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REGIONALISM AND BORDER REGIONS IN MODERN EUROPE

THE CASE OF UPPER SILESIA IN CONTEXT

The study of border regions has become fashionable in the recent two decades. There are several reasons for this widespread fascination, firstly the rediscovery of multiculturality and distinct mixtures of cultures which was lost in an 'age of extremes'. Secondly, the long lasting peace in the postwar period and the confirmation of the existing borders in the post-Cold War period ended the destructive competition of nation states over border regions (with few exceptions like in former Yugoslavia). This allowed a much wider range of research unobstructed by political interference or radical nationalism. Last but not least, fields of study like comparative empire and postcolonial studies provided a methodological impetus for the study of border regions. They can also be termed as 'lands in between' which were caught in between by competing nationalisms (this was the title of an earlier article published in a collective volume on borderlands by Indiana University Press).[1]

The metaphorical term 'lands in between' alludes to the fact that many border regions in modern Europe, and in particular in Central Europe, were shaped by a distinct mixture of cultures and languages. Precisely because of this blend and their supposed malleability many borderlands stood under the competition of two or more national movements and

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nation states. This was already an issue in the age of empires that preceded World War I. When an order of nation states was established in 1918-20, this competition often turned into a bitter struggle over disputed regions. While these disputes have been a very important topic of historiography, a discourse often tailored to legitimise the competing claims of various nationalisms and nation states, the issue of human identification with regions has for a long time been relatively neglected.[2]

In this article the term regionalism is used to explore the political and social dimensions of regional identification. In certain periods regional movements achieved a high degree of political mobilisation and developed their own political programs. However, the European nation states perceived regional movements as competitors and fought against political projects that stressed the autonomy of border regions. On the one hand, this was an issue of the administrative power of the centres over the periphery, in particular over disputed borderlands. On the other hand, it was a struggle over ideological domination. The centres aspired to define the national codes, i.e. the ways in which the various nations defined themselves. There was little toleration for regional identifications that stressed the particularity of regions and their blends of cultures and languages.

While the continental European empires (Russian, Habsburg, German and Ottoman Empire) at least acknowledged the existence of different nationalities (like in population counts) and of regional divergence, the nation states refused to do so. In modern states, which are characterised by a direct relationship between rulers and the populace, people were forced to affiliate themselves unambiguously. It was only possible to have one nationality; there was no place for multiple identities, at least not in population counts or other bureaucratic procedures. Recording populations in this way helped to put a seal on nations. The belief prevailed that individual nationality could be determined by objective criteria. The call for an unambiguous loyalty affected also regional movements and regionalisms and was imposed on society at a very basic level.

As the second part of this article shows through the example of Upper Silesia, the population of the borderlands had to find various strategies to cope with the homogenising pressure of nation states and national movements. The first strategy (all are 'ideal types' in the Weberian sense) was to join one of the competing national movements, the second one to resist and to establish regional movements, the third one to retreat into the private sphere and to keep a distance from political activities in general, including the competing nationalisms. Quite often, the population of border regions would show conformity with the ruling ideology in public, especially when confronted with dictatorships, while preserving a strong identification with the region in the private sphere or the neighbourhood.

But the preservation of regional identification and the perseverance of a peculiar mix of cultures and languages should not be romanticised as a case of multiculturalism. The population of the borderlands was often 'caught in between', and was discriminated against, persecuted, or even deported. This will again be shown specifically in the case of Upper Silesia (in Polish the specification 'Upper' is unusual, the region is mostly called Śląsk/Silesia, in contrast to Dolny Śląsk/Lower Silesia with its centre Wrocław), which forms the empirical core of this article. The evidence for other European border regions is gathered from a project about 'Regional Movements and Regionalism' that was carried out in 2001-2003 at the Centre for Comparative History of Europe in Berlin and published in a collective volume.[3]

Problems of historiography

As Ron Suny once pointedly stated, the institutionalisation of history is more closely linked with the project of the nation than that of any other science.[4] Although historiography has largely freed itself from misuse by various nationalisms, the nation and the nation state have remained the most important units of analysis or at least points of reference for historians until the end of the twentieth century. Ernest Gellner once

found a wonderful metaphor for this still prevailing *nation-state perspective,* which for him resembles a modernist painting.[5] Thereby, the historical map of Europe is shaped by homogenously painted areas of various sizes and colours, sometimes bizarrely shaped, but always clearly outlined. These coloured territories demarcate the European nations that were able to form their own states over the course of their history. Shading or transitional areas between the individual colours, or nations, is certainly not provided; nor is any grading of colour tone, although some national categories that persist in the language, such as German or Polish, meant something quite different two hundred years ago than they do today.

This state-national or modernistic view offers little possibilities to integrate the history of borderlands. For example, in Upper Silesia, an intermediary space between today's Czech Republic, Poland, and Germany, it was not possible to clearly define the nationality of a majority of its inhabitants until well into the twentieth century. The same is true of Alsace, where the population was torn between France and Germany until the 1940s. One could also point to the example of the former Polish East (the so-called *Kresy*), to the southern Balkans, in particular to greater Macedonia, and to numerous other regions in Europe. In these 'lands in between', national standard languages were only spoken to a limited extent. The population communicated mainly in mixed local and regional dialects. Social distinctions and purposes determined the usage of language, rather than national standards. This was not only true for rural areas and small towns, but often also larger cities. One should add that in Central and Eastern Europe, such multilingual borderlands are not just narrow marginal areas, but in fact covered large parts of the entire large region until the postwar period. Although these cultural and social nuances defined people's everyday life – and in the twentieth century, even influenced international politics and the domestic policy of the states concerned – they become almost imperceptible when the history of Europe is packed into a cabinet consisting entirely of national compartments. It is a mistake to perceive European history as the sum of its national histories.[6] One should also look at regional specifics or

characteristics, which are of course not exhausted with the cases of the borderlands presented in this article.

Even the term 'borderlands' has potential drawbacks, because of prominence of the word 'border', which in today's perspective automatically connotes the boundaries of nation states. The 'lands in between' dealt with in this article do not necessarily end *at* state borders, but often transcend them and encompass areas of both sides. If a less metaphorical and more analytical term is preferred, one can label 'the lands in between' as *intermediary spaces.* This term has a geographical dimension, in the sense of a location between national centres and spaces. There is also a political dimension, which will be shown below in the section on 'regionalism'. Finally, there is an important cultural dimension. All of the regions mentioned in the last paragraph are areas of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic transition in which various influences meet and frequently mingle.

A vivid example can again be provided by Upper Silesia, where Czech, Austrian, Prussian, German, and Polish rule not only shaped the region's history but also its language. Up to the present, the regional dialect has been shaped by elements taken from various national languages. In the early 1990s the sociologist Danuta Berlińska, one of the most prominent specialists on the region, noted a sentence spoken by a teenager: 'Jechołech na kole, trzasązech się ze stromem i się skrzywiła linksztanga.'[7] The content of this sentence is quite simple: the teenager rode on a bicycle, hit a tree, and as a result of this his handlebar broke. Linguistically speaking, the sentence is much more complicated and hardly understandable for an outsider coming to the region. If one looks at this sentence from the viewpoint of standardised national languages, the Silesian boy rode a Czech bicycle with an old Polish verb and archaic Polish grammar into a Czech tree and then the German handlebars broke.[8] This example is of more than anecdotal significance.

In recent years linguists and literature scholars have proven that 'continuous dialects' such as Silesian were not only an everyday means of communication but also served to differentiate between the familiar and the foreign – they were points of identification.[9] The linguist Hans-

Christian Trepte has demonstrated this as well for the Polish-Belarusian border area.[10] In view of the close linguistic relationship of the various Slavic languages, the existence of transitional dialects is not surprising. It displays similarities with the situation in Teschen Silesia, for example, where areas of Czech and Polish linguistic influence intersected and where until recently people communicated mainly in a regional dialect.[11] Yet even in places where quite different linguistic families had an influence, such as in the Slavo-Germanic border area, mixed dialects and modern Creole languages developed which assumed elements of the surrounding standard languages. If one approaches the history of Upper Silesia, Alsace, the eastern Polish borderlands, or Macedonia only with the conventional nation state categories, these linguistic phenomena are easily lost, along with their political significance.

But if there was any awareness of consistent dialects and other regional traditions or cases of syncretism in the 'short' twentieth century, they were generally regarded as backward and inferior. Population groups that opposed clear national classification or cultural monopolisation were considered to be premodern. In an ideological move aptly criticised by Celia Applegate, modernisation was frequently equated with nationalisation so that, except for purposes of legitimisation, the study of regions such as Upper Silesia, Polesie, Moravia, Transylvania or the Vojvodina was largely neglected.[12]

It is characteristic of many intermediary spaces that their cultures serve as a point of departure for political projects and movements. Also for this reason, intermediary spaces cannot be regarded as a peripheral phenomenon of European history, where one studies only bizarre dialects. Precisely their location at the (changing) borders specified a certain centrality, for major traffic arteries and channels of communication ran through them.[13] This is true of the late nineteenth century as well as of the situation today. From a European perspective Strasbourg or Katowice are more centrally located than Paris or Warsaw. In her programmatic essay on 'A Europe of regions', Applegate describes the extent to which regions have shaped the economic and political development of the individual European nations and states. This can also be said of most of the

intermediary spaces treated here. Their border location often gave rise to their symbolic significance for the respective national movements and nation states.

The study of nationalism is, for reasons inherent to the subject, an end in itself. In spite of the disputes between constructivists, ethnosymbolists, and other schools of study[14], the telos of nationalism studies, and frequently the finale of scientific narratives, is the fully developed modern nation and the nation state.[15] This focus on the 'success' of nationalism entails a hermeneutic problem. This is particularly true of nationalism studies in the Federal Republic of Germany, which has always started from the premise that the German nation project possessed a strong assimilating power and that the population was nationalised by the turn of the century.[16] Christian Geulen recently transposed this theory to the modern self and maintained that 'all other differences and identities have been made to disappear by the national.'[17]

Michael G. Müller at the University of Halle, a specialist of Polish and Prussian history, has expressed criticism of this teleology. In their recently published book on regional and national identities in Europe, Müller and his two coeditors come to the conclusion that, 'it is no longer possible to maintain the tacit assumptions long made that the impact of national propaganda increases with its intensity and that the advance of the nation-building process means that thinking in national categories takes primacy over regional and local loyalties.'[18] One possibility for solving the hermeneutic problem of the study of nationalism is to analyse potentially competing identification options on the political, social, and cultural levels. On closer examination, it emerges that religion, political convictions, social standing, a dynasty, or a monarchist state were often more important to people than national beliefs or identities. The problem with this kind of relativisation, however, is that it defies measurement and does not take into account the fact that nation and religion, for example, often effectively complemented each other.

One possible way of avoiding this dilemma is to first examine nationalism from the perimeters of its range of influence and to look at identification alternatives that at least partly offered competition. In many intermediary

spaces, regional identification options could not be combined with the ideologies of national movements and nation states. For this reason, it seems appropriate to take a closer look at regional identities, movements, and programmes in borderlands. The initial question is, then, to what extent regional identities in the various intermediary spaces competed with national identities starting from the middle of the nineteenth century, followed by to what extent regional movements were able to mobilise the masses, and which political programmes arose from this mobilisation.[19]

The concept of regionalism

In the context of the theoretical state of nationalism studies today, regions are constructs that should not be assumed as units, as this leads to incorrect assumptions regarding territorial continuity and internal homogeneity.[20] Following Rogers Brubaker's approach to nationalism, the emphasis should be placed on examining European regions as a cultural practice.[21] Therefore, one needs to look at a region not as a territory with fixed boundaries, but as an object of discourses. One particularly informative empirical example is the above-mentioned region of Upper Silesia, which will be looked at more closely below. The question is, why this and other regions at times played an important role in political, social, and cultural discourses or were even considered as alternative projects to already existent state nations and nation states. Taking this approach, regional movements are viewed as modern mass movements that support the autonomy of the region in question in relation to greater units such as empires or nation states. The term regionalism describes the programmes and ideologies on which the construction of a given region is based. It also contains a dimension of social history, for without knowledge of the social extent of regionalism, its development as an ideology cannot be understood.

In principle, transitional forms of identification can also exist between regionalism and nationalism. The difference between the two phenomena is that regionalism does not strive for sovereignty or independence of the

area it lays claim to. While people's belonging to a nation state is defined by clearly identifiable criteria such as citizenship, the right to vote or military service, regions do not have such sources of legitimisation and institutions of power at their disposal. The *feeling* of belonging to a region is determined more by identification elements involving 'soft' cultural criteria, such as dialects, customs, traditions, personal relationships, and specific historical experiences and memories. People evidently have a close affinity to areas of a manageable size, while nations are more often based on a cognitive 'invention' or 'imagination'.[22] These dissimilarities also make it clear that regionalism and nationalism should not be regarded only as competing concepts and social movements. Even in the age of nationalism, multiple identities were widespread, with beliefs about belonging to a region and in belonging to a nation often complementing and augmenting each other. Thus the question is: why in certain circumstances does a situation of competing identifications arise?

The case of Upper Silesia

It would go beyond the scope of this article to describe the already mentioned region of Upper Silesia in great detail.[23] Nevertheless, a brief, concise outline of the history of the region in the age of modern nationalism can convey an idea of why regions and particularly the intermediary spaces treated here could form a component in a new, more variegated kind of European history.

In the case of modern Germany, a general congruence of regional and national identifications has been shown in various studies. Applegate and Alon Confino have provided persuasive evidence of this in central areas of Germany with an exclusively German-speaking population.[24] In Silesia, and particularly in the mainly Catholic, Slavic-dialect-speaking region of Upper Silesia, however, different circumstances prevailed. Even when it was part of the German Empire, national identities spread relatively slowly in Upper Silesia. The reasons for this lay in the religious and social specifics of the activity of the German national movement in the eastern territories

of Prussia, including Upper Silesia, and in the antagonistic, counterproductive attempts at nation building in the German Empire and the ideological narrowing of German nationalism.

The revolution of 1848 was a boost for the activities of the German national movement in the area. The Polish national movement took the same moment to hit on the Upper Silesians, who to a large extent still spoke an ancient Polish dialect, especially in rural areas. Both movements were confronted with obstacles in the shape of the social and religious specifics of Upper Silesia. The German national movement was mainly supported by Protestants and members of the Prussian administration and met with little response from the mixed population of these mainly Catholic and rural areas. The distance between them was increased by the struggle between the Prussian state and the Church in the *Kulturkampf* and the narrowing definition of who and what was to be perceived as German. These splits were not fully overcome until the First World War.[25] Furthermore, a social gulf formed between the elites and the German middle class, on the one hand, and what they disparagingly called the *Schlonsaks,* the Slavic-speaking workers and rural proletariat, on the other. The relationship between the two sides was markedly asymmetrical. For this reason, the Krakow sociologist Maria Szmeja even describes the Prussian-German rule of Upper Silesia as an example of 'internal colonialism'.[26]

Polish nationalism also came up against considerable obstacles despite the fact that many Poles immigrated to Upper Silesia's industrial district. The Polish national movement, unlike the German, was not backed up by an own state, so it had organisational deficits. And since Upper Silesia had not been part of Poland since the fourteenth century, there was no common remembrance of the Polish state that had existed until 1795. Furthermore, the numerous cultural differences between the Poles and the Polish-speaking Upper Silesians which had developed over the centuries of Austrian, Prussian, and German rule all played a part. Many Poles could barely understand the Upper Silesian dialect, or considered it a strange mixture with German. For this reason, identification with the more immediate homeland among the Polish-speaking population, particularly

in rural areas, continued to dominate and usually prevailed over any secondary German or Polish national consciousness.[27] This identification with Silesia did not, however, manifest itself in a strong political movement and the Upper Silesians did not produce a secular political elite in the German Empire.

Poland was refounded after the First World War and claimed a large part of Upper Silesia on the basis of ethnic principles. The German Empire, however, insisted on keeping the largest industrial district in East Central Europe. The conflict between both states caused deep ruptures in the region. Violence broke out, and the two sides fought each other in armed combat in the three Silesian uprisings (1919-21). It is undisputed that Upper Silesians took part in these conflicts, but more decisive was the intervention and mobilisation from abroad. The paramilitary units fighting on both sides brought in Germans and Poles who had little connection to the region but basically continued the war in the name of the 'national interest'. The major cause of the violence, then, was a lack of demobilisation of troops who had fought in World War I and who now formed paramilitary units, not a nationalist mobilisation of the population in Upper Silesia.

Silesian insurgents of 1919-1921. | NARODOWE ARCHIWUM CYFROWE – WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The vast majority of the political elites in Upper Silesia, for their part, called for unity in the region and tried to mediate in the dispute between Germany and Poland. After World War I, a strong regional movement emerged, the Bund der Oberschlesier (Alliance of Upper Silesians), which demanded autonomy and at times even Upper Silesia's independence. In 1919 the regional movement had around 300,000 adherents, that is a seventh of the population. Publications of the Bund der Oberschlesier even tried to invent an Upper Silesian nation. They spoke about a ‘multilingual unitary nation’ (*multilinguales Einheitsvolk*) and a blend of Slavo-Germanic blood (*slavo-germanische Blutmischung*).[28] The regional activists mixed ethnic elements with arguments of multiculturalism in order to construct a regional community or even nation. But how could this invention have attracted a population that was already familiar with German and Polish nationalism?

The regional movement failed eventually due to its inability to maintain neutrality in the conflict between Poland and Germany. Furthermore, neither Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, nor the Allies wanted another free state like Danzig/Gdańsk. In March 1921, the inhabitants of Upper Silesia were called on to align themselves with either Germany or Poland in a plebiscite. Around 700,000 people voted to stay with Germany while 480,000 voted for Poland. The areas with a majority in favour of Germany were mainly urban and left of the Oder River; those in favour of Poland were right of the Oder and small-town or rural.[29] It would, however, be wrong to interpret this voting behaviour as an expression of a deeply rooted national identity (in the hardly translatable terms of the time: *Volkstum, Deutschtum,* or *Polskośćć*; or very roughly ‘local culture’, ‘Germanness’, and ‘Polishness’) or to equate the number of votes for each side with the number of resident Germans or Poles. At local elections in November 1919, Polish candidates still had gained over 60 percent of the votes – this roughly corresponded with the proportion of the population that was Polish-speaking or bilingual. Economic considerations and loyalty to the Prusso-German state evidently carried more weight in the plebiscite than ‘objective’ criteria of national belonging such as language.

The division of Upper Silesia left large minorities on either side of the new border. A total of 226,000 people who had voted for Germany remained in eastern Upper Silesia while 195,000 people who had voted for Poland became residents of Opole Silesia. Under the Geneva Convention on Upper Silesia of 1922, the people in the areas where the vote was held were

Map of the 1921 plebiscite: (1) Percival-De Marinis line (2) Le Rond-Korfany line (3) demarcation line as recommended by the Entente (May 1921) (4) area with majority of Polish votes (5) German-Polish border as established in October 1921 (6) western referendum border | J.J. TAZBIR, *WIELKI ATLAS HISTORYCZNY* (2008) – WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

entitled to adopt the nationality of the respective neighbouring country and emigrate to Germany or Poland. By 1925, about 100,000 people on both sides had taken advantage of this right of 'option'. The plebiscite and the Geneva Convention show that not only the nation states, but also the international community in the League of Nations wanted to enhance the homogeneity of the nation states. There was no 'option' to remain Polish *and* German, or to declare an allegiance to Silesia.

During the Weimar Republic, in the western part of Upper Silesia that remained German, many members of the mixed population adopted Germany's language and culture for pragmatic reasons. Not only was this a prerequisite for social advancement, but even school children distanced themselves from their regional roots and Slavic mother tongue in order to avoid teasing and isolation from the German majority. This 'pragmatic assimilation' manifested itself in censuses in the drop in numbers of people who declared themselves bilingual or Polish-speaking and in elections in the decrease in votes for Polish candidates. This tendency to assimilate was, however, disrupted by a seizure of power by the National Socialists, who gained only thirty percent of the votes in Upper Silesia in 1932. When the National Socialists began to take steps against the Catholic Church, dissolved the Catholic Centre Party in 1934, and finally also persecuted priests, the mixed population was driven into the arms of Polish minority organisations.[30] Nazi Church policy provoked a similar reaction to that which the *Kulturkampf* had elicited two generations earlier: resistance to anything henceforth defined as German and the linking of the struggle for linguistic and cultural freedom with defense of the Church. The head of the regional government in Breslau recognised this problem and dispatched a report in 1935 to Wilhelm Frick, the Prussian and Reich Minister for the Interior, stating that 'the unrestrained attacks which were customary in the past and went way beyond the fight against political Catholicism, have to stop. In any case, the state and the movement must not identify with them.'[31] Racial prejudice against the Upper Silesians proved to be just as counterproductive.

In the eyes of many National Socialists, the only options were to be either German or Polish. The idea of a 'floating national character' (*schwebendes*

Volkstum), as it was pejoratively called, was only accepted as a temporary phenomenon. In general, the popular image of Upper Silesia's mixed population transformed in the interwar years from that of a nationally and otherwise underdeveloped community to that of a group of freeloaders. Indeed, the National Socialists noted with pleasure how they were able to entice Upper Silesians to their functions with free tickets to cultural events and complimentary cake at women's meetings but in other reports bemoaned the fact that this was a nationally unreliable and corruptible ethnic group.[32]

In 1935, the National Socialists proceeded with the Germanisation of personal and place names and extended their pursuit of the population into the private realm, suspecting that, underneath the cloak of outward conformity, anti-German or even pro-Polish identities continued to exist. As the official reports from Upper Silesia show, the authorities were not entirely wrong in this assumption. One sign of the endurance of cultural traits was the popularity of Polish church services. In 1938, thirty percent of services were still held in Polish according to the nationalist Association of the German East (Bund Deutscher Osten, BDO). The BDO estimated the total number of people in the 'Polish minority' at about 400,000, or about 550,000 with the 'Germanised section' included.[33] Nevertheless, very few people openly professed their Polishness, as that would have led to persecution and possibly even internment in a concentration camp. As is well known, Silesian Jews experienced an even more terrible fate, regardless of their national allegiance. Many Upper Silesians who outwardly conformed or even spoke German at home preserved close family, religious, and cultural ties with Polish Upper Silesia. Paradoxically, the nationalist propaganda against the so-called *Diktat von Versailles* and the revisionism in regard to the border established in 1921 helped to preserve a mental mapping that encompassed the entire region of Upper Silesia.

Parts of the Silesian society activated an Upper Silesian or Polish identification, whether out of sympathy for Poland or an aversion to National Socialism, or for pragmatic reasons. The further tightening of the policy on nationality and the ban on Polish-language church services in the

run-up to the Second World War increased the old tendency among Upper Silesia's mixed population toward self-isolationism.[34] Not until Germany achieved its first war victories and troops on the home front had been mobilised was it possible to win over a section of the population. Following Germany's defeats on the eastern front, however, personal and public attitudes toward Germany changed. Despite the Nazi terror, a willingness to show symbols of a Polish or Upper Silesian identification in the private sphere and in the limited public of neighbourhoods increased.

In Polish eastern Upper Silesia, which requires special consideration in the interwar period, national and regional identification changed even more than in the German part of Upper Silesia. The number of inhabitants who considered themselves definitely German had dropped, mainly due to emigration, from about a third to a seventh of the total population between 1921 and 1931.[35] But many Polish-speaking or bilingual Upper Silesians turned toward German political parties in order to express their dissatisfaction with economic and political developments in Poland. In local elections in 1926, German parties gained 42 percent of the votes, and 18.4 percent in the Polish parliamentary elections in Upper Silesia in 1930, far more than the proportion of the corresponding population. These results were, however, less an expression of 'unbroken Germanness', as was thought in the Weimar Republic, and more a sign of the vitality of the identification with Upper Silesia. Many Silesians voted for German parties in protest against the undermining of the autonomy of Silesia as a Polish province (*Województwo*). Arkadiusz Bożek, who became vice president of the province of Upper Silesia in 1945, summarised the general feeling of disappointment with the Polish administration in the interwar period thus: 'Only the men in charge have changed. The Berliners went and the Warsaw-Krakovians came.'[36] This quote indicates the gap between the regional society and those who came from outside.

At the end of the twenties, as the situation in Poland began to temporarily stabilise, German parties enjoyed much less electoral success, and participation in German-national rallies also decreased rapidly. Even the opponents of the Polish state evidently grew accustomed to its existence.[37] Furthermore, in Upper Silesia, social and economic considerations gave

rise to a willingness to adapt oneself to the majority nation. This pragmatism could, however, swing in the opposite direction at any time. For example, parents often signed their children up for wealthier German schools because they tended to provide more plentiful school meals than their state-run Polish competitors.[38] But this pragmatic attitude was not tolerated by the Polish state, which thought in dialectic national terms and was afraid of a strengthening of the *German* minority. The Polish administration wanted to compel parents of mixed origin to send their children to Polish schools. Eventually the conflict about these children was decided by the League of Nations. It decided that the nationality of children, and therefore their choice of school, had to be decided by the state bureaucracy according to objective indicators (primarily the language spoken by the parents), and not by the parents. One can conclude that it was not only radical nationalists and 'nationalising nation states' (Brubaker) who thought in terms of a binary nationalism, but also the international community of states. Moreover, nationality was not perceived as subjective and changeable, but as objective. The regional society was indeed caught in between.

A person's sense of being German, Polish, or Silesian often depended on their individual social and professional standing. Some cases are known, for example, of the wives of Polish policemen in eastern (Polish) Upper Silesia who belonged to the German People's Association.[39] These cases were recorded because the Supreme Commander of the Polish Police in the *województwo* of Silesia was angered at the lack of national feeling among officials and suspected that state secrets were being betrayed. In Opole Silesia, the authorities also reported on behaviour that could not be reconciled with their view of a proper national standing. There was no understanding at all for several members of the local Hitler Youth who had joined Polish sports clubs.[40] As the reports show, Upper Silesians sometimes switched languages and cultures within the space of one evening. This is illustrated by an incident reported by the chief of police in Gleiwitz/Gliwice in 1929, when a local celebration organised by the Polish choral society presented a guest choir that sang in Polish first before performing German military songs.[41]

Nevertheless, one should be wary of romanticising this multicultural *mélange*. If a person failed to opt for a particular nationality, he or she faced life with a bad reputation and sanctions. Even after 1945, the 'struggle for national character' (*Volkstumskampf*) – which today would be described as a conflict over identities – was fought out primarily at the expense of the regional society.

After the Second World War, attempts to nationalise the region continued – although in different circumstances. Poland had been granted all of Silesia in 1945 through the Potsdam treaty. Its main goal was to Polonise (or 're-Polonise', as the propaganda formulated it) the region once and for all. For reaching this goal the postwar Polish state deployed the entire toolkit of violent, totalitarian nationality policy. The 'enemy' language was forbidden, the regional culture eliminated by all possible means, books destroyed, and personal as well as place names changed. The aim of this policy was to 'de-Germanise', as the apt title of a book by Bernard Linek translates, that is to eliminate all traces of the German era.[42] This also entailed the expulsion of inhabitants who could be clearly identified as German. In comparison to Lower Silesia, where almost all German citizens were removed, the stance toward the Germans in Upper Silesia was more tolerant. In the areas where the plebiscite was held in 1921, a declaration of loyalty to the Polish state and the Polish nation was generally enough to earn one's 'verification' or 'rehabilitation' as a Pole and so avoid expulsion to postwar Germany. The authorities upheld the argument that a large part of the population of Upper Silesia was actually Polish; this also formed the basis for territorial claims to the former German territories. About 850,000 'autochthones' were therefore permitted to stay, making up the majority of the population after the war in the later provinces of Katowice and Opole.

Yet this majority section of the population was regarded with deep mistrust and often disapproval by the Polish government, the immigrant population from central Poland, and expellees from eastern Poland, who equated the indigenous Upper Silesians with Germans – the most negative categorisation possible in view of the recent experience of National Socialist occupation.[43] This bipolar national discourse had existed since

World War I: one had to be either German or Polish and nothing in between. The suspicion persisted that the *Ślązacy* (the Silesians) were in fact Germans. In fact, after the war, many Upper Silesians could speak German better than Polish, which they pronounced with a strong accent anyway, as a result of Nazi-era pressures. Even the term 'Autochthon' has a derogatory connotation, as the immigrants who used it regarded themselves as Polish missionaries leading the formerly German citizens of Polish extraction back to the path of rightful nationality and drumming Polishness into them, by force if necessary. Furthermore, deep social conflicts arose after the Second World War, particularly over property. Locals and immigrants fought over farms, apartments, everyday necessities, and soon also over positions in the state and the party.

These conflicts and the frequent discrimination and persecution of native inhabitants led to the latter's complete rejection of Poland as a nation and a state. For the deeply Catholic population, the rejection of communism was also connected with their religious affiliation. By contrast, the German era in Upper Silesia was often idealised, especially as the 'economic miracle' was beginning to take effect in West Germany. In 1950, Bożek recorded bitterly that 'the Germans are laughing up their sleeves – what we could not achieve in seven hundred years, because the Silesians persistently defended their faith and their language, they accomplished in seven years: the complete eradication of Polishness in these lands, down to the very last root.'[44] This statement contained the nationalist myth of timeless Polishness; nevertheless, it was right about the disaffection with Poland and Poles.

The change in orientation toward Germany was, however, also motivated by the fact that the identification with the region of Upper Silesia was suppressed in the People's Republic of Poland, being regarded as a remnant of the interwar period and a possible Trojan Horse of the Germans. Open declarations of Germanness were the most effective method for gaining permission to leave the country and so escape communism. Moreover, the Upper Silesians were discriminated against as Germans.

Until 1989, the situation in Upper Silesia remained by and large stable. The People's Republic of Poland proceeded with oppression – the ban on the German language, for example, remained in force to the last – and Upper Silesians reacted to this with inner emigration or actual emigration to Germany. Thus the old-established Upper Silesian population became the minority, estimated at 250,000-300,000 of a total population of around one million in the province of Opole in 1989. Those who felt drawn to German culture or simply saw no future in communist Poland left the country.

When the communist regimes collapsed, the troubled history of the interwar period threatened to repeat itself. The minority, which as a result of the Polish nationality policy indeed had become a *German* minority, demanded their official authorisation, and individual demands for the borders to be redrawn were also made. The situation quickly eased with the conclusion of the 2+4 Treaty in 1990, in which Germany relinquished all territorial claims in favour of reunification, and the German-Polish treaty of 1990-91, which finally confirmed the Oder-Neisse border and enforced the official recognition of the minority in Poland.

For this reason, among others, Poland tolerated the *de facto* revisionist citizenship policy of the Federal Republic of Germany. In Upper Silesia, all Polish citizens who could provide evidence of their German ancestry could apply for German citizenship. Well over 200,000 German passports were issued as a consequence of this policy up to the mid 1990s. They secured the holders' free access to the job market in Germany and the EU before the enlargement of the Union in 2004, which was a great advantage in these dire years of early transformation. The Germanness of the minority in Upper Silesia was once again officially confirmed.

Freedom to travel and reunification, however, rapidly brought about a change in the popular image of the Federal Republic of Germany in Upper Silesia. The former spiritual homeland became simply a neighbouring state that could be reached within a few hours. Nearly all Upper Silesians took advantage of their newly established right to travel to visit the country, especially those who held German passports and therefore also work permits. The reality of Germany, however, was often surprising, and did

not always correspond with images conjured up by television, brochures of expellee associations, and letters from relatives who had emigrated there before. Especially at work Upper Silesians were not greeted as compatriots but rejected as Poles, particularly in the former German Democratic Republic. Those with a good command of German still spoke a dialect that sounded foreign to people west of the Oder and Neisse. In addition to this, job seekers from Silesia were hardly regarded as lost sons of the fatherland but frequently as competition. Because of this renewed experience of national differences after the 1989 revolution, many members of the mixed population turned away from Germany and German nationality.

As Berlińska has shown, some years after the 1989 revolution more than two thirds of the minority population considered themselves exclusively or primarily Silesian, while only about one tenth defined themselves as German.[45] Less is known about changes in the identities of the majority population, which migrated or were forced to migrate to Silesia in the postwar period. Most of them clearly and sometimes exclusively identify with Poland as a nation and as a state. The changes in Poland since 1989 contributed to a generally stronger perception of the regional or local homeland as a point of reference. In the province of Opole, the minority possessed a concrete territory in which they could realise their political ideas. Since the 1989 revolution, the 'socio-cultural society of Germans in Poland' has produced numerous mayors, chief administrative officers, some members of the Sejm, and a few senators in the second chamber of the Polish parliament. In the 2003 census, however, 173,000 people unexpectedly declared themselves 'Silesian'.[46] Among these were many former members of the German minority that had sharply decreased in numbers to become the second largest minority in Poland after the Silesians. With this result, the minority demonstrated that their regional allegiance was stronger than a national Polish or German one.

After the census was taken, the leadership of the regional movement tried to gain recognition as national minority. This was first denied by the Polish government and courts, then also by the highest European court in Strasbourg. The refusal in Poland was based on fears that a new separatist

movement might arise. Indeed, the widespread discontent in Upper Silesia with the social and economic situation of the region might feed some discontent. But the anti-reaction against the Silesian movement was driven rather by historical memories than by rational calculations or public opinion polling. In Strasbourg, the underlying issue was that if the Silesians were to gain recognition, then other groups might organise themselves as national minorities as well. That would be in contrast to the still dominant vision that the European states are homogenous nation states. None of these states would today repeat the coercive nationality policy of the interwar and postwar period. But it still seems to be difficult to accept diversity and to overcome the utopia of homogenous nation states if divergent groups come into existence.

Summary

By looking at the case of Upper Silesia, one can show the endurance of regions as objects of identification, which is surprising precisely because of the wide range of references they host. The Upper Silesia which the Silesian or German minority refers to today has little in common with the Prussian region of Upper Silesia of the early twentieth century. The size of the area, its social and demographic structures, and its state affiliation changed several times, quite dramatically, between 1900 and 2000. And yet today a significant number of people identify themselves primarily with the substratum called Upper Silesia. National identities, by contrast, appear volatile and context-dependent. Such processes can be shown to have taken place not only in Upper Silesia but also in other intermediary spaces such as Alsace. With these intermediary spaces and their inhabitants frequently crushed between national millstones, the European idea presented itself as a possible solution. It is no coincidence that some prominent figures of the European movement or a European historiography, such as with Robert Schuman and Lucien Febvre, originated from such intermediary spaces.

Although the regionalism in Upper Silesia has so far failed to achieve its aims to the extent other regional movements have – with any comprehensive autonomy still lacking – it proves the limits of concepts of nationality and nation states. The relationship between nationalism and regionalism is fundamentally defined by the attractiveness and inclusive ability of the concept in question. That means, however, that nation and region should not be understood as firmly established quantities but as relational options employed in political discourses and practices. Collective identification models such as the nation or the region are transitory. The history of Europe is, then, in this respect an open book. It remains to be seen whether it will continue to be a matter of a Europe of fatherlands or whether a Europe of regions will gain in significance. This is even more true for the enlarged European Union and hence, academic disciplines studying not past but present-day changes, making it just one more reason to take the study of regions as a way of approaching European history. The Schengen Treaty and its expansion to the East in 2007 have removed all border controls from the Bug in eastern Poland to Portugal in the West. This means that the European borderlands have ceased to be located at state borders in the previous sense. Of course, Schengen has not removed linguistic, social, and political borders. But it remains to be seen how this reconfiguration will influence the intermediary spaces in Europe.

Looking back at their history again, one can distinguish three major periods. The late age of empires between 1848 and 1918 was undoubtedly an age of nationalism. People's identification with regions did not diminish, however, but was spread in various borderlands as a result of a generally rising tide of politicisation of the population. The national movements hit their limits in the horizontal and vertical mobilisation of societies. Because of their mostly bourgeois character and other factors such as religious and linguistic differences, the national movements had problems mobilising the urban and the rural under-classes. This is especially true for borderlands such as Upper Silesia or Alsace. World War I was a catalyst of nationalism, but especially in countries that had lost the war, regional movements also gained power. However, they were always hampered by the lack of a secular elite. So even when nation states were

weakened, such as Germany in 1918-19, the regional movements could not achieve autonomy, let alone secession or independence.

The second period lasted from 1918 until 1939, in which the old and new nation states demanded an unambiguous identification from their citizens. This created conflicts with national minorities, and in particular with and within disputed borderlands. As a reaction, the nation states intensified their nationalising policies. Regional movements became suspicious of helping enemy states across the borders or guessed that minorities could be Trojan Horses within the body of an organically understood nation. Various nation states such as France in Alsace, both Germany and Poland in Upper Silesia, Romania in Transylvania, Italy in South Tirol, or the states which had carved up Macedonia, developed repressive policies. Instead of accepting at least a minimum of regional specifics, any demands for

Polish and German propaganda posters for the 1921 Silesian plebiscite.
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autonomy were interpreted as a danger for the nation state. The repressions ranged from discrimination to persecution and deportations of elites. This created deep conflicts that should not be interpreted in the framework of minority politics only, but also as conflicts between centres and marginalised borderlands.

The suppression of regionalism was mostly counterproductive. For a demonstration of this we can look not only to Upper Silesia, but also to Alsace. Christiane Kohser-Spohn has shown how the French policy against the regional movement in the 1920s turned sour an Alsatian society which had welcomed French troops in 1918. Similar conclusions can be made about other nation states and their nationality policy in disputed borderlands.[47] Although discontent was widespread, none of the regional movements were able to reach their ideal goals or even reduce the degree of suppression by nation states. This was mostly due to their weakness in term of organisation and political ideology, and their late start compared to national movements. Moreover, the nation states could offer careers that were of course pursued by inhabitants of the borderlands. The regional movements were caught in between the nation states. Looking for support beyond the border was not a viable solution anymore after 1945 because the regional movements in Alsace, the Silesians in Poland and the Schleswiger in Denmark were tainted by collaboration with the National Socialists.

After World War II, our third period, Europe was structured into nation states that were more homogenised than ever before. The borderlands lost all opportunity to raise a political voice, let alone to form a regional movement again. Only in the late 1960s did new dynamics emerge. In Western Europe this was mostly due to the activities of the student movement. The regionalist component of 1968 has, however, not received much attention by historians. In Alsace, Bretagne, and parts of southern France regional initiatives gathered and established institutions. Similar developments can be observed in Wales and Scotland, in parts of Italy, and in Spain after the death of Franco. This 'new' regionalism was partially inspired by the political Left, and it utilised the vocabulary of the anti-colonial struggle.[48] In France, the activists also spoke about a 'renaissance'

of the region, revealing the relevance of invented traditions. Altogether this regionalism was very different from the interwar period, when there still was a strong influence from clerics and right-wing parties, and is ripe for attention as a distinct era.

In the late 1960s, identification directed against hegemonic nation states also increased in Central and Eastern Europe, but developed a different dynamic. Officially the autonomist Slovak, Croat, Macedonian, and other elites asked for more regional autonomy, but the political discourses soon focused on national interest and rights. The regimes in both countries responded with federalisation (1969 in Czechoslovakia, 1974 in Yugoslavia), but this did not have the same results as in France or Britain, where regions also gained power in the 1970s and 80s. In Eastern Europe, the devolution of political power strengthened national discourses and national movements. Similar conclusions could be made about post-Franco Spain, where the regional movements called themselves national movements. But only a minority of Catalans or Galicians called for independence from their regions. Hence, one can label these movements as predominantly regionalist according to the definition here provided. In the Basque Country and in Northern Ireland, events took a different course because violence was introduced.[49]

In Western Europe the postwar regionalism was also strengthened by the European Community/Union. This seems to be paradoxical on first view because originally the concept of the EC had been a ‘Europe of fatherlands’. But the European Union organised its various programs for agriculture and in particular for infrastructure in such a way that the entities who could apply for funds were not entire nation states, but rather the less developed parts of them. Inequality was defined on a regional not on a national basis. This motivated regional interest groups to become politically active in order to get funding from Brussels. One can explain this development through a comparison with the United Nations. While it is necessary on a global level to make political claims as a nation because only nation states can become members of the United *Nations,* in Europe certain benefits, especially the structural funds, are distributed at a regional level. Moreover, the states that already had a federal structure,

such as Germany, pressed for a general federalisation of the EC and its single member states. This culminated in the establishment of the 'Committee of the Regions' (CoR) in the Maastricht Treaty, which is better known for having laid the groundwork for the common currency, the Euro. It is disputed how much power the CoR really has. Since the enlargement of the EU in 2004, this consultative body has rarely produced any headlines or public discourses. But this institutionalisation might be more relevant in the future. It is an open question how the 'Europe of nations' will develop into a 'Europe of regions'.

Independently of this process, regions and in particular borderlands are important objects of study for historians. They make it possible to overcome the still dominant national paradigm, they reveal the contingency in nation building and nation state formation, and they demonstrate that no territorial and group identification, be it on a national, regional, or local level, is set and stable.

Endnotes

[1] See Ph. Ther, 'Caught in between. Border regions in modern Europe', in: O. Bartov & E.D. Weitz (eds.), *Shatterzone of empires. Coexistence and violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman borderlands* (Bloomington, 2013) 485-502. The author and *SNM*'s editorial staff thank the publisher for allowing to publish a revised version of this article. The condensed material appears Courtesy of Indiana University Press; permission duly granted, gratis.

[2] The term 'identification' is preferred in this article because it indicates an active process which can be gradual, fluid, or multiple. For the debate about the term identity see R. Brubaker & F. Cooper, 'Beyond identity', in: *Theory and society*, 29 (2000) 1-47. See also the genealogical treatise in L. Niethammer, *Kollektive Identität. Heimliche Quellen einer unheimlichen Konjuktur* (Hamburg, 2000).

[3] This project is documented in a publication by Ph. Ther & H. Sundhaussen (eds.), *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen in europäischen Zwischenräumen seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Marburg, 2003).

[4] See R.G. Suny, 'History and the making of nations', in: Z. Gitelman (ed.), *Cultures and nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in honor of Roman Szporluk* (Cambridge, 2000) 569-589.

[5] On the comparison with modern painting, see E. Gellner, *Nations and nationalism* (Ithaca, 1983) 139ff. Rogers Brubaker used this in his essay 'Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism', in: J.A. Hall (ed.), *The state of the nation. Ernest Gellner and the theory of nationalism* (Cambridge, 1998) 272-306 (294 ff.).

[6] See M. Fulbrook, 'Introduction. States, nations, and the development of Europe', in: M. Fulbrook (ed.), *National histories and European history* (London, 1993) 1-20.

[7] On the change of identities among the Silesian population see D. Berlińska, *Mniejszość niemiecka na Śląsku Opolskim w poszukiwaniu tożsamośći* (Opole, 1999).

[8] In standard Polish the sentence would read 'Jechałem na rowerze, zderzyłem się z drzewem i skrzywiła się kierownica.'

[9] On the social function of such 'consistent dialects', explored through the example of Teschen Silesia, cf. K. Hannan, *Language and identity in a West Slavic borderland. The case of Teschen Silesia* (Austin, 1994).

[10] H.-Ch. Trepte, '"Die Hiesigen" (Tuejsi/Tutejšyja). Regionales Bewusstsein im polnisch-weissrussischem Grenzraum', in: Ther & Sundhaussen, *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen*, 145-160.

[11] K. Hannan, *Borders of language and identity in Teschen Silesia* (New York, 1996).

[12] C. Applegate, 'A Europe of regions. Reflections on the historiography of sub-national places in modern times', in: *American historical review*, 104 (1999) 1157-1182.

[13] Centre-periphery models are therefore hardly suited to analysing the cases examined here. On the problematic nature of such models, see also Applegate, 'A Europe of regions', 1167.

[14] Among the main proponents of the debate were and are Gellner, *Nations and nationalism*; B. Anderson, *Imagined communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London, 1983); A.D. Smith, *Nations and nationalism in a global era* (Cambridge, 1995). Miroslav Hroch came up with a convincing compromise on this contentious issue in which he accepts that the nation is to be regarded as a project which is basically formed by previously existing economic, political, and linguistic areas of communication: M. Hroch, 'Real and constructed. The nature of the nation', in: Hall, *The state of the nation*, 91-106.

[15] See as prototypical examples E. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The modernization of rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford 1976); A. Miller, 'Russko-ukrainskije otnošenija v 19 i načale 20 veka. Rusifikacija i pričiny jejo neudači', in: *Ruskij istoričeskij žurnal*, 1 (1998) 131-148.

[16] This mainstream point of view of postwar West German history writing is expounded in H.-U. Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte,* 3: *Von der 'Deutschen Doppelrevolution' bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Munich, 1995) 962. More recent publications have modified or revised the assumption that minorities were largely assimilated; see H. Henning Hahn & P. Kunze (eds.), *Nationale Minderheiten und Minderheitenpolitik in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1999). On Upper Silesia in particular, see Ph. Ther, 'Die Grenzen des Nationalismus. Der Wandel von Identitäten in Oberschlesien von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1939', in: U. von Hirschhausen & J. Leonhard (eds.), *Nationalismen in Europa. West und Osteuropa im Vergleich* (Göttingen, 2001) 322-346.

[17] Ch. Geulen, 'Die Metamorphose der Identität. Zur "Langlebigkeit" des Nationalismus', in: A. Assmann & H. Friese (eds.), *Identitäten, Erinnerung, Geschichte, Identität* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998) vol. 3, 346-373 (359).

[18] H.-G. Haupt, M. Müller & S. Woolf (eds.), *Regional and national identities in Europe in the XIXth and XXth centuries* (The Hague, 1998) 4, 14; M.G. Müller & R. Petri (eds.), *Zur Konstruktion nationaler Identität in sprachlich gemischten Grenzregionen* (Marburg, 2002).

[19] A recently published volume on the incorporation of borders into the concept of the nation formulates a similar question, albeit indirectly: Müller & Petri, *Zur Konstruktion nationaler Identität*. The introduction to this volume contains a comprehensive bibliography on this subject.

[20] On the problematic nature of the tendency to regard regions and towns as given or essential, see for example, J. Revel, 'La région', in: P. Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3: *Les France,* 1: *Conflicts et partages* (Paris, 1992) 851-883 (854). A convincing definition can also be found in W. Schmale, *Historische Komparatistik und Kulturtransfer. Europageschichtliche Perspektiven für die Landesgeschichte* (Bochum, 1998) 54. Neither this article nor the comparative volume on regionalism published in 2003 (cited in note 3) intend to contribute to the establishment of regional identities.

[21] See the introduction of R. Brubaker, *Nationalism reframed. Nationhood and the national question in the new Europe* (Cambridge, 1996).

[22] On the potential of these terms, see E. Hobsbawm & T. Ranger (eds.), *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge, 1983); Anderson, *Imagined communities.*

[23] A detailed account of the relationship between regional and national identities in Upper Silesia can be found in K. Struve & Ph. Ther (eds.), *Nationen und ihre Grenzen. Identitätenwandel in Oberschlesien in der Neuzeit* (Marburg, 2002). Most of the relevant literature published up to 2001 is listed in the introduction to this book.

[24] A. Confino, *The nation as a local metaphor. Württemberg, imperial Germany and national memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill, 1997); C. Applegate, *A nation of provincials. The German idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, 1990). On the regional basis and orientation of the German national movement, see D. Langewiesche, 'Föderativer Nationalismus als Erbe der deutschen Reichsnation. Über Föderalismus und Zentralismus in der deutschen Nationalgeschichte', in: D. Langewiesche & G. Schmidt (eds.), *Föderative Nation. Deutschlandkonzepte von der Reformation bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2000).

[25] On the struggle between state and Church in Upper Silesia, see J. Bahlcke, 'Die Geschichte der schlesischen Territorien von den Anfängen bis zum Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkrieges', in: J. Bahlcke (ed.), *Schlesien und die Schlesier* (Munich, 1996) 14-154 (103-104).

[26] M. Szmeja, *Niemcy? Polacy? Ślązacy! Rodzimi mieszkańcy Opolszczyzny w świetle analiz socjologicznych* (Kraków, 2000) 65-74.

[27] For a complete panorama of the various national and subnational population groups in Upper Silesia and their identification designs, see T. Kamusella, *Silesia*

and Central European nationalism. The emergence of national and ethnic groups in Prussian Silesia and Austrian Silesia, 1848-1918 (West Lafayette, 2007).

[28] Quoted from materials of the Bund der Oberschlesier in A. Schmidt-Rösler, 'Autonomie- und Separatismusbestrebungen in Oberschlesien 1918-1922', in: *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung*, 48/1 (1999) 1-49 (11).

[29] It has become difficult to navigate the sheer amount of literature on the plebiscite, which cannot be listed here due to lack of space. On Upper Silesia after World War I: K. Struve (ed.), *Oberschlesien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Studien zu einem nationalen Konflikt und seiner Erinnerung* (Marburg, 2003).

[30] W. Wrzesiński, *Polski Ruch Narodowy w Niemczech 1922-1939* (Poznań, 1970) 222-232. At the national census of 1933, about 100,000 people stated that Polish was their mother tongue and 266,375 declared Polish and German to be their native languages.

[31] '9.12.1935. Der Oberpräsident in Breslau an den Reichs- und Preußischen Minister des Innern. Lagebericht', in: R. Jaworksi, M. Wojciechowski, M. Niendorf & P. Hauser (eds.), *Deutsche und Polen zwischen den Kriegen. Minderheitenstatus und Volkstumkampf im Grenzgebiet amtliche Berichterstattung aus beider Ländern 1920-1939* (Munich, 1997) 877-881 (878). Cf. a report of March 1935 with similar content by the president of the local government in Opolskie in Jaworski e.a., *Deutsche und Polen*, 857-862 (862).

[32] Cf. various reports in Jaworski e.a., *Deutsche und Polen*, 872, 881, 895.

[33] Quoted in J. Kokot, 'Wojenne i powojenne losy byłej ludności niemieckiej Śląska', in: *Ekonomia*, 1 (1965) 5-51 (13-15).

[34] Wrzesiński, *Polski Ruch Narodowy*, 374-380. On the National Socialist policy on nationalism during World War II, see P. Madajczyk, *Przyłączenie Śląska Opolskiego do Polski 1945-1948* (Warsaw, 1996) 45, 121.

[35] For an estimate of the German proportion of the population, see K. Đmigiel (ed.), *Die statistische Erhebung über die deutschen Katholiken in den Bistümern Polens 1928 und 1936* (Marburg, 1992) 220; M. Wanatowicz, 'Niemcy wobec problemu integracji Górnego Śląska z Rzeczpospolitą (1922-1939)', in: A. Szefer (ed.), *Niemcy wobec konfliktu narodowościowego na Górnym Śląsku po I wojnie światowej* (Poznań, 1989) 141-156 (154); F. Serafin, 'Wpływ Drugiej

Rzeczypospolitej na przemiany demograficzne i społeczne w województwie Śląskim w latach 1922-1939', in: M.W. Wanatowicz (ed.), *Rola i miejsce Górnego Śląska w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Bytom, 1995) 163-182 (169ff.).

[36] Quoted in M. Wanatowicz, *Ludność napływowa na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1922-1939* (Katowice, 1982) 345. On the national attitudes of the population particularly in eastern Upper Silesia, see P. Hauser, 'Zur Frage der nationalen Identität der oberschlesischen Bevölkerung in der Zeit zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen', in: G. Stöber & R. Maier (eds.), *Grenzen und Grenzräume in der deutschen und polnischen Geschichte. Scheidelinie oder Begegnungsraum?* (Hannover, 2000) 205-216.

[37] M. Marek Drożdowski, 'Górny *Śląs*k czasów Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Rzeczywistość, stereotypy, mity', in: Wanatowicz, *Rola i miejsce Górnego Śląska*, 65-83 (75ff.).

[38] T. Falęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1922-1939* (Katowice, 1970) 67.

[39] Jaworski e.a., *Deutsche und Polen,* 983.

[40] Jaworski e.a., *Deutsche und Polen*, 949.

[41] Jaworski e.a., *Deutsche und Polen*, 933.

[42] B. Linek, *'Odniemczanie' województwa Śląskiego w latach 1945-1950 (w świetle materiałów wojewódzkich)* (Opole, 1997).

[43] This immigrant population deserves special attention already for the mere fact that in the course of postwar history, it came to be a large majority in historical Upper Silesia and the present-day provinces of Opole and Katowice. Since the third postwar generation has already been born, it would seem anachronistic to call them 'settlers', and the Silesian society 'indigenous population', as they were labelled in the 1990s. But within the framework of this article I cannot deal in detail with the (former) 'settlers' (*osiedlency*) who came to Silesia after 1945.

[44] A similar conclusion was drawn by sociologist K. Żygulski already in communist times. See his uncensored manuscript in Opole, Opole Instytut Śląski, A 1454: *Przyczyny wyjazdu ludności rodzimej z woj. opolskiego na Zachód*, 24. The grounds for Bożek's disappointment lay in the fact that he, as one of the proponents of Polishness among the Upper Silesians, strongly overestimated their actual link to

the Polish nation. The same thing applies to Żygulski, whose essay was suppressed by the censors.

[45] D. Berlińska, 'Identität und nationale Identifikation der Schlesier nach 1989', in: Struve & Ther, *Nationen und ihre Grenzen*, 275-308.

[46] Cf. one of the first press reactions, A. Klich, 'Czy Ślązacy są narodowości', in: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1/7/2003. See for a more in depth study M.G. Gerlich, *'My prawdziwi Górnoślązacy…'. Studium ethnologiczne* (Warsaw, 2010).

[47] On Alsace, see the work by the Swiss historian K.-H. Rothenberger, *Die elsaß-lothringische Heimat- und Autonomiebewegung zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen* (Bern, 1976); also A. Wahl & J.-C. Richez, *L'Alsace entre France et Allemagne 1850-1950* (Paris, 1994).

[48] Traces of anti-colonial terms can also be found in academic literature, which invented the term of 'internal colonialism'. See for example M. Hechter, *Internal colonialism. The Celtic fringe in British national development 1536-1966* (Berkeley, 1977); J. Blaschke, *Volk, Nation, interner Kolonialismus. Konzepte zur politischen Soziologie der westeuropäischen Regionalbewegungen* (Berlin, 1984).

[49] Consult for these conflicts the comparative research by the sociologist Peter Waldmann, who published widely in German and Spanish. See in Spanish P. Waldmann, *Radicalismo étnico. Análisis comparado de las causas y efectos en conflictos etnicos violentos* (Madrid, 1997).