presents its image in an individualised way, using many personal sources and thus capturing the human dimension of the dramatic events of the time. It confronts the experiences of individual nations of the Central European region, pointing out, nevertheless, more similarities than differences.

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Janusz Faryś, Grzegorz Kucharczyk, Elżbieta Skorupska-Raczyńska, Przemysław Słowiński, *Cud niepodległości. Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1918–1919* [*The miracle of independence. The rebuilding of the Polish state 1918–1919*], Gorzów Wielkopolski: Wydawnictwo Akademii im. Jakuba z Paradyża, 2018, 202 pp.

The year 2018, for obvious reasons, abounded in a set of undertakings, diverse in form and content, accompanying the celebrations of the centenary of Poland's regaining independence. The issue of restoration of sovereignty was attempted to be looked at from various angles and perspectives, using, among others, film, several kinds of exhibitions, concerts and conferences. An important place in the process of commemoration was also played by book publications, usually the result of scholarly reflection of historians. A number of propositions referring in their content to the theme of independence appeared on the publishing market.

The book under review is one of those. Four Authors, representing the Jakub of Paradyż Academy in Gorzów Wielkopolski, presented texts, the result of their own research, which are linked by the topic of independent Poland. However, the Authors clearly “trimmed” the subject, both in terms of time and problems. The first was clearly indicated in the subtitle of the work (The rebuilding of the Polish state 1918–1919), while the second was signalled in the introduction: “The authors focused on issues of domestic politics and diplomacy, showing the essence of the process of building the foundations of the country's statehood” (p. 8). The area of research thus outlined was supposed to limit the scope of consideration, which, however, did not turn out to be entirely possible (although it did eliminate the

analysis of, among other things, the important and interesting issues of the struggle for national borders; nevertheless, echoes of these events are present in the narrative).

The book has a problem-based structure, clearly divided into five chapters, for which the respective authors were (autonomously) responsible. It has been prepared on a solid factual basis, although it should be noted that the Authors did not reach directly to the archives or the press. However, they have made extensive use of the available literature on the subject (both books and articles)¹, which they supported with references to normative acts, as well as Internet resources.

The first chapter of the book can be regarded as unusual or, one might say, “unobvious”. In a work, which seems to be uniformly historical, we first encounter reflections on language. The situation becomes a little clearer when we take a look at the profile of the Author. This is because Elżbieta Skorupska-Raczyńska, who heads the Jakub z Paradyża Academy, is a professor of humanities and linguistics. The Author has made the expressions, notions and paraphrases present in the Polish language and connected with the problem of independence the leit-motif of her chapter. Her analysis is based on a very wide chronological range – from the Renaissance (although in places her references go as far back as the Bible) to the 20th century. The text is richly woven with references to specific writers and their output. Thanks to this chapter, Readers can learn the etymology and meaning of particular terms, as well as see how they were used by certain artists. One could say that the linguist’s statement confirms the historian’s opinion that “the image of independence [...] is characterized by struggle and suffering” (p. 28). The Author aptly referred to the historical context, but she did not avoid a mistake, because when describing the realities of the 19th century she referred to the attitude of a Pole – a Catholic – a patriot, which “was reflected in the unambiguously interpreted and perceived motto ‘God – Honour – Homeland’ displayed on military banners, and being a kind of life motto of a soldier, an officer, a Pole, a responsible and noble man” (p. 18). Yet the motto adopted by the Polish army in 1919 was “Honor and Homeland”, “God” was added for a short time in 1943², while the inscription “God – Honor – Homeland” was introduced on the banners of the armed forces in the reality of the Third Republic and only in 1993.

¹ Although it may seem surprising that G. Kucharczyk did not make us of Michał Śliwa’s work (*Polska myśl polityczna w I połowie XX wieku*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1993), or that P. Słowiński did not refer to Karol Sanojca’s (*Relacje polsko-ukraińskie w szkolnictwie państwowym południowo-wschodnich województw Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Kraków 2013).

² In the maxim “To the Fatherland everything but the love of God Supreme and Honor”.

The Chapter Two, written by Janusz Faryś, introduces the Readers to the essential, because strictly historical part of the work. It presents a historical sketch of building the Polish state in the years 1918–1919. It is difficult to find mistakes or point out errors to the Author, who is a student of Janusz Pajewski, one of the best known and respected researchers of the interwar period of the older generation³. Rather, it is worth examining the structure of the chapter. Let us therefore briefly note the main threads: a description of the circumstances of the formation of the organs of state power and the competition for power between various political forces (culminating in the formation and launching of Ignacy Jan Paderewski's government); a presentation of the first social reforms; an overview of the beginnings of democracy (elections and the earliest period of the activity of the Constituent Assembly); a picture of the emergence of two different visions of the reborn Poland (Piłsudski's federation-based vision and R. Dmowski's incorporation-based one) as well as a reminder of the work on the structure of the political system and the development of the economic life of the state. Although in the introduction to the book the Authors declared that they would not discuss the military aspects of shaping the country's borders, the text does contain some references to these issues. Faryś describes, among other things, the formation of the Polish army, tracing the Polish-Ukrainian conflict and the dispute over Vilnius, sketching a picture of "Poland as the largest state in Europe" ("because it had no borders, wars were fought on all of them", p. 46). Particularly interesting are those passages in which the Author referred to lesser known aspects (e.g. noting as a 'paradox of the times of the breakthrough' the establishment of Jędrzej Moraczewski's government by J. Piłsudski, and the issuing by that government of a decree appointing J. Piłsudski as Interim Chief of State, as well as reminding of edifying examples of rising above particular political interests by J. Piłsudski and Roman Dmowski, pp. 34, 37). J. Faryś summed up his presentation of these issues by stating that "[t]he period under review was a period of great successes in almost every field" (p. 66).

The next two chapters were written by Grzegorz Kucharczyk, Professor of the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, a scholar of Germany and the history of political thought in the 19th and 20th

³ See: Janusz Faryś, *Koncepcje polskiej polityki zagranicznej: 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1982; *idem*, *Piłsudski i Piłsudczycy. Z dziejów koncepcji polityczno-ustrojowej (1918–1939)*, Szczecin 1991.

centuries⁴. In his discussion, he analysed Polish political thought (in Chapter Three) and the foreign policy of the Second Republic (in Chapter Four) in the first two years of the reborn Independent Poland. Chapter Three presents an orderly and synthetic picture of the political thought of Polish socialists, national democrats, representatives of the most important groupings of the people's movement, conservatives, Christian democrats and communists. In the Chapter Four the Author presented a picture of the relations between J. Piłsudski and R. Dmowski, shaped at the beginning of the Polish statehood, and then presented a vision of Polish foreign policy in the first two years of the Second Republic. As a good researcher of Polish-German relations G. Kucharczyk dedicated special attention to these relations, characterizing, among other things, the conditions accompanying the Wielkopolska Uprising and the Paris Conference. In the second part of the chapter, G. Kucharczyk outlined the attitudes of other countries to the Polish questions: Soviet Russia, Great Britain, and the United States, and concluded by returning to the manner in which Polish eastern policy had been shaped. In this case as well, the Author's evaluation of the Polish achievements is unequivocally positive – the whole of Polish foreign policy of that period was assessed by him as “the success of the reborn Polish state” (p. 119).

The final chapter, concerning social policy of the Polish state, was prepared by Przemysław Słowiński, a historian currently serving as Vice-Chancellor of the Academy. Although the Author is mainly known for his publications relating to the period after World War II⁵, the chapter is nevertheless a thorough study of the policies of those in power in the context described above. The Author began his considerations by presenting the models of social policy of the partitioning states, after which he described the social activities carried out by the first governments of the Second Republic. He presented and described in detail the main problems of the emerging Poland: housing and supply limitations, the process of counteracting unemployment, solutions in the area of insurance and health care, the regulation of salaries and pensions, and other employee rights, as well as ways of counteracting activities “with the characteristics of usury and speculation”. He also paid considerable attention to the reconstruction of the foundations of education, taking into account the difficulties of both general and university education, but also the training in teachers' colleges.

⁴ See e.g.: *Polska myśl polityczna po roku 1939*, Dębogóra 2009, and *Polska myśl polityczna do roku 1939*, Dębogóra 2011.

⁵ See e.g. Przemysław Słowiński, *Administracja terytorialna województwa szczecińskiego w latach 1945–1950*, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2008.

As a reviewer writing for “Silesian Historical Quarterly *Sobótka*”, I feel obliged to examine what the Authors of the book wrote about the “Silesian question”, and it is sad to note that the Upper Silesian theme appeared very rarely in this publication. The figure of Wojciech Korfanty was mentioned only in the context of his membership in the Commissariat of the Supreme People’s Council in Poznań and the leadership of the Popular National Union in the Parliament. The first Silesian Uprising was only mentioned in one perfunctory passage (“[...] the division of Upper Silesia had not been resolved, the Silesians were waiting for a plebiscite. The relatively short-term First Silesian Uprising showed that, irrespective of the Versailles decisions, another armed conflict might be still threatening”, p. 56). The Upper Silesian issues also appeared in the above mentioned quotation by Gustav Stresemann, which was an echo of the debate in the Reichstag on October 25 (p. 100), during which W. Korfanty demanded “Polish districts of Upper Silesia, Middle Silesia”⁶ and during the presentation of the territorial postulates of the Polish delegation in Versailles and the Allies’ decision on the plebiscite settlement (pp. 106–107). It has to be said that the subject matter concerning the region (although formally its part became part of the reborn Poland only in 1922) is far too absent, even when the narrative allows this theme to be easily woven into the considerations.

The shortcomings of the book are: “overlapping” of some elements (e.g. elements of description of political thought of the main forces of the Second Republic by both J. Faryś and G. Kucharczyk); minor editorial errors (e.g. the figure mentioned on p. 188 was Stanisław Janicki, not Stanisław Jancki) or the lack of indication of the sources of some data (as on p. 170, when P. Słowiński provides the number of students in different cities of Poland). Strong aspects of the book – the ability to build a narrative that can attract and hold the reader’s attention, and – perhaps paradoxically – the small volume of the work (200 pages), “digestible” for a modern recipient. And certainly the editorial quality of the book. The carefulness of the edition is noticeable in almost all aspects. It is visible already at the stage of the front cover. The hard-cover shows on the front a photograph from the collection of the National Digital Archive [NAC] depicting Józef Piłsudski against a background of marching armed formations and red and white contours of the borders of the Second Republic of Poland. The back cover contains photocopies of the first pages of “*Goniec Krakowski*” of 12th November 1918, and “*Monitor Polski*” of the same date. Attention to the non-narrative elements

⁶ See Grzegorz Bębnik, Sławomir Rosenbaum, Mirosław Węcki, *Wojciech Korfanty 1873–1939*, Warszawa–Katowice 2018, p. 30.

of the book can also be seen in its interior. The publisher and the Authors have made sure that the effects of the scholars' work included in the book are complemented by an imaginative layer. The appendix contains not only photocopies of the press titles visible on the cover, but also texts of the most important documents and speeches which had an impact on the formation of the Second Republic (J. Piłsudski's telegram of 16th November 1918 notifying the creation of the Polish state, the Chief of State's decree of 22nd November 'on the supreme representative power of the Polish Republic', and J. Piłsudski's speech at the inaugural session of the Legislative Sejm of 10th February 1919). The appendix is supplemented by photographs of the most important Polish politicians of the period, provided by NAC: of J. Piłsudski, I. Paderewski, R. Dmowski, J. Moraczewski, Wincenty Witos and Ignacy Daszyński, as well as "background" figures (e.g. Generals Józef Dowbor-Muśnicki, Józef Leśniewski and Kazimierz Sosnkowski), which help the reader in better understanding the content and show visually the more important heroes of those events. Although it needs to be emphasized that photographs of not all the "Fathers of Independence" were included, again referring to the regional perspective, let us note that it is particularly regrettable that the image of W. Korfanty is missing. Another deficiency is the incomplete identification system (there is an index of surnames but no index of geographical names), which somewhat hinders a more analytical reading of the book (e.g. through the prism of specific places). Whereas an advantage (especially in the context of promoting Polish history outside its borders) is the inclusion of a summary of the work in as many as four languages (English, French, German and Russian).

To sum up: the book *Cud Niepodległości. Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1918–1919* is not an innovative study. It does not present the events of a hundred years ago as Jochen Böhrer did in his *Civil War*⁷, published in the same year. However, as one should assume, its Authors did not aspire to present a work which would "overturn" the existing order resulting from the findings of historiography. Rather, they intended to prepare a skilfully written review of the process of shaping the reborn Polish state in the first years of the Second Polish Republic – as they said themselves, to give "expression to the memory of events fundamental for posterity". And they succeeded in achieving this goal. At a time of heightened interest in historical themes, the book therefore provides material through which the reader can expand their knowledge and find inspiration and hints for further research.

⁷ See Jochen Böhrer, *Wojna domowa. Nowe spojrzenie na odrodzenie Polski*, Kraków 2018.

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Dariusz Jeziorny, *Londyn wobec ochrony mniejszości żydowskich w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej (1918–1919)*[*London and the Protection of Jewish Minorities in Central and Eastern Europe (1918–1919)*], Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016, 192 pp.

The centenary of the end of the First World War is an opportunity to reflect on the events that accompanied the formation of a new political order in Central and Eastern Europe. At the Paris Peace Conference, the Great Powers determined the shape of the new state borders in this part of the continent and also imposed obligations for the protection of minority rights in separate treaties. The initiators of such a solution were influential Jewish organizations, which feared for the situation of the people of the Mosaic faith in countries emerging on the ruins of the Habsburg monarchy and on the western peripheries of Russia, still plunged into revolution and civil war. The Polish delegation was the first to be forced to sign such a treaty, which took place in Versailles on 28th June 1919. The origins of these events and Poland's position on the issue of protection of minorities in the interwar period have already been widely studied. Historiography, however, lacked a monograph treating the role played by the United Kingdom in developing the principles of the Versailles system of protection of national minorities. This issue was taken up by Dariusz Jeziorny, a professor at the Institute of History of the University of Łódź, who specializes in research on British foreign policy towards Central and Eastern Europe in the interwar period. In his extensive scientific output, two

monographs published so far are particularly noteworthy¹. The protection of ethnic minorities is not a *novum* in the research conducted by the Author of the reviewed monograph, and an announcement of its releasing and its main theses is a separate article published at the same².

The work under review consists of an introduction, five chapters written in chronological order, a conclusion, a list of references, a dictionary of people in the book and a list of abbreviations. The objective of the work, according to the Author's words (pp. 12–13) is to analyse the position of the British government towards the Jewish population living in Central and Eastern Europe between 1918 and 1919, i.e. in the period of shaping a new peace order after the end of the war, with particular emphasis on the activities and decisions of the Paris Peace Conference and the role of British diplomacy in establishing international guarantees of minority rights in Central and Eastern European countries. The maturity of the concept of the subject matter of the book under review is evidenced by the extensive catalogue of detailed research questions presented in the introduction.

The monograph is characterized by a solid source base, the result of an in-depth query, which yielded detailed information on the factors influencing the shaping of British policy on the issue under consideration and allowed for a precise reconstruction of the decision-making process of British diplomats and politicians. Using this collected information, the Author presented convincing and exhaustive answers to the research questions posed in the introduction. It should be emphasized that he reached not only the official records of the British Department of Foreign Affairs deposited at The National Archives in London, but also the private collections and papers of English politicians and diplomats held at The British Library in London and at the Churchill Archives in Cambridge. He also used, obviously, Polish archival materials from the Archive of Modern Records in Warsaw. Among the documents published, the British, American, French and Polish publications

¹ Dariusz Jeziorny, *Londyn a spuścizna po monarchii Habsburgów. Sprawa Austrii w koncepcjach i praktyce dyplomatycznej Wielkiej Brytanii (1918–1919)*, Toruń 2002. The monograph was nominated for the Waław Felczak and Henryk Wereszycki Awards in 2002. *Idem*, *Dyplomacja brytyjska wobec koncepcji paktu wschodniego (1933–1935). Analizy, projekty, działania*, Łódź 2011. The English version of this monograph was published as part of a grant within the frames of the National Humanities Development Programme: *idem*, *British Diplomacy and the Concept of the Eastern Pact (1933–1935). Analyses, Projects, Activities*, Stuttgart 2017.

² *Idem*, *Dyplomacja brytyjska a kwestia ochrony praw mniejszości żydowskich po I wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Dyplomacja europejska wobec wyzwań XX i XXI wieku*, ed. Elżbieta Alabrudzińska, Toruń 2016, pp. 9–46.

on the Paris Peace Conference were the most important for the Author. In this category of sources, it is noteworthy the inclusion of the edition of *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*, little known in Poland and not yet widely used by Polish historians, containing the so-called Confidential Prints. From the point of view of the subject undertaken, D. Jeziorny also collected the most important diaries, memoirs and texts by politicians. However, the published diary of the legal advisor to the US delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, David Hunter Miller, is missing in this category of sources³.

The current accessibility of English press titles in digital form provides a possibility for historians to undertake in-depth comparative research, both into British public opinion and the role of the press in shaping it. Jeziorny made the most of these opportunity. For, in a situation where the United Kingdom did not yet have its diplomatic representations in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe at the turn of 1918 and 1919, the British press was the main, often the only, although not always reliable, source of information on the treatment of the Jewish population and anti-Semitic incidents in the countries of this region. Therefore, the Author conducted a detailed and systematic search in a number of titles of the British local press, giving priority to the London “The Times”, the liberal “Manchester Guardian” and the labourist “Herald” with the new name “Daily Herald” (since 1st April 1919).

The complexity and multidimensionality of the subject matter required the Author to use extensive literature related to the history of the Paris Peace Conference and the origins of the system of international guarantees of minority rights in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the location of the Jewish population in the countries of the region. It also includes analyses of the political agendas of individual Jewish organizations, an assessment of British diplomacy’s preparations for the Peace Conference and the decision-making process in British foreign policy. Literature on each of these issues includes dozens of books and hundreds of scientific articles. In this situation, the Author had to make a difficult selection. I consider his selection to be essentially accurate. Only the omission of Carole Fink’s monograph⁴ is surprising.

³ David Hunter Miller, *My Diary at the Conference of Paris with Documents*, vol. I–XXI, New York 1924.

⁴ Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others. The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938*, Cambridge 2004.

As already mentioned, the book under review consists of five chapters, which show in detail the evolution of the British position on the problem in question. In Chapter I the Author presents the complex reasons for the intensification of anti-Jewish resentment in Central and Eastern Europe during and after the end of World War I, which in turn led to the occurrence of anti-Jewish incidents in Galicia, the lands of the former Polish Kingdom, Wielkopolska, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Ukraine, as well as in Germany and the Austrian capital. He also pointed out that the information published on this matter in the British press (and not only) between October 1918 and July 1919 was dominated by reports of anti-Semitic incidents by the Polish population, hindering the activities of the authorities and diplomacy of the recovering Poland on the international forum and in Paris. It was then that some American and British politicians came to believe that the “Jewish problem” – understood as guaranteeing the rights of the Jewish population in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe – should be regulated by means of an international agreement. He dedicated Chapter II to the position that British diplomacy was taking on this issue on the eve of the Paris Peace Conference. It also contains a detailed overview of the divergent demands made by the most important Jewish organizations: i.e. the World Zionist Organization, the Joint Foreign Committee in the United Kingdom, the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in France and the American Jewish Committee in the USA. It is extremely important because their representatives at the Paris Peace Conference tried to influence the policies of the Great Powers behind the scenes. Jeziorny proves that before January 1919, when the session began, in London there was no clear position on the rights of the Jewish population, let alone instructions for the delegation going to Paris. For among the officials of the Political Intelligence Department in the Foreign Office there were different views on this subject. The fundamental dispute was whether to support only and guarantee equal rights for Jews in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, or to additionally consider them as a separate nation? For this reason the tactics of the British delegation on this issue, in the first phase of the Paris Conference, were based on the maxim “wait and see”.

In Chapter III, the Author confronted extremely anti-Polish information published in the British press about the ill-treatment of Jews and pogroms of their population with the content of reports of British members of successive missions that were sent to Poland in early 1919. Jeziorny also stresses that in their reports they did not confirm the exceptionally anti-Semitic attitude of Poles. In February

1919, almost the majority of British diplomats were already inclined to the idea of resolving the Jewish question by guaranteeing Jews only equal treatment among other citizens in the various Central and Eastern European countries. An exception in the Foreign Office was the leading expert on Polish affairs, Lewis Namier (actually Ludwik Niemirowski), who continued to support the concept of treating them as separate nation and demanded that they be granted cultural and national autonomy. The further evolution of the British stance towards the Jewish problem in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was presented in Chapter IV, where the Author wrote that in March and April 1919, at the Peace Conference, the efforts to protect Jewish rights were intensified. Jewish organizations active in Paris sought to internationalize the issue, and reports from Poland of new anti-Jewish incidents and pogroms of the Jewish population, regardless of how they were presented and interpreted, led the Great Powers to finally decide on 1st May 1919 to establish a special commission to develop clauses to protect the rights of national minorities in Central and Eastern Europe. Thus, the idea, originally pushed by the President of the United States, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, that the clauses would be included in the League of Nations Pact was abandoned. The Japanese postulate to include a clause on racial equality in the Pact, i.e. to prohibit the deprivation of equal rights of people on the basis of their race and nationality, contributed to this. This proposal was unacceptable to the Americans because it would have prevented Washington from applying a restrictive immigration policy.

In the last Chapter V, Jeziorny presented the participation and role of British diplomats and politicians in the Committee on New States, preparing the final version of the clauses of the Declaration guaranteeing minority rights in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The final shape was given to them during the discussion in the Council of Four with the participation of the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Jeziorny points out that the work of the Committee on New States was dominated by British James Headlam-Morley and American David Hunter Miller. They argued for different ideas on how to address the protection of minorities in terms of both content and form. Headlam-Morley was in favour of less radical solutions, and in many cases he consulted Lucien Wolf, representative of the Joint Foreign Committee, who represented the “moderate” wing of the British Jewish movement, while Miller was the “tube” of the American Jewish Congress and supported its far-reaching proposals. As a result, the

relationship between Headlam-Morley and Miller was tense, as they wrote in their diaries, using harsh epithets.

The British delegates seek solutions to stabilise the situation in Central and Eastern Europe. For this reason, Headlam-Morley and Lloyd George effectively opposed giving the Jewish people national and cultural autonomy and recognising them as a separate nation. At their request, it was also established that the right of appeal for failure to respect minority rights was only available to member states of the Council of the League of Nations. In conclusion, the Author emphasized the paradox that the British delegates who came to the Peace Conference in Paris without a specific position on this issue ultimately became the main architects of the Versailles minority protection system.

The book under review is essentially a study of the history of diplomacy, with dozens of diplomats, politicians and military men, etc. appearing on its pages. This orientation is facilitated by the dictionary of people at the end of the book, which does not limit itself, as is usually the case, to the names and surnames, but contains a short biographical note at each of them. At this point I would like to point out a small mistake: Arthur James Balfour, who appeared on the pages of the book many times, only obtained the title of Count in 1922. Before that he functioned in a public space as “Mr Balfour” and calling him “Lord Balfour” is not appropriate. I have no great complaints about the correction of the text of the work, although General Adrian Carton de Wiart has been written down as de Wiatr, but this is the only serious of the few misprints and typos noticed by me. In this case, it was probably caused by a Polish text editor.

To sum up, we have received a very well-written book, which treats an important and at the same time sensitive issue in a competent and very balanced way. It would be good to have this book translated into English in order to introduce the latest findings of Dariusz Jeziorny into international scientific circulation. Undoubtedly, this book deserves it. It would then be worth supplementing it with an annex containing the text of the Minority Treaty signed between the Allied and Associated Powers and Poland on 28th June 1919 in Versailles.

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***100x100. Nasze stulecie [Our century]*, ed. Joanna Lusek, Bytom: Muzeum Górnośląskie w Bytomiu, 2018, 437 pp.**

Celebrated in 2018, the centenary of Polish independence, became an impulse to organised many different forms of its commemoration. Increased interest in the past began already in 2014, when the World commemorated the outbreak of the Great War. However, for Poles who have been fighting in the armies of the occupying countries, i.e. Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia¹, only their defeat in 1918 opened the possibility of creating their own state and establishing its borders. In the centenary celebrations, the question of how to remind the general public of those incidents a hundred years ago so that they fully reach the contemporary Pole came to the fore. The authors of last year's exhibitions and various activities commemorating the centenary of Poland's independence attempted to answer these and a number of other questions related to the problems of contemporary museology and our historiography². The form of exhibition venues and projects was extremely diverse, but it seems that the initiative of the Upper Silesian Museum (MG) in Bytom deserves special attention. The museum documented and recorded its centenary exhibition of 1918 in an extensive publication titled *100x100. Our Century*, edited by Joanna Lusek. The exhibition was devoted to Bytom,

¹ However, there is interest in these issues and it is even growing. An example is the work: Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Polacy w armii kajzera. Na frontach I wojny światowej*, Kraków 2014.

² The Polish state runs a separate programme for the years 2017–2020 to support commemoration activities entitled “The Independent. Polish Centenary of Independence”. On the programme website there is an extensive list of various centenary projects (<https://niepodlegla.gov.pl>, access: 10 XII 2018).

a medium-sized Upper Silesian town with a rich and complicated past of its inhabitants engaged in Polish patriotic activities, whether cultural, insurgent or plebiscite, in the years 1918–1921. Yet, the town did not become part of the reborn Poland, remaining until 1945 on the western side of the Polish-German border drawn in 1922. Its line was set in Geneva, under the auspices of the League of Nations, despite the armed effort of the participants in the three Silesian uprisings and the declaration of Polish national-political identification in a plebiscite held in Upper Silesia in 1921. Bytom became a town situated almost on the border itself and in the centre of the Polish-German dispute about the nationality and the line of the border.

However, when presenting the phenomenon of Bytom at that time, the creators of the Bytom exhibition did not follow the easiest and most obvious course, i.e., they decided not to prepare an exhibition that would show, in conventional terms, a local chapter in the great international and national history. Known and seen many times when rich (and expensive) multimedia equipment is brought in alongside valuable exhibits. The Upper Silesian Museum has shown that nothing can replace a specific artefact in the exhibition, even if it seems to be “ordinary”, even common. It is the object, or rather a hundred of objects from the “Century of Independence”, condensed in the title as *100 x 100*, that became the main structure of the Bytomian exhibition³. They create this exposition in the material dimension, but their strength lies not so much in the physical form as in the emotional dimension associated with them. This is their ability to “tell” stories and speak to the viewer, and to point out the symbolic connections they contain within themselves. All of these elements inscribe the object in a network of diverse, intertwined cultural contexts. They place what is individual in what is collective and common.

The very idea to construct an exhibition in such a way is not entirely original. There are many examples of the use of “a hundred” in exhibitions and publications⁴. But the subject of this review is not the exhibition itself, but a 500-page catalogue that accompanies it. This canniest published volume, as is usually the case with

³ For more see: http://muzeum.bytom.pl/?exhibition=100-x-100-nasze-stulecie-2&exhibition_date=2018-05-17 (access: 10 XII 2018).

⁴ In relation to the history of the 20th century, among others: Roger Moorhouse, *The Third Reich in 100 Objects. A Material History of Nazi Germany*, London 2017; Herman Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte in 100 Objekten*, München 2015. This key was used in the latest exhibition organized on the centenary of the famous trend of modern design in the interwar period, i.e. Bauhaus: <https://stilwerk.com/de/events/das-bauhaus-in-100-objekten-bndnwk-2019> (access: 10 XII 2018).

this type of publications, not only complements the exposition, but also extends its impact beyond the specified presentation period. It becomes an extremely important 101st object, which can be treated – after dismantling the exhibition – as a kind of time capsule protecting a certain proposal of presenting, understanding and taming “The Age of Extremes” (E. Hobsbawm). The reading of this publication is also very necessary both to fully understand the construction of the exhibition (seemingly very simple) and to notice various connections of Silesians and Poles with individual, local, regional and, finally, national history, which the exhibition wanted to draw attention to.

The book, which was prepared under the supervision of Joanna Lusek, curator of the Upper Silesian Museum, consists of two parts. The first one contains three introductory texts. They are important for understanding the main idea of the exhibition as well as for recognizing its meanings, especially in relation to the issues of collective memory and memory policies. Leszek Jedliński, the Director of MG, devoted a part of his discussions to the significance of the year 1918 and the historical period it began. Reflecting on how to see this moment, he points to three aspects: the end of the bloody war, whose memory in Upper Silesia is still alive and connected with the memory of families (which is a certain regional specificity compared to the rest of Poland), then the victory of the idea of national self-determination (“the Autumn of New States”) and the beginning of “a new opening of civilization and the birth of ideologies that will plague the already post-modern world until the end of the past century” (p. 3). These long-lasting effects of the events of 1918 were the basis for the idea of creating an exhibition commemorating not only this limited, fleeting moment on the chronological axis, but rather the entire century it started. Here, in line with popular for a long time trends in museology (as well as historiography), there appears a tendency to show the century and its several historical eras “through the prism of fate of ordinary people” (p. 4). Thus, in this approach, great history becomes a kind of a small history (micro-history), located within the fences of our homes, but not at all isolated from what is sometimes called the mainstream of events. So the exhibition, and the catalogue itself, took on the form of a “unique biographical story about ourselves” (p. 4). The objects presented at the exhibition, and coming exclusively from the MG’s collection, were chosen because of their “value, symbolism and emotions”, which made a private object a “collective memory” of a national, ethnic or religious community. As Jedliński points out, the selected objects carried the “seeds of a story”. By revealing their story, they tell about

significant events, wider processes, showing their significance in “our Silesian community”. Moreover, the departure from presenting centred on the whole nation, focused directly around such symbolic places as Warsaw, or such figures as Józef Piłsudski or other “Fathers of Independence”, made it possible to create a narrative that has its own character, is attractive and open to various directions of interpretation (and even to reflect on why these and not other objects were chosen...). Emotions and inspirations triggered by the exhibition should encourage visitors to “sail” towards their own “memory archipelagos”. It may begin with a visit to a forgotten drawer...

The next article, by Robert Traba, a well-known researcher of historical memory and Polish-German relations, places the exhibition in this very space of reflection. The author reminds that the black and white picture of events is dominant, in which national borders are of fundamental importance. However, for such regions as Silesia, whose history is neither nationally nor religiously unequivocal, and creating visions like this is false. Traba refers to the concept of history of mutual interactions, which poses questions about exclusivity of historical subjects and exclusivity in “reaching historical truths in the perspective of experiences and sentiments of other social and religious groups, or individual feelings of witnesses of events” (pp. 6–7). Its application in research and educational practice leads to make the vision of the past more nuanced and to break simple divisions. It makes us realize how strongly we depend on external influences, how much they shape us. Another theoretical assumption mentioned by Traba is the “memory of things” which allows us to go beyond formal criteria of evaluating their meaning. It makes the reader aware, following Krzysztof Pomian, among others, that things are “carriers and catalysts of memory” as well as symbolic meanings. Recalling borrowed memory, they play a huge role in the intergenerational transmission of memory, in the formation of collective memory. Traba reminds us that things are not only traces or remnants, but thanks to them the past, which we are not able to see, becomes in a sense “contemporary and tangible”. This fragment of the reflections acquaints the reader with the main views of the classic authors of this current of reflection on the past: Maurice Halbwachs and Pierre Nora, as well as an important part of contemporary historiography, which is connected with “deconstruction of national perceptions of the past” and learning about “collective mechanisms of remembering” (pp. 9–10). He also embeds his reflections in the literary trends associated with such artists, explorers of human memory as Marcel Proust and the

contemporary Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, for whom selected everyday objects were an instrument for reviving memories, resurrecting the past. Referring directly to the contents of the exhibition (and the catalogue), he notes that although attempts were made to introduce internal divisions, many objects break them, as they pass from one period to another in their functions and meaning. He appeals to us – with a view to understanding our present, but also to giving meaning to the future – to ask our own objects, which are sometimes part of the family heritage, about their own stories and try to inscribe them in our knowledge. The result, however, is not to be a “new interpretation of history”, but to allow those things to add unknown threads “in the background of the great narratives” (p. 15). Traba thus, in a way, warns the reader that the book will not give them an overview of a wonderful and clearly defined vision of the past, but rather a polyphony of stories and expressions.

The analysis of the image(s) of the past century offered by the discussed book (or rather exhibition) has been provided in the following text by Ewa Chojecka, an art historian, the great expert in the history of Silesian architecture. In her opinion, a colourful, ambiguous image of the “difficult time” has been created, open to interpretation and presented “from the inside”. She draws attention to the multiplicity of forms of selected objects, to the inclusion of damaged and injured objects among them, which made the viewer sensitive to the historical dramas of the last century. She has stressed that the exhibition shows inconsistencies, cracks that were not attempted to be hidden. In her opinion, the stories told by 100 objects are free of “hatred, depreciation of the Stranger”, but stimulate reflection on “awareness of one’s own history”, the influence of material heritage on the formation of our identity (p. 23). “This is not an illustration of the past century, but rather a picture of the condition of our injured memory”, she sums up, referring to the chapters of 20th century history that were the most destructive and devastating for the continuity, order and morality (p. 25).

After reading the above introductory texts that give more knowledge and awareness of the debates in contemporary humanities, the reader can set out on the intricate paths of hundreds of individual, unique stories, for which the starting point is a specific object. As Joanna Lusek, the curator of the exhibition, announces in the prologue to this part of the book, “following in the footsteps of things” arranged in chronological and narrative order, she discovers the past time, and more importantly she has the opportunity to “add a further sequence of everyday and unusual stories from the point of view of the present, ordinary people, ORDINARY

US [so in the text – MR]” (p. 28). Thus, it highlights the unnoticed, disregarded extraordinary nature of seemingly ordinary equipment, material crumbs of bygone everyday life. We could make an appeal here: let’s respect these little things, let’s respect the stories connected with them, because not much more will be left after us for our successors to read from them... A selected hundred photographs of the artefacts of the last century and related articles have been grouped – according to the exhibition scenario – into seven modules: The End and the Beginning, At the Threshold of Freedom, The Crazy Twenties, The Independent and New – the Interwar Culture, The (Un)obvious Times – World War II and Its Consequences, Worlds of the People’s Republic of Poland, The Defiant 1980s, It Was Yesterday. However, the objects have not been mechanically separated into groups equal in number. Some periods are more saturated with historical “happening”, which also had a stronger impact on this ordinary/extraordinary everyday life. Small articles (1–2 print pages) tell the story of a given object itself, its owners or users and guide the reader through the connections, associations, relations linked to it. They show how small, sometimes banal objects are connected both with an individual story and the great one – the history of a region, nation or state. The articles have also been provided with bibliographic guidelines to further explore the subject signalled by a particular object.

So, what did the museologists – after a difficult selection – choose to present? We have here artefacts belonging to various spheres of human activity, strictly private, family, connected with functioning in the local community, with political activity, but also with religious or sporting life. There are here works of art by great artists as well as home-grown ones, representatives of the so-called Naïve Art. There are here things professionally designed, associated with the best design of the era, as well as home-made by a caring hand of a housewife. There are things, which could be said to be trivially useful at home, and objects that evoke respect and even fear. To discuss them all is virtually impossible, and probably unnecessary. Let us limit ourselves to a few examples illustrating the principle of the books’ structure. A walk following traces of the objects is opened by a small notebook in which someone wrote down in German with a pencil the information about the ceasefire under the date 11 November 1918. The last object is a painted dwarf from the early 1980s, reminding about the front of the fight against communism running on walls where brushes, stencils and paints were used. Between them we encounter, among others, an urn for voices from the times of the Upper Silesian plebiscite of

1921, an insurgent banner and a *pepesha* of a Red Army soldier from the Second World War. There is a brick with an inscription scratched out by a prisoner, tortured by the Nazis, and a *uhlan* sabre with an engraved inscription “Honor and Fatherland”. There is a wedding souvenir and a beautiful glass set for a dressing table of an elegant lady from the inter-war period. We have a stripped uniform of a concentration camp prisoner and a travel trunk of a family displaced from the Eastern Borderlands. There are food stamps and a cupboard from the PRL era. A porcelain service and a propaganda poster. The famous “Frania” washing machine, a gramophone, a pocket radio, a watch presented “for faithful service”. A glass bottle of Coca-Cola – a trace of longing for a consumer paradise, but also a “big little badge” of Solidarity. A yarmulke of a certain Jewish inhabitant of pre-war Bytom, as well as clips, which were collected by children participating in the Nazi collection of recyclable materials. Diplomas, which were awarded to insurgents and shock workers. A damaged marble bust of Pope Pius XI and an “eternally alive” plaster Lenin. Letters from the prisoner-of-war camp and the school notebook with wrong verses. There are various references to mining as the basis of the local economy and lifestyle. So we have before us a mosaic of everyday life consisting of hundreds of very different elements. We can watch its fragments in any order. We can jump over the parts of the book, delving into the reading when something intrigues us, catches our eye, triggers an association. The discussion about the appropriateness of choosing this or that object is actually missing the point. The subjectivity of both the selection and one’s reception of the exhibition has been repeatedly stressed. This was meant to be its strength. The authors of the exhibition and catalogue have tried to find in the MG collections objects that will lead a viewer to the most significant 20th century phenomena, including the tragic ones. However, a certain sense of shortage – perhaps based on the reviewer’s subjective perception of the history of this part of Silesia – was aroused by the small presence of the German Silesians. This has probably resulted from the basic assumption of the exhibition – the desire to show the “Polish” century. There was also a lack of an object related to the events of early 1945, called the Upper Silesian Tragedy (merely a mention about it in the article concerning the post-war national verification is not enough). In recent years a lot has been done to spread the knowledge about the repressions which then fell on the Silesians and the dramatic consequences of mass deportations

from the region deep into the USSR⁵. It seems that this theme of forced migration of the 1940s should be represented at the exhibition as a separate component of the collage of memory and meaning created through the objects.

Generally speaking, however, we are dealing with a narrative so multithreaded, even full of tropes, connections, as well as inspirations that it is difficult to indicate significant gaps or omissions. It is a work with which the receiver enters into an emotional relationship, which even invites them to add their own traces so that someone can follow them. In her introduction to the exhibition, Joanna Lusek stated: “We live following traces. Let’s try to see them” (p. 32).

⁵ This is the main interest area of the institution located not far from Bytom: Centrum Dokumentacji Deportacji Górnoślązaków do ZSRR w 1945 roku [The Centre of Documentation of Upper Silesians Deportation to the Soviet Union in 1945] in Radzionków. See: <https://deportacje45.pl/index/pl> (access: 20 XII 2018).

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INDEPENDENT POLAND 1918–2018. CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY OF THE REVIVAL OF THE POLISH STATE IN OPOLE SILESIA

In Opole Voivodeship, the celebration of the centenary of Poland's regaining independence in November 1918 started already in the autumn of 2017, when its authorities, in reference to the announced government programme "NIEPODLEGŁA" ("Independent"), scheduled for implementation in 2017–2021¹, organized an information-preparatory meeting. Representatives of voivodeship institutions of culture, education and science as well as historians active in associations popularizing widely understood historical subjects were invited to participate. During their second meeting, they discussed – in accordance with the postulate contained in the government programme – on "a dignified and, at the same time, creative celebration of the 100th anniversary of regaining independence" and on the selection of projects whose implementation could be supported by funds from the state budget². It should be noted that the "NIEPODLEGŁA" programme, postulating a "dignified and creative commemoration of the anniversary of regaining freedom", made it possible to take into account various social initiatives organized under the overriding motto "strengthening the sense of civic community". It was also accompanied by the goal of common celebration of values particularly important for Poles, i.e. state freedom, respect for human rights and national dignity and solidarity.

¹ See: <https://www.opole.uw.gov.pl/niepodlegla-czyli-czteroletni-program-na-rzecz-godnego-i-kreatywnego-upamietnienia-rocznicy-odzyskania-wolnosci> (access: 7 XII 2018).

² <https://www.opole.uw.gov.pl/drugie-spotkanie-w-sprawie-niepodleglej> (access: 7 XII 2018).

In the “NIEPODLEGŁA” programme, the centenary activities were outlined in three areas. In the first one, there were to be projects for which the state cultural institutions were responsible. In the second area, addressed to local government cultural institutions and non-governmental organizations, programs were planned to financially support the organization of the celebrations from the group of civic initiatives. The third area concerned the program for the celebrations outside Poland, for which the Adam Mickiewicz Institute was responsible³.

As a result of the organisational activities adopted by the voivodeship authorities, Opolszczyzna received funding in the amount of one hundred thousand zlotys for the implementation of its own three initiatives. The first of them was the unveiling of a patriotic mural on 10th November 2017, whose artistic creation and execution was carried out by employees of the Faculty of Art at the University of Opole. It is located in a representative place in the capital of the voivodeship and the region, i.e. in Opole, on the building of the Voivodeship Office in Piastowska Street⁴. The whole idea was created by the slogan “Polonia Restituta” 1918–2018 and the red logo of the “NIEPODLEGŁA” Programme, which was combined with a composition of images of distinguished Poles treated as “Fathers of Independence”: Wincenty Witos, Wojciech Korfanty, Józef Piłsudski, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Roman Dmowski and the heroes of the struggle for Opolszczyzna to belong to Poland – Alfons Zgrzebniok, Norbert Bończyk and Bronisław Koraszewski⁵.

The second initiative, submitted by the Opole Voivode, which also received support from the state central budget, was a series of six radio broadcasts from Radio Opole entitled: “As it was truly so”, which was carried out in the last two months of 2017. Through them, the audience got to know the history of the distinguished Opolanians, who fought for a free and independent Poland. The broadcasts were realised in schools all over the Opole Voivodship, because the active participation of school children was envisaged in the creation of an information layer about distinguished Poles⁶.

³ <https://niepodlegla.gov.pl/o-niepodleglej/> (access: 7 XII 2018).

⁴ On 11th November 2018, the Opole Voivode unveiled under the mural a plaque with the Decalogue of a Pole written by Zofia Kossak-Szczucka during World War II. For more information see: <https://nto.pl/dekalog-polaka-odsloniety-na-budynku-opolskiego-urzedu-wojewodzkiego/ar/13657104> (access: 7 XII 2018).

⁵ In the original version of the mural, Roman Dmowski was “lacking”, the image of which was added only on 3rd May 2018.

⁶ See: <http://radio.opole.pl/469,2,niepodlegla> (access: 7 XII 2018).

However, the exhibition entitled “Incredible Women of Opole Silesia” aroused the most vivid interest among the initiatives subsidized by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The opening of the exhibition took place on 28th November 2017 in the Voivodship Office in Opole, where the profiles of 32 women, selected in the course of wider discussions, were presented as significant and distinctive in the history of the Opole region. Among them were, i.a. the Piast princesses, an outstanding astronomer from Byczyna, blessed ones of the Catholic Church and well-deserved activists of the national movement, who in the nineteenth and twentieth century were involved in the struggle for Opolszczyzna to belong to Poland. Violetta Porowska, the Opole Vice Voivode, was the originator of this project and the preparation of the exhibition was carried out by the Foundation for the Polish Heritage of Silesia.

Also the local government of the Opole Voivodeship, with the Marshal’s Office at the head, organizing on 23th–24th November 2017, together with the University of Opole, a nationwide scientific conference entitled: “Visions of Polish Independence in the 20th Century. History. Memory. Education”⁷, joined the commemoration of the centenary of regaining independence.

In addition, in November 2017, the Opole Regional Assembly passed a resolution to announce the year 2018 in the Opole Voivodeship – the Year of the Centenary of Independence⁸. The resolution stated that the celebrations will be held under the mobilising motto “Poland – Self-Government – Community”, and the appointed Honorary and Organisational Committee of the celebrations was to propose in each of the Opole powiats the most important tasks to be performed. It focused on supporting the historical education of the youth, organizing cultural events and inspiring local civic initiatives. Referring to the latter initiatives commemorating the centenary of Poland’s regaining of independence, it should be noted that in powiat (county) towns and rural-urban gminas (communes) of Opolszczyzna, concerts of popular music and musical-literary performances with commemorative programmes were organized, as well as many art contests and parades, marches in Polish historical and regional Silesian costumes were prepared.

⁷ <https://www.opolskie.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Informacja-nt.-organizacji-jubileuszu.pdf>; <http://radio.opole.pl/18,14069,na-dzien-dobry> (access: 7 XII 2018). See *Wizje niepodległości Polski w XX wieku. Historia – Pamięć – Edukacja*, ed. Marek Białokur, Adriana Dawid and Anna Gołębiowska, Opole 2018, pp. 263 ff.

⁸ The resolution also referred to the simultaneous celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Self-Government of the Voivodeship and Powiats. See: <https://www.opolskie.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Informacja-nt.-organizacji-jubileuszu.pdf> (access: 7 XII 2018).

An interesting project was presented by Byczyna, an urban-rural gmina in the Powiat of Kluczbork known in history due to the victorious battle of the army of King Sigismund III Vasa, commanded by the Grand Hetman of the Crown Jan Zamoyski, who defeated the army of Maximilian III Habsburg, Archduke of Austria, on 24th January 1588. On the centenary of regaining Polish independence, it was decided to refer to this event and with the joint financial effort of the inhabitants a hand woven huge tapestry was purchased, being a replica of the painting “Jan Zamoyski at Byczyna” by Jan Matejko (lost during World War II), which was hung in the local historic church of St. Nicholas during a solemn parish ceremony⁹. In Brzeg, in turn, as part of the centenary celebrations, its authorities invited residents to the street program “NIEPODLEGŁA Through the Light”. From 9th to 11th November 2018, at 5 p.m. – 21.00 p.m. multimedia light spectacles were presented to them, which – as it was written – “took the audience 100 years back and told them the history of Poland”¹⁰. Whereas the inhabitants of Kędzierzyn-Koźle, the second largest city in Opolszczyzna after Opole, on 11th November, on the centenary of regaining independence, celebrated the unveiling of a monument to Marshal Józef Piłsudski¹¹. On the same day, in neighbouring Krapkowice, the culmination of the town’s celebrations – on the local Independence Square – was the joint lighting of “one hundred symbolic votive candles” by the inhabitants at 6 p.m.¹²

Museums were particularly involved in the centenary celebrations of regaining independence in Opole Silesia. The list of exhibitions, vernissages, and lectures organised in them is impressive. Employees of the Institute of History of the University of Opole, invited to the Museum in Praszka, conducted a series of lectures on the events of 1918.¹³ At that time, the Museum held two thematic occasional exhibitions: “Towards NIEPODLEGŁA. On the 100th Anniversary of Poland’s Independence” and “Numismatics of NIEPODLEGŁA”, during which each visitor to the exhibition was able to make by themselves their own commemorative

⁹ See: <http://www.ok.byczyna.pl/7619/11-listopada-narodowe-swieto-niepodleglosci.html> (access: 10 XII 2018).

¹⁰ For more information see: <https://bck-brzeg.pl/9-11-11-18-iluminacja-3d-niepodlegla-swiatlem> (access: 10 XII 2018).

¹¹ The monument can be seen, among others, on the website: <https://kk24.pl/obchody-100-lecia-odzyskania-niepodleglosci-w-kedzierzynie-kozlu-fotoreportaz> (access: 10 XII 2018).

¹² <https://krapkowice.pl/6669/wspolnie-swietujmy-100lecie-odzyskania-niepodleglosci.html> (access: 10 XII 2018).

¹³ <http://www.muzeum.praszka.pl/index.php?id=979>; <http://www.muzeum.praszka.pl/index.php?id=1032> (access: 10 XII 2018).

token to celebrate the anniversary¹⁴. The Prudnik Land Museum offered a series of scientific and memorial lectures to the town's residents¹⁵ and the Koźle Land Museum in Kędzierzyn-Koźle arranged an exhibition combined with a concert under the common motto "The Road to Independence". Moreover, educational workshops for school youth were organised under the motto "Independence"¹⁶. The ceremonial lectures took place in the Museum of Silesian Piasts in Brzeg, and the Powiat Museum in Nysa invited to the "Academy of Independence", for a series of lectures illustrated with slides¹⁷. A wider chronological scope was illustrated by the exhibition entitled "Poland Resurrected 1918–2018", prepared in the Museum of Opole Silesia. The exhibition covered not only the atmosphere of the November days, ending the War in 1918, but also the following decades¹⁸.

Particularly noteworthy are the dozens of initiatives carried out in various types of schools, where the most popular form of celebrating the 100th anniversary of regaining independence were students' art and literary competitions and occasional historical presentations, including lectures by invited guests, concerts of patriotic songs and sports competitions. It seems that on the jubilee day of the 100th anniversary there was no educational institution in Opolszczyzna whose youth would not be involved in patriotic celebrations under the white-and-red flag. The culmination of the celebration in most schools was a joint singing of the National Anthem on 9th November 2018 at 11.11 a.m. The most numerous group of performers – with more than 1,500 people – gathered in the Opole Comprehensive Secondary School Complex¹⁹ at 28 Dubois Street. That young people were also joined by a group of students and teachers from the Comprehensive Secondary School No. VIII, the Complex Economic Schools under the name of Gen. Stefan Grot-Rowecki and the Primary School No. 22. With patriotic historical education is connected the presentation

¹⁴ <http://www.muzeum.praszka.pl/index.php?id=1013>; <http://www.muzeum.praszka.pl/index.php?id=1019>; <http://www.muzeum.praszka.pl/index.php?id=1024> (access: 12 XII 2018).

¹⁵ http://muzeumprudnik.pl/muzeum-news-243-100_lat_odzyskania_niepodleglosci___cykl_wykladow.html (access: 12 XII 2018).

¹⁶ <http://muzeumkozle.pl/temat/niepodleglosc-2018/> (access: 12 XII 2018).

¹⁷ <http://zamek.brzeg.pl/aktualnosci/nie-tylko-szabla-wyklad-mariusz-patelskiego/>; <http://muzeum.nysa.pl/web.n4?go=1815> (access: 12 XII 2018).

¹⁸ The exhibition was organised in cooperation with the Silesian Institute in Opole. See: <http://muzeum.opole.pl/uncategorized/polska-zmartwychwstala-otwarcie-wystawy-09-11-2018/> (access: 12 XII 2018).

¹⁹ On this joint singing of the anthem, see: <https://opole.tvp.pl/39883498/wspolne-spiewanie-hymnu-o-1111-w-szkolach-wybrzmiel-mazurek-dabrowskiego>; <http://psp2.opole.pl/web.n4?go=3312> (access: 12 XII 2018).

of a commemorative publication issued in 2018 entitled *Polski rok 1918 w podręcznikach do nauczania historii i literaturze dokumentu osobistego* (Polish Year 1918 in textbooks for teaching history and literature of personal document), which was prepared by employees from the Institute of History of the University of Opole, representing the Laboratory of History and Knowledge of Society²⁰.

In the information about the ceremonies commemorating the regaining of Poland's independence in 1918 in Opole Silesia in 2018, it seems necessary to mention the historical specificity of this region, currently called Opolszczyzna and Opole Silesia²¹. In 1918, administratively, it was the Regency of Opole, which was part of the Province of Silesia, part of the Kingdom of Prussia and the Imperial German Reich.

The warfare of 1914–1918 did not reach Silesia, and the truce signed in France, in Compiègne near Rethondes, on 11th November 1918, meant defeat for Germany and victory for the Entente's armies. For many people in Silesia, including the Polish population, this fact was a big surprise, but the creation of independent Poland in November 1918 did not change their legal and state affiliation to Germany. The numerous commemorative undertakings presented earlier, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Poland's Independence, organised in Opole and Opolszczyzna, referred to the events of a hundred years ago in which the Poles of that time could not participate. Only after the defeat of the Nazi Third Reich during World War II did the Great Three on 2nd August 1945 in Potsdam establish the current Polish-German state border.

²⁰ <http://radio.opole.pl/101,261206,polski-rok-1918-w-podrecznikach-do-nauczania-his&s=1&si=1&sp=1>; <https://mbp.opole.pl/relacje-z-wydarzen/polski-rok-1918-w-podrecznikach-do-nauczania-historii-i-literaturze-dokumentu-osobistego/> (access: 12 XII 2018).

²¹ These names were introduced and popularised in the 1920s by Piotr Pampuch, a Silesian publicist, national and plebiscite activist. They are considered to be an ambiguous definition of the administrative area, but, it should be stressed, they have been accepted by many inhabitants of the region.

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ŚLĄSKI KWARTALNIK HISTORYCZNY SOBÓTKA

Informacja o kwartalniku

Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny „Sobótka” wydawany jest we Wrocławiu od 1946 r., początkowo jako półrocznik i rocznik pod tytułem „Sobótka”, a od roku 1957 jako kwartalnik pod obecnym tytułem. Należy do najstarszych w Polsce regionalnych czasopism naukowych o profilu historycznym, pozostając ważnym elementem polskiej humanistyki. Uchodzi za jeden z najważniejszych periodyków śląskoznawczych, ale jego łamy pozostają otwarte również na materiały o innym zakresie tematycznym. Służy prezentacji wyników badań nad dziejami Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej – ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Śląska, sąsiednich regionów i krajów, zarazem refleksji nt. dziejów regionalnych. Przez wiele lat pismo znajdowało się w gestii Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Miłośników Historii (Polskiego Towarzystwa Historycznego), obecnie ukazuje się pod auspicjami Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego. Dodatkowe informacje o czasopiśmie znajdują się na stronie: <http://sobotka.uni.wroc.pl>, na której można znaleźć jego bieżące i archiwalne numery.

Na łamach „Śląskiego Kwartalnika Historycznego Sobótka” publikowane są materiały (rozprawy, artykuły, miscellanea źródłowe, recenzje, polemiki i inne) w językach polskim, czeskim oraz kongresowych. Materiały należy nadsyłać drogą elektroniczną na adres redakcji: skh.sobotka@uwr.edu.pl. Składane teksty należy przygotowywać według instrukcji znajdującej się na stronie: <http://sobotka.uni.wroc.pl/redakcja>. Nadsyłane teksty są recenzowane przez dwie osoby wskazane przez Redakcję i na tej podstawie kwalifikowane do druku. Procedura recenzowania jest opisana na wyżej wymienionej stronie internetowej. Redakcja zastrzega sobie prawo do proponowania zmian lub skrótów w tekstach.