

Cuius regio?

Ideological and Territorial Cohesion of Silesia

eds Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościław Żerelik

vol. 2

The Strengthening of Silesian Regionalism (1526–1740)



eds Lucyna Harc, Gabriela Wąs

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Cohesion
of the Historical Region of Silesia
(c. 1000-2000)
vol. 2**

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The Strengthening of Silesian Regionalism (1526–1740)

eds Lucyna Harc, Gabriela Wąs

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The principles of the Cuius regio project and the history of Silesia between 1526 and 1740

Abstract:

The articles gathered in the volume present the second stage of research on the region of Silesia, encompassing the period 1526-1740 and conducted under the patronage of the European Science Foundation as a portion of the project “Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and cohesion within regions”. The objective of the project is to identify the factors occurring in each period which consolidated the Silesia region, or alternatively led to its disintegration, in several primary areas: administrative, economic and cultural/artistic. The specificity of the region’s history during its time under Habsburg rule led to a focus of attention on the political and cultural orientations of the people and social groups of Silesia. Their activities and attitudes were treated as the primary indicators revealing the social dimension of efforts to unify the region of Silesia with other countries of the Kingdom of Bohemia, as well as with the other political and territorial organisms composing the Habsburg dominion in Central Europe. These processes were also observed from the perspective of the political objectives pursued by Czech monarchs in that period. Analyses of events and phenomena of the time revealed periods of royal anti-regional policies towards Silesia accompanied by periods of policies intended to strengthen its regional identity within the Kingdom of Bohemia, within the context of efforts to achieve the overarching goal consisting in the monarchical centralization of authority.

Keywords:

Silesia, regional history, regionalism

This book is the second in a series dedicated to the history of Silesia, following a publication devoted to the period of history until 1526¹; it presents the history of Silesia from 1526 to 1740, with special attention placed on the development of the internal cohesion of the region. This study has been conducted under the auspices of the European Science Foundation under the *Cuius regio: An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and the cohesion within regions* programme². It has been financed by the

¹ *The Long Formation of the Region Silesia (c. 1000-1526)*, ed. Przemysław Wiszewski, Wrocław 2013 (=Cuius regio? Ideological and territorial cohesion of Silesia, eds. Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościław Żerelik, vol. 1), <http://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/publication/46981>

² More information on the project is available at www.cuius-regio.eu.

Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education³. The programme, initiated and led by Professor Dick de Boer from Groningen, aims to develop a research method for studying regions that would allow comparative analyses of the processes of their formation in different parts of Europe.

The Polish research team examining the issues of Silesia as a region is led by the following project members: Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski and Rościsław Żerelik. Moreover, renowned experts on specific historical periods have been invited to participate in the project. Their work has been coordinated by a specialist in the field of research on a given period of the history of Silesia and a member of the grant team. For the part discussing the period 1526-1740, the project involved experts in the fields of history, art history and the history of literature from Hamburg (Arno Herzig), Zielona Góra (Cezary Lipiński) and Wrocław (Jacek Dębicki, Mateusz Goliński, Lucyna Harc, Piotr Oszczanowski, Gabriela Wąs). The issues related to the role of administration and economy in the processes of integration and disintegration of the region have been referred to globally. Issues concerning social groups, as well as ethnic and linguistic issues, have been presented within two sub-periods: from 1526 until the early 17th century and from the Thirty Years' War to the cessation of Silesia's affiliation to the Bohemian Crown. The last two chapters present the development of regional and artistic identities separately. All the works of the team studying the period 1526-1740 have been supervised by Gabriela Wąs and Lucyna Harc.

The outline of the history of Silesia between 1526 and 1740⁴

The chronology of the history of Silesia adopted in the publication marking the beginning of the modern era in 1526 is primarily an ordering procedure. Cultural, political, social and economic phenomena, in the context of their regional specificity, are in fact long-lasting processes which began many decades before 1526, while individual phenomena characteristic of the previous epoch had not yet finished by the late 16th century, and sometimes lasted even longer. Therefore, the

³ *Cuius Regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces destined the attachment of (groups of) persons to and the cohesion within regions as a historical phenomenon*, decision of the Minister of Science and Higher Education No. 832/N-ESF-CORECODE/2010/0.

⁴ Detailed literature on particular issues has been collected in the following sections of this book. For general studies of the history of Silesia during this period see: *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 2: *Die Habsburger Zeit 1526-1740*, ed. Ludwig Petry, Sigmaringen 1988, 2nd edition. The latest bibliography on the history of Silesia prepared in cooperation with Herder Institute in Marburg, Slezské zemské Museum in Opava and the University of Wrocław is available online at: http://www.wroclaw-uw.sowwwa.pl/sowwagi.php?&lang=en_GB (accessed on the 20th August, 2013).

lower chronological limit of the discussed epoch could have been demarcated otherwise, i.e. earlier, as some historians have done⁵. Leaving aside considerations about the actual end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern period in Silesia, it is clear that the epoch framed by the years 1526 and 1740 – regardless of whether it is called ‘modern’ or just perceived as some stage in the modern period – has so many features characteristic only for itself that it can be isolated as a compact and homogeneous time unit in the history of Silesia.

In contrast to the previous period, which is characterized by Silesia’s volatile and unstable political affiliations, in 1526-1740 the region belonged permanently to the Kingdom of Bohemia, even though for the first decade the Bohemian king still had to struggle with Hungary, which refused to recognize this fact. According to the Peace of Olomouc of 1479, the affiliation of Silesia, along with Moravia and Lower and Upper Lusatia, to the Kingdom of Bohemia was suspended and authority over those lands was granted to the Hungarian King. The condition for the return of those lands to Bohemian rule was a payment of 400,000 guilders to Hungary⁶. During the reign of the Kings of the Jagiellonian dynasty, who ruled both the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Kingdom of Hungary (Ladislaus, the King of Bohemia from 1471 and the King of Hungary from 1490, as well as his son Louis, who ruled both kingdoms from 1516 to 1526), this issue remained unsettled. In the year that Ferdinand I of Habsburg assumed power (1526), the state affiliation of Silesia, in a political sense, continued to be in limbo. At that time, Silesian dukes and estates unequivocally chose to affiliate themselves with the Bohemian monarchy. In addition to a decidedly long tradition of such state formation, whose impact was considerable, the threat of direct involvement of Silesia in the war conducted by Hungary against Turkey was also of importance, above all in the aspect of supplying financial and human provisions. After 1526, Turkey seized a large central part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The disintegration of the remaining area into royal Hungary and the south-eastern part known as Transylvania was due to the fact that some members of the Hungarian political community petitioned Ferdinand and others to side with John Zápolya. Faced with the prospect of further Turkish expansion, Zápolya was placed in an extremely difficult situation which ultimately not only enabled Ferdinand to make an advantageous pact with Zápolya in 1538 concerning the seizure of the Hungarian Crown, but also finally closed the issue of Hungarian claims over Silesia. In addition to political will and the activity of various political

⁵ Norbert Conrads, *Książęta i stany. Historia Śląska (1469–1740)*, translated by Lidia Wiśniewska, Wrocław 2005.

⁶ Karl Bosl, *Handbuch der Geschichte der Böhmischen Länder*, Stuttgart 1974, p. 104.

forces which was particularly prevalent in Silesia, what helped consolidate the region's affiliation with the Kingdom of Bohemia was the relative stability of other state borders in this part of Europe.

Throughout the period 1526-1740 the Bohemian throne was occupied by rulers from the Habsburg dynasty, who represented a fairly uniform governing strategy in relation to Silesia. This strategy consisted of efforts to expand the range of the monarch's power. This purpose was served by a policy of integration, which mainly took two forms. In the 16th century, the idea of integration initiated by Ferdinand I (1526-1564) was to try to create administrative links between Vienna, Prague and Silesia, excluding Prague in the second period of his reign. Despite the conceived projects, the royal offices and institutions did not fulfil the tasks they were obliged to follow, or performed them only partially. The governing of Silesia was performed primarily through an estate system of offices and institutions. It was only during the Thirty Years' War that a small, yet important – from the monarchy's point of view – reform took place. The office of the governor of Silesia was transformed into a collegial institution: the Superior Office. This allowed the governing system of Silesia to be a transparent mechanism for executing the royal will. The second type of integration policy characteristic of the 17th century and the first four decades of the 18th century was based on the idea of Catholic confessionalization. Silesia, mostly Protestant before the war's outbreak, was to be dominated by Catholics. Affiliation to a Roman-Catholic confession was to guarantee fidelity to the Habsburgs' rule. It was, therefore, a process of integration based on a political ideology strongly connected with religious values. Its main objective and the greatest achievement was the conversion to Catholicism of a significant part of the Silesian elite, especially aristocrats⁷.

Another important consequence of dynastic change in the Bohemian throne in 1526 was the increased distance of Silesia from the centre of power. Until then, the centre of power had been placed in the Kingdom of Bohemia, primarily in Prague. In the days of the Jagiellonian Kings, their simultaneous occupation of the Hungarian and Bohemian thrones was the cause of rivalry between the elites of these kingdoms for political influence, yet because the monarchy did not formulate plans for one kingdom to dominate, they were balanced. In the period 1526-1740 the centre of power was Vienna, except for a short period of time during the reign of Rudolf II (1576-1611), who in 1582 moved his court to Prague. The distance between the region of Silesia and the centre of power became greater not only geographically,

⁷ Jarosław Kuczer, *Baronowie, hrabiowie, książęta. Nowe elity Śląska (1629-1740)*, Zielona Góra 2013.

but also in a political sense. Within the contemporary political scene the existing competitors for political influence and participation in the central authority, i.e. figures from the Bohemian estates, were soon joined by lords and nobles of the Austrian lands.

As early as in the 16th century this fact had led to the Silesian elites being pushed to the political margins within the domain of the Habsburg dynasty. At the same time, the Habsburgs sought to rebuild the Kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary so that these lands would become a permanent part of the territory ruled by them, united with their hereditary countries in the Reich. In implementing this plan for the ruling dynasty, the territories in the Kingdom of Bohemia that received the greatest focus were primarily Bohemia⁸, followed by Moravia. Silesia, on the other hand, held an inferior position within the new political and estate structure of the popularly-named Habsburg monarchy, which was planned and was gradually emerging in that epoch, especially since the period of Ferdinand II (King of Bohemia from 1617, Emperor from 1619 to 1637). This did not mean, of course, that the Habsburgs were ready to abandon their rule over this relatively rich country, which provided the monarchs with considerable income. However, the consequence of following the priorities of the Habsburgs' dynastic policy, for whom the ultimate goal was to create their own, hereditary monarchy, was the disintegration of the Kingdom of Bohemia. It lost three of the five countries which had been its constituents at the beginning of this period: Lower and Upper Lusatia in the 1630s, and from 1740 to 1742 almost the whole of Silesia. The rapid and permanent loss of most of the Silesian lands can equally be attributed to the efficient military aggression of Frederick of Prussia, and to the nature of the internal policy of the Habsburgs.

Silesia also benefitted from a period of territorial and political stabilization in 1526-1740. The fluctuating numbers of not only duchies and other types of sovereignty but also their borders, so characteristic of former times, were markedly inhibited in the period around 1526. During the epoch under discussion there were 16-17 duchies. Beside them there were four, and from 1697 six, free-state countries and several smaller separate forms of territorial ownership. The dominant dynasty among the princes was the Piast dynasty. The rulers of one line of the family ruled in the Duchies of Legnica, Brzeg, and Wołów, members of the second line ruled in the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz, while members of the third line ruled in the

⁸ Jaroslav Pánek, *Das politische System des böhmischen Staates im ersten Jahrhundert der habsburgischen Herrschaft*, 'Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung', 97 (1989), Nos. 1-2, pp. 53-82.

Duchy of Cieszyn. The princes of the Poděbrady family ruled in the Duchy of Ziębice (until 1569) and Oleśnica. Until 1621 the Duchy of Krnov belonged to the Hohenzollern dynasty. The Saxon Wettins holding a *lieu* Duchy of Żagań and the electoral Hohenzollerns of Brandenburg in the Duchy of Krosno were also Silesian vassals, yet they were not perceived as lords of the land by nature. However, changes of ownership in the duchies were substantial. They were connected with the dying out of all old Silesian lines of dukes in the 17th century (the line of the Poděbrady family died out in 1647, followed gradually by other lines of the Silesian Piasts – the last family that died out were the Dukes of Brzeg and Legnica in 1675) and the passage of their duchies, in accordance with the established legal and state tradition, to the direct possession of the Bohemian king while maintaining their affiliation to Silesia. More important and larger territorial units were preserved by the king in the form of the so-called hereditary duchies. To the duchies which were already ruled directly by the king from a previous epoch, that is Wrocław, Głogów and Świdnica-Jawor, in the period after 1526 also joined such duchies as, among others, Legnica, Brzeg and Opole-Racibórz. Some of them were given by the king to his Catholic supporters, the families of Liechtenstein, Auersperg and Lobkowitz, who by the grace of the king were raised to the titular dignity of dukes. The regional identity of Silesian elites was also disrupted by the claims of foreign families and rulers to whom the Habsburgs had political commitments, which were satisfied by assigning them Silesian duchies or placing them in long-term *lieu*. In this way, the turn of the 18th century saw the appearance in Silesia of sovereigns of individual Silesian duchies such as Gabriel Bethlen or Albrecht von Wallenstein, as well as members of the dynasties ruling in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1646-1666 the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz was pledged to the Polish branch of the House of Vasa, and in the years 1691-1737 Oława, along with its princely title, was passed to James Louis Sobieski, son of King John III, who was married to the sister of the wife of Leopold I. Such dynastic relationships with the Habsburgs, as well as the pro-Habsburg policy carried out during the Thirty Years' War by Sigismund III Vasa – who was married first to Anne and then to Constance, the sisters of Ferdinand II – were crucial for the establishment of Charles Ferdinand Vasa to the throne of the Bishopric of Wrocław (1626-1655). However, the presence of the Polish ruling families in Silesia at this time did not stem from the policy of the then Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom – its political interests in this epoch went in a vastly different geographical direction: towards the east and south-east because of the union with Lithuania and the Turkish threat – but it resulted rather

from dynastic interests, whose aims were to provide territories for younger members of families or to acquire assets for their own dynasties.

Another aspect that supports the decision to mark the beginning of the period as 1526 and the end as 1740 is the fairly uniform political system that existed within Silesia during this period. On the one hand – according to convincing studies conducted by historians of law⁹ – the earlier date is related to the completion of the formation of the political estate of Silesia, where many basic elements had been formed at the end of the previous period but whose consequences were not fully visible until the age under discussion. Another argument connected with state and politics for determining the lower and upper time limits of the period was the formation of central institutions of power in the region which administered Silesia as a political and territorial entity, and the determination of the specific practice of governance in Silesia. The change in the source of power divides the 1526-1740 period into two sub-periods: the first period of 1526-1629/39 characterized by a duality of power in the province – the power of the estates and royal power – and the second period of 1629/39-1740, in which the monarch was the only source of power. The indicated dates mainly refer to particular acts issued by the monarch at that time.

The relationship between the power of the king and that of the estates takes on its full meaning only after taking into account a very important phenomenon in the history of 16th-century Silesia, namely the developing Reformation movement. One consequence of this was an increased sense of separateness among the Silesian political, economic and cultural elites, the vast majority of whom were gradually converting to Protestantism in the 16th century, against the power of the Catholic monarchs. This separateness made itself visible not only in the religious sphere but also in the political one. Despite the expansion of their realm of sovereignty, throughout the 16th century the kings also had to put up with the increasing autonomy of the region. During the 16th century Ferdinand I, Maximilian II and Rudolf II had, when ascending to the throne, in addition to confirming all the privileges of estates and the country, also expressed in Silesia their intention to abide by the rules of the religious Peace of Augsburg promised by Ferdinand for the first time in 1556. In a practical sense, the range of religious freedom enjoyed by Silesian Protestants was much wider than that foreseen in the principles of the Peace of Augsburg. Protestant parishes, along with the churches and schools, existed not only throughout

⁹ Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, Warszawa–Wrocław 1979; *idem*, *Historia ustroju Śląska 1202-1740*, Wrocław 2005.

the areas remaining under the rule of their fellow believers, but also in the territories of Catholics, and even belonging to the bishop and monasteries¹⁰.

The combination of religious conflict between Protestant estates and their Catholic rulers with the conflict for political power was not only an ad hoc dispute. Behind it lay the striving for legal and political redevelopment, in which the estates were in favour of an estate monarchy, and the kings opted for a kingdom with centralized monarchical power. This led to a dramatic confrontation between those forces in the period 1609-1620. In 1609, the Bohemian and Silesian estates formed a confederacy for the first time to force Rudolf II to safeguard their religious and political rights. In view of the united forces of the estates, the sovereign issued two Letters of Majesty for Bohemia and Silesia, introducing an almost complete formula of freedom for Lutheranism in Silesia. Another concession for Silesia was the king's pledge not to appoint general bishops of Wrocław to the position of a governor of Silesia, who had held this office since 1536 when all lay Silesian dukes became Protestants. In this way, in 1609 for the first time a Lutheran, Duke Charles II of Oleśnica, became the governor of Silesia.

The attempt to stop the transformation of the Bohemian monarchy into an estate monarchy first by Matthias, and then by Ferdinand II, concluded in a clash of royal and estate forces, which began in 1618 as the Defenestration of Prague. It was initiated by the Bohemian estates, who, having performed the act of renouncing allegiance to the king, persuaded the Silesian estates to further joint steps. They proposed a second confederation on the basis of full equality for the regions, an act which was signed by the Silesians on the 31st July 1619. They dethroned Ferdinand II and appointed Frederick V, Elector Palatine, as the new king. The defeat of the estates' troops in the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 quickly turned into a disaster for the estate movement and the Silesians, at the mercy of Ferdinand II, signed the so-called Dresden Accord in 1621. Their price for the confirmation of the Letter of Majesty in terms of the freedom of the Lutheran religion was their political submissiveness and withdrawal from the relationship with the Bohemian estates, who were subjected to cruel and bloody reprisals. The second renouncement of allegiance to the king in 1633 by the Silesian estates, along with their joining the anti-Habsburg forces with the intention of even deserting the Kingdom of Bohemia in order to liberate themselves from the rule of the Habsburgs, concluded in submission to the Peace of Prague in 1635, which brought even more humiliating political reprisals. Repressions during the two times when Silesia took an active part in the

¹⁰ Colmar Grünhagen, *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 2: *Bis zur Vereinigung mit Preußen 1527-1740*, Gotha 1886, pp. 3-107.

Thirty Years' War were limited to individuals who specifically revealed their anti-Habsburg attitude. However, the Thirty Years' War was an extremely difficult period for the people of the land of Silesia. On several occasions it had been the venue for serious hostilities, which caused massive losses of property and people. Historians estimate that the population diminished by one-fifth to one-third. Silesia also served as a winter shelter and supply area for the troops, which led to the country's economic collapse due to the system of financing the war, the so-called contribution.

The legal status of the Lutheran confession in Silesia became a subject of discussion during negotiations which concluded with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Silesian Lutherans were assured of freedom of religious worship and the ownership of the churches in the duchies where the power, at the time of establishing peace, was still held by independent Protestant dukes, that is in the Duchies of Brzeg, Legnica and Oleśnica, and also the city of Wrocław and the Duchy of Ziębice, which had reached an agreement on religious freedom with the king back in 1571. Silesian history in the second half of the 17th century is characterized on the one hand by Silesian Protestants raising complaints against violations by the Catholic monarchs – Ferdinand III, Leopold I and Joseph I – of their religious rights provided for in the Peace of Westphalia, and on the other hand by the rather monotonous favouritism of the Habsburgs in the public life of Silesia over everything that supported monarchical Catholicism. This procedure involved both seizing Lutheran churches in the areas which had been given the freedom to practise Lutheranism by the Peace of Westphalia, as well as the systematic removal of Protestants from all public authorities and institutions, especially from the Diet of Silesia, the office of governor of Silesia and the municipal councils. Therefore, the next milestone in the social history of Silesia was the Altranstädter Convention of 1707 – a convention which complied with the provisions of the Peace of Westphalia regarding the rights of the Lutherans in Silesia and the restoration of their ownership of churches forced by a military threat from the Swedish King Charles XII on the Emperor of the Reich and the Bohemian King, Joseph I. The long reign of Charles VI (1711-1740) as the King of Bohemia was the last Habsburg to rule over the whole region of Silesia. In 1720, without resistance, the Silesian Diet adopted the resolution of the Pragmatic Sanction, ensuring the succession went to Charles' daughter, Maria Theresa.

The period 1526-1740 is also distinguished by the creation of modern Silesian culture, which was diverse in its forms and content, and individualist in its expression. What developed from around the mid-16th century and throughout the 17th century until the Thirty Years' War was a specific 'late Silesian humanism', which

can be also described as evangelical humanism. It was characterized by a symbiosis of the late Renaissance humanism with evangelical religious ideas¹¹. The period leading to the Thirty Years' War had been a source of continuous, vivid flourishing of Silesian intellectual circles. One of its trends was expressed in the development of modern historiography, which exhibited proto-national features, where the love of the homeland solidified with a desire for ethno-cultural separation¹² (the works of Joachim Cureus, Nicholas Henel, Nicholas Pol and the continuation of this trend in the 17th century historiography such as of Frederick Lucae). Another important trend of late humanism was associated with the turn of the intellectual elites of Silesia towards medical and botanical sciences, which inspired the Silesian Protestants to study at the Catholic universities of Padua, Bologna, and Venice¹³. Due to their strong philosophical and humanistic profile, the studies became a medium of re-establishing the direct contact of the Silesians with the cultural centres of late Italian humanism. This contact strongly influenced the revival of interest in literature and art. Most prominent Silesian physicians and jurists at that time were also poets. Many of them were honoured, by imperial grace, with the titles *poeta coronatus* and *comes palatinus* (John Crato von Crafftheim). Moreover, in the 17th century, especially in the second half, and at the beginning of the 18th century, two Baroque confessional cultures developed in parallel in Silesia. Although the Catholics had for a long time been a distinct religious minority in the Silesian community, and it was only after intensive efforts of the Habsburg authorities that they began to match the number of Protestants within the first 40 years of the 18th century, it was Catholic Baroque art that dominated the artistic landscape of Silesia in the modern period. This phenomenon was influenced on the one hand by the activity of secular and ecclesiastical patronage, which was far more powerful than in Protestantism, and on the other hand by the much more important role of art in spirituality and religiosity of that confession. The Jesuit architectural complexes in such cities as Wrocław and Legnica, and Cistercian ones in rural areas such as Lubiąż or Krzeszów, all of them of European artistic standing – mentioned by way of example only, since a list of the Catholic artistic edifices in Silesia and the com-

¹¹ Arno Lubos, *Der Späthumanismus in Schlesien*, 'Jahrbuch der schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau', 2 (1957), pp. 107-147.

¹² Matthias Weber, *Zur Konzeption protonationaler Geschichtsbilder. Pommern und Schlesien in geschichtlichen Darstellungen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Konstruktion der Vergangenheit. Geschichtsdanken, Traditionsbildung und Selbstdarstellung im frühneuzeitlichen Ostmitteleuropa*, eds Joachim Bahlcke, Arno Strohmeier, Berlin 2002, pp. 55-79.

¹³ Claudia A. Zonta, *Schlesische Studenten an italienischen Universitäten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Stuttgart 2000; Manfred Komorowski, *Silesia accademica. Promotionen, Inauguraldissertationen, Biographien schlesischer Ärzte und Juristen im 17. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Kulturgeschichte Schlesiens in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Garber, vol. 1, Tübingen 2005, pp. 321-360.

munities that initiated them would be very long – have continued to play a decisive role up to today in determining the qualities of architectural landscape throughout those lands.

Despite the oppressive social and economic situation caused by terrible devastations left by the Thirty Years' War and the intensive policy of re-Catholicization pursued by the Habsburgs, the 17th century was the most abundant period in the history of Protestant culture in that country in terms of literature and poetry. Martin Opitz, one of the greatest poets of Silesia and the creator of German Baroque poetics, lived and worked until 1639. A few years after the war followed a generation of artists that were under his direct influence, including, among others, Christopher Köler and Andreas Tscherning. The most prominent author in the new generation of poets was Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664), who was directly inspired from antique and new-Latin classical works. The next generation of poets, including Christian Hoffmann von Hoffmannswaldau (1616-1679) and Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein (1635-1683), constituted the core of the so-called Second Silesian School, referring in their works of poetry and lyrics both to Petrarch and to a Neapolitan artist, Giambattista Marino¹⁴. The intense spiritual life of the Silesian Evangelists in this period was also manifested in the creation of a spiritual and religious trend referred to as Silesian mysticism and related to specific religious literature. Its most prominent creators were Jakob Böhme, Daniel Czepko von Reigersfeld and John Scheffler, more commonly known as Angelus Silesius, the name which he assumed after his conversation to the Catholicism¹⁵.

The essays presented in this volume are considerably expanded versions of the articles published in Polish in the second issue of the *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* quarterly (2013).

¹⁴ Manfred Fleischer, *Späthumanismus in Schlesien*, München 1984, p. 40.

¹⁵ Józef Piórczyński, *Absolut, człowiek, świat. Studium myśli Jakuba Böhme'go i jej źródeł*, Warszawa 1991; Józef Kosian, *Mistyka śląska. Mistrzowie duchowości śląskiej Jakub Boehme, Aniol Ślązak, Daniel Czepko*, Wrocław 2001. For specialist biographical articles concerning most of the people mentioned in this paragraph see: *Śląska Republika Uczonych = Schlesische Gelehrtenrepublik = Slezská vědecká obec*, eds Marek Hałub, Anna Mańko-Matysiak, vol. 1-5, Wrocław 2004-2012.



Map 1. Territorial-political division of Silesia c. 1675 (Dariusz Przybytek)

Institutions and administrative bodies, and their role in the processes of integration and disintegration in Silesia

Abstract:

The Early Modern Period in formation of the political and social order is marked by the formation, in the beginning of said epoch, of distinct institutions and offices for the purpose of ruling Silesia, pan-Silesian, estate and ducal in various jurisdictions in Silesia, said system – with changes introduced in the absolute reign after 1629 – survived until 1740. Factors which influenced the perception of being separate among the social and political elite of Silesia were the institutions forming for the purpose of administrating the country in the time when links with the Bohemian Crown were weakened, especially in the latter part of the 15th and beginnings of the 16th century. This influenced the formation of Silesian institutions as having a great deal of autonomy in regards to the rule of the king and other institutions of the monarchy. The distinctly Silesian social structure was also influential in forming the distinctiveness of Silesian institutions. Formation of regions was also influenced by the institutional and political structure of the monarchy, which was comprised of five countries, all of which had their own estate representation, and comprised nearly all, available in those times, aspects of governing the society. The Thirty Years' War became the caesura of Silesian regionalism: the monarchy managed to marginalise the Silesian political regionalism, although reforms after 1629 maintained the administrative and institutional regional system of Silesia.

Keywords:

Silesia, regional history, regional administration, socio-political structure

Perceiving the year 1526 as a transition point between two historical epochs is connected with the fact that it was around this date that the crucial stage of the formation of the system of institutions and offices of the Silesian government was completed. Many fundamental elements of this system emerged at the close of the previous age, bringing about consequences which only became fully apparent at the time of dynastic change in the year 1526. This system, with modified elements, lasted throughout the modern period, that is until 1740. Due to the existence of public-legal sources of authority with the power to establish offices, the period from 1526 to 1740 may be divided into two sub-periods: that of the co-existence of two sources of national authority – estate and royal (the so-called dualism of authority) – and that of exclusive monarchical rule. It is very difficult to determine the date of transition between these two periods: although the monarchical reforms

were initiated in 1629, the actual date of the implementation of the modified administrative system of Silesia needs to be moved later into the 17th century.

A factor which came to exert a particularly strong influence on the further development of regionalism in the Kingdom of Bohemia was the cultural-political consequences of the turbulent events of the 15th century connected with the emergence of Hussitism, the suppression of the integration potential of Bohemia as the supreme country of the monarchy and the emergence of the disintegrating force of confessional differences. At that time Silesia was often conceived as being isolated from the monarchy and treated as an object of political manoeuvrings. It was even perceived, albeit temporarily, as an adversary of Bohemia. This became a powerful impetus for the members of the socio-political elites of Silesia to develop a sense of their unique cultural and political identity. It was this period – when the links of Silesia with the Kingdom of Bohemia were considerably loosened – that marked the most intense stage of the formation of the estate administrative institutions of Silesia. These were not only independent from the central authorities of the monarchy, but also, to a large extent, from the king himself. The formation of the institutional administration system in Silesia, strictly dependent on the region's specific social structure, was yet another fundamental factor in boosting the sense of unique identity among Silesian communities – a process whose effects were felt throughout the entire modern period. The political maturation of Silesia manifested in a conscious representation outside Silesia of all its political agents by the central bodies of Silesian authority, which contributed significantly to the fact that before 1526 Silesia had already achieved the status of a country within the structure of the monarchy¹. The fact that other regions obtained a similar status also meant that, at the outset of the modern period, the Kingdom of Bohemia was an estate organism composed of five heterogeneous political-territorial units: Silesia, Moravia, Upper Lusatia, Lower Lusatia and Bohemia (which, although it continued to be the principal land of the monarchy, was in an unstable and weakened position)². Such an estate structure can be considered as an existent, powerful pro-regional force – both for the constitution of Silesia and the entire contemporary monarchy – until the

¹ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 241.

² J. Pánek, *Das politische System*, pp. 53-82; Joachim Bahlcke, *Regionalismus und Staatsintegration im Widerstreit*, München 1994, p. 32; *Böhmen und Mähren. Handbuch der historischen Stätten*, eds Joachim Bahlcke, Winfried Eberhard, Miroslav Polívka, Stuttgart 1998, pp. LXX-LXXXII; Christine van Eickels, *Schlesien im böhmischen Ständestaat. Voraussetzungen und Verlauf der böhmischen Revolution von 1618 in Schlesien*, Stuttgart 1992, pp. 20-56; Petr Mat'á, *Verwaltungs- und behördengeschichtliche Forschungen zu den böhmischen Ländern in der Frühen Neuzeit, [in:] Herrschaftsverdichtung, Staatsbildung, Bürokratisierung. Verfassungs-, Verwaltungs- und Behördengeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit*, Wien 2010, pp. 421-476.

outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Another factor that had a remarkable effect on regionalism was the fact that at the outset of the modern period, each of the constituent countries of the monarchy possessed its own estate representative body and other offices of estate administration, whose power, while being limited to individual countries, would extend to almost all areas of the contemporary social administration.

In the early modern period, the number of central authorities in the Kingdom of Bohemia was rather insignificant. The power of those that dealt with Silesian affairs was monarchical in character. However, by the time of the Thirty Years' War, within some nominally monarchical institutions it was the Bohemian estate that played a crucial role. Central power was represented primarily by the king's office, which was characteristic of the modern period. Furthermore, the royal institutions and the central offices which were common for the entire monarchy and which controlled certain aspects of life and administration in Silesia included: the Bohemian court Chancellery headed by the Bohemian chancellor, which until the Thirty Years' War was clearly dominated by the Bohemian estates and whose characteristic feature was extensive power of the chancellor; the Bohemian camera until 1558, and the Prague Appeals Chamber from 1548. Another body, in principle a monarchical one (for it was only the monarch who exercised the power to summon it) yet composed of estate authorities, was the institution of the general estates assembly of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Another central body was the royal council, but it did not possess executive powers and its impact on the processes of administration was only indirect, which resulted from the fact that it was presided over by the Bohemian chancellor³.

What was also characteristic about the modern period was the striving of the Habsburg monarchs to establish administrative-bureaucratic connections beyond the Bohemian monarchy. Until 1740 this aim was realized only partially in an institutional sense⁴, though from the Thirty Years' War onwards the Habsburgs instituted an intensified process of unification of individual dynastic rights towards territories described as hereditary: ducal power over hereditary areas within the Old Reich and monarchic power within the Kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. Due to the lack of a common monarchic title for the new great political-estate unit *in statu nascendii*, from the second half of the 16th century the Habsburgs used the imperial title in combination with relevant monarchic titles, which were not explicit enough

³ Thomas Winkelbauer, *Österreichische Geschichte 1522-1699. Ständefreiheit und Fürstenmacht. Länder und Untertanen des Hauses Habsburg im konfessionellen Zeitalter*, vol. 2, Wien 2003, pp. 82-83.

⁴ Paula S. Fichtner, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1490-1848*, Basingstoke 2003, pp. 19-20.

by themselves yet were separable from the scope of the emperor's authority within the Reich. Within this structure, the institutional Kingdom of Bohemia, however, remained an autonomous organism until the very close of the era⁵, preserving the separate office of the Bohemian king and a separate monarchic Chancellery, which in relation to Silesia functioned as the highest and immediate instances of power. In the light of current research it seems inadequate to perceive institutions created to govern the countries of the Habsburg's territories within the Reich as central for the Bohemian monarchy⁶, although from the second half of the 17th century the process of merging them into a uniform mechanism of authority – albeit composed of independent institutions – intensified. The only exceptions were two bodies. In the period until 1740, the supra-Bohemian institutional structures were establishing themselves within the Bohemian Crown and Silesia by means of two Viennese bodies: the court Camera of Vienna, initially possessing limited power⁷ and, from the second half of the 17th century – and probably effective only in the 18th century – the court council of war. The so-called 'congresses of lands' represented the next unsuccessful attempt to create a form of institutional body that would operate beyond the political borders of the Habsburg sovereignties, which were composed of estates. In fact, they did not develop into an independent political institution. Neither does it seem appropriate to describe the Viennese secret council as a superior body within the Kingdom of Bohemia, for it lacked a structural relationship with the Bohemian authorities. Despite its somewhat political significance, its relationship with the Bohemian monarchy was restricted to the fact of its ranks being populated by individual Bohemian officials appointed by the king – which was a form of their distinction⁸.

The aforementioned central offices were – by definition – designed to unite individual parts of the state and facilitate its institutional unification. Their remit

⁵ Eila Hassenpflug-Elzholz, *Böhmen und die böhmischen Stände in der Zeit des beginnenden Zentralismus. Eine Strukturanalyse der böhmischen Adelsnation um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, München–Wien 1982, pp. 53-92; Jaroslav Pánek, *Der böhmische Staat und das Reich in der Frühen Neuzeit*, [in:] *Alternativen zur Reichsverfassung in der Frühen Neuzeit?*, ed. Volker Press, München 1995, pp. 169-178; Hans-Wolfgang Bergerhausen, *Die Verneuerte Landesordnung in Böhmen 1627: ein Grunddokument des habsburgischen Absolutismus*, 'Historische Zeitschrift', 272 (2001), No. 2, pp. 346-351; Robert John Weston Evans, *The making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550-1700*, Oxford 1979, p. 148.

⁶ The view of the separation of Czech institutions also in the Habsburg territories of the Reich is adopted by Christoph Link, *Die Habsburgischen Erblande, die böhmischen Länder und Salzburg*, [in:] *Deutsche Verwaltungsgeschichte*, vol. 1, eds Kurt G.A. Jeserich, Hans Pohl, Stuttgart 1983, pp. 468-516.

⁷ Friedrich Walter, *Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte von 1500–1955*, Wien–Köln–Graz 1972, p. 74 I 67.

⁸ J. Pánek, *Das politische System*, p. 75.

also included eliminating regional administrative-political differences within the Kingdom of Bohemia. General observations on the unique character of these institutions need to be elaborated on through consideration of the practical side of their operation. What one needs to take into account is the difference between the promoting competences attributed to them by political forces and the resistance of the Silesian estates to recognize these competences. The range of unification activities conducted by these institutions was also influenced by the dynamics of political events. Due to the distribution of political forces in the rivalry for power and the realization of their own particular interests, the role of these institutions in Silesia, however, began to evolve.

The Bohemian estates, during their political revival under the stabilized conditions created by the rule of the Jagiellons at the turn of the 16th century, formulated a political framework whereby Bohemia was to function as the superior country within the monarchy⁹. In the first decades following the year 1526 this concept was consolidated by the policy of the monarchy, whose aim was to reinforce and extend its range of power both in Bohemia and in the territory of the constituent countries of the monarchy. The kings attempted to make use of the monarchic organs of authority as well as the Bohemian offices and institutions (of an estate character or composition) and strove – temporarily - together with the Bohemian estates - to gain acknowledgement of their primacy and to secure the precedence of the offices of the Crown's country over the analogous offices of the remaining countries. Both as far as the concept of the policy of the Bohemian estates and the concept of the royal policy are concerned, this was an attempt to reactivate (in the 16th century) the vertical structure of authority within the structure of an entire monarchy. Simultaneously, the Habsburgs were trying to transform the local dual character of authority, i.e. rule based on the strategy of reaching consensus between the king and estates, into monarchic centralism characterized by the explicit dominance of the royal authority. Their activity met with protests from Bohemian opponents and hence the Habsburgs were forced to compete for their position at the central institutions of the monarchy. In the modern period, none of these options was approved by the estates of the remaining lands. Each of them developed specific tendencies towards political emancipation from the dominance of the principal country and perceived the monarchy as a system of countries with horizontal connections, tied together by bonds of a federative nature, with each one having equal

⁹ K. Bosl, *Handbuch*, p. 104; J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, p. 27.

political status¹⁰. They also attempted to achieve full autonomy in the area of internal administration by means of self-developed estate institutions¹¹. The three basic political forces – those of the king, the Bohemian estates and the estates within Silesia – resulted in the relatively high lability of the institutions with volatile powers, especially in the period prior to the Thirty Years' War. The brief outline of these institutions presented below gives only a slight indication of the dynamics they were subject to.

The presented dichotomy of the structure of the monarchy, with the vertical-hierarchical authority of the Bohemian estates and the king and the horizontal-federative authority of the estates – which initially defined the struggle between the centralizing and regionalizing forces – gradually, from the mid-16th century, began to lose its status as the principal hotbed of the conflict. For the Bohemian estates, the hierarchical structure of the monarchy ceased to be the ultimate priority once it transpired that, in order to maintain a balance of power, it was necessary for them to create a confederation with the estates of remaining countries of the monarchy and to appease anti-Bohemian attitudes among some of the regional political elites, which were spurred in Silesia in the 16th century as a consequence of Czech claims to hold senior positions at the regional institutions and offices. The sharpest conflict came to light in 1546 during the trial of Duke Frederick II of Legnica for forming a family alliance of inheritance with the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns without the king's consent. The fall of one of the greatest Silesian dukes into royal disfavour and his humiliating summoning to court, served for his pursuers, representatives of the Bohemian estates, as grounds to demand the abolition – against the 1498 privilege of Ladislaus Jagiellon – of the law according to which Silesian dukes were the only suitable candidates to fill the office of governor of Silesia (*Oberlandeshauptmann*), and claimed that the office of governor of Silesia as a royal office should be entrusted to the Bohemian lords, that is to the members of the highest social group in the Kingdom of Bohemia. Continuous tensions concerning methods of administration in Silesia surfaced even in the period of loyal cooperation between the Bohemian and Silesian estates towards Rudolph as the King of Bohemia at the time of turbulent political feuds between members of the Habsburg family, Rudolph and Archduke Matthias, between 1608 and 1611¹². Political cooperation between the Bohemian and Silesian estates, which in 1609 led to the first Bohemian-Silesian

¹⁰ J. Pánek, *Das politische System*, pp. 71-74; J. Bahleke, *Regionalismus*, pp. 17–23; *idem*, *Das Herzogtum Schlesien im politischen System der Böhmisches Krone*, 'Zeitschrift Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung', 44 (1995), No. 1, p. 33.

¹¹ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, pp. 327-328.

¹² Hugo Hentsch, *Die Geschichte Österreichs*, vol. 1, Graz 1969, pp. 318-329.

confederation, thanks to which the estates were granted confession-estate freedoms¹³ in the shape of the Letters of Majesty granting in Silesia equal legal status to Catholics and Lutherans, did not, however, temper the rivalry for power. Bohemian estate politicians kept calling for the right to hold senior offices in Silesia, due to their higher political status in the monarchy. In the period prior to the Thirty Years' War, when the Bohemian estates were an active shaping force in the monarchy, they nonetheless failed to break the resistance of the Silesian political elites and fill any of the Silesian country offices. The actions of the Bohemian estates which focused on achieving the internal unification of the monarchy – also in terms of institutions – may be regarded as attempts to abolish the regions. Yet the strong link between unification intentions and hegemonic aspirations resulted in the continuous distrust of Silesia towards Bohemia and constituted a strong impetus for Silesians to consolidate their pro-regional attitudes. At the same time, Bohemian politicians became allies in the struggle against the spread of the power of the Habsburgs. Going back to the aforementioned privilege of Ladislaus Jagiellon – which Bohemian politicians in the mid-16th century wanted to revoke for the sake of satisfying their own appetites for Silesia – in the years 1583-1586, in the face of the expansion of power of the Habsburgs, they supported the Silesians' attempt on the basis of this privilege to prevent the Habsburg Archduke Matthias from assuming the office of governor of Silesia¹⁴.

Moreover, the hierarchical structure of the monarchy and the institutional subordination of its constituent countries to the Bohemian-central institutions became an outdated priority for the royal authority when it transpired that its efforts to centralize and thereby eliminate the regions merely brought more benefits to the Bohemian estates, at the expense of royal power, and simultaneously flamed anti-royal attitudes in the regions. This was reflected in the gradual change of Ferdinand's policy from the mid-16th century with regard to his efforts to establish regional royal institutions, but most remarkably in the kings' consent in the 17th century – after gaining political dominance as a result of the Thirty Years' War – to the functioning of the Bohemian monarchy as a group of regions of equal status. The very fact of recognition of the primacy of royal power opened the way for the king to draw full benefits from taxes raised from Silesia, as well as to allocate funds for military purposes.

The royal authority, viewed as a force which either disintegrated the region of Silesia or supported its continuity, was therefore a variable factor. By around the

¹³ Paul Konrad, *Der schlesische Majestätsbrief Kaiser Rudolfs II vom Jahr 1609*, Breslau 1909.

¹⁴ J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, pp. 221-223.

mid-16th century the king sought to infiltrate the region by means of centralized monarchical institutions. However, by inducing estate opposition in Silesia, the royal authority actually strengthened the resistance to its operations¹⁵ and, in consequence, served to act as a region-forming force. From about the mid-16th century, the king began to pursue a policy of involvement in the country's administration by instituting royal regional institutions of Silesia. Having gained a dominant political position in the monarchy during the Thirty Years' War, he continued to manage the country from the level of regional institutions, simultaneously achieving – through administrative means and personal policies – an increase in the loyalty of regional officials and growing power over the staffing of Silesian estate institutions, albeit without actually violating the principle that only members of Silesian estates possessed the right to be appointed to the offices of central institutions of Silesia. This resulted both from the king's pragmatism (when it became clear that for monarchical purposes this was the most effective way of administration), but also from political security – for maintaining regionalist tendencies constituted a barrier to the potential revival of the concept of estate cooperation among lands.

The impact of the royal authority, however, resulted not only from the fact that the kings conducted their own policy, but also from their position in the monarchic structure. Royal authority may be regarded as the authority which is the greatest bonding force in the monarchy, although the extent of its presence differed for each country. The office of the king may be considered as playing a double role: that of the central office of the kingdom – treating Silesia as a constituent country of the Bohemian Crown – and, also, that of the internal authority of Silesia. The latter aspect will be explained below.

The royal office was a factor which consolidated the political affiliation of Silesia to the monarchy of Bohemia. However, the perception of its cross-regional nature differed significantly across various countries, especially in the case of Silesia and Bohemia. Bohemian estates considered it to be strictly Bohemian, meaning that the king assumed this office through the will of the Bohemian estates, i.e. the Crown estates, which was manifested in an independent election. Silesians, however, were, on the one hand, trying to force the Bohemian states to respect the election procedure – allowing all of the countries of the Bohemian monarchy to participate – while on the other hand, being unable to enforce this demand, they recognized the royal office as hereditary – which in turn undermined the concept of

¹⁵ Joachim Bahleke, *Landesbewußtsein, Staatsbildung und politisch-gesellschaftlicher Umbruch: Zur Rolle Schlesiens in der Geschichte des böhmischen Staates*, [in:] *Slezsko v dějinách českého státu*, ed. Mečislav Borák, Opava 1998, p. 128.

the Bohemian estates' dominance. In this way, the crucial problem of the Bohemian kings, namely, the transformation of the status of their authority from electoral to hereditary¹⁶, became the subject of rivalry between the estates of various regions: the Bohemian estates expressed hopes for the centralization of the estate and the growth of their power together with the electoral status of the king's office, while Silesians campaigned for the consolidation of regions and a hereditary royal office. Moreover, Silesian elites had a highly specific understanding of the royal authority over Silesia. The feudal relationship between the king and the dukes of Silesia, dating back to the 14th century, was established without the agency of supra-Silesian authorities and did not include any other body of the kingdom. This circumstance allowed for the strengthening of the political concept that the dukes and the estates of Silesia paid feudal homage only to the king in modern-era Silesia, and that their feudal subordination resulting from this act was a relation based on the Silesian dukes and estates' exclusive subordination to the king and – optionally – monarchical offices, but not to the central offices and institutions of the Bohemian monarchy governed by the estate forces. The idea of sharing the same king with other countries of the monarchy was only marginally present in this concept. When the competition with the Bohemian estates during efforts to establish a Vice Chancellery for Silesia (1611) became increasingly fierce, there even emerged a concept of the Silesian estates' possible feudal subordination to the 'Silesian duke', and, thereby, Silesia and Bohemia being linked only by a common ruler holding two offices at a time – that of the King of Bohemia and that of the Duke of Silesia¹⁷. Consequently, the estate unifying royal office was at the same time a force which brought about the diversification of regions in the sphere of their relevant political concepts.

The central monarchical organs included the aforementioned Prague Appeals Chamber, which was established on the initiative of the monarch in 1548¹⁸. According to the initial plan regarding the Appeals Chamber's duties, it was to serve as a court of appeals for the courts of all the countries of the monarchy by constituting a three-level system of jurisdiction which would operate across the entire territory. The kings never managed to realize this aim – neither at the time the institution was

¹⁶ Hugo Toman, *Das böhmische Staatsrecht und die Entwicklung der österreichischen Reichsidee vom Jahre 1527 bis zum 1848*, Prag 1872, pp. 1-29.

¹⁷ Jan Kilián, *Zápas německou expedici v české dvorské kanceláři (1611-1616)*, [in:] *Korunní země v dějinách českého státu*, vol. 2: *Společné a rozdílné. Česká koruna v životě a vědomí jejích obyvatel ve 14.-16. století. Sborník příspěvků přednesených na kolokviu pořádaném ve dnech 12. a 13. května 2004 v Clam-Gallasově paláci v Praze*, eds Lenka Bobková, Jana Konvičná, Praha 2006, pp. 294-95.

¹⁸ Felix Rachfahl, *Die Organisation der Gesamtstaatsverwaltung Schlesiens vor dem dreissigjährigen Kriege*, Leipzig 1894, p. 231; Johann Ferdinand Schmidt, *Monographie des k.k. Bömischen Appellations-Gerichtes*, Prag 1850, pp. 5-8.

brought to life nor during absolutist rule in the 17th century¹⁹. According to the mandate issued by Ferdinand on 20th January 1548, the chamber formally served two functions: it was the court of last instance for royal cities, including the cities of Silesia, and the organ to issue legal instructions²⁰. The chamber was to become a tool to gain political control over the cities by means of the judicial system. The point was to stop the cities of the Kingdom of Bohemia from appealing to the city court of Magdeburg for legal judgements (Magdeburg was placed under an imperial banishment order following the Smalcald war), and to force them to turn to the legal institutions within the Bohemian kingdom's limits. It appears that considerable time must have elapsed before the chamber started to fulfil its assigned tasks. At the same time, in the following years the kings made efforts to expand the chamber's powers. In his policy towards Silesia, Ferdinand made use of the permission obtained from the estates in 1547 for written dissents (supplication) from the verdicts of Silesian courts to be addressed directly to the king, which was made possible owing to the defeat of the first uprising of the Bohemian nobility²¹. From the perspective of the Silesian estates, the granting of such a right to the king did not violate the institutional autonomy of the judiciary system of the Silesian country. Yet, as early as in the 16th century, the kings were engaged in a practice of forwarding all the dissents they received to the Prague Appeals Chamber, which, despite sparking a great deal of protest in Silesia, was not abandoned by the monarchs²². The chamber also pursued interventionist actions by issuing legal opinions on Silesian affairs. However, these tasks were not performed by the chamber on an exclusive basis. On the one hand, the estates undertook certain counter-actions by introducing directives which hindered the Chamber's activity in Silesia – an issue which will be addressed in more detail later on in this paper. On the other hand, the investigation of written dissents was, with increasing frequency, being passed down by the king to the governor of Silesia – especially following the reform of this office in 1629-39 – that is, transferred to the competence of Silesian country authority. The verdicts in cases examined by the governor of Silesia within the so-called Superior Office (*Oberamt*), like those formally issued by the Silesian Supreme Ducal

¹⁹ Jaroslav Pánek, *Ferdinand I. – der Schöpfer des politischen Programms der österreichischen Habsburger?*, [in:] *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1620–1740. Leistungen und Grenzen des Absolutismusparadigmas*, eds Petr Mařa, Thomas Winkelbauer, Stuttgart 2006, p. 68; Dalibor Janiš, *Apelační soud*, [in:] *Manuál Encyklopedie českých dějin*, eds Jaroslav Pánek, Oldřich Tůma, Praha 2003, pp. 342–345.

²⁰ F. Rachfahl, *Die Organisation*, p. 235; K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 156.

²¹ Winfried Eberhard, *Monarchie und Widerstand. Zur ständischen Oppositionsbildung im Herrschaftssystem Ferdinands I. in Böhmen*, München 1985 (=Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum, vol. 54), p. 481.

²² Otto Peterka, *Rechtsgeschichte der böhmischen Länder*, Reichenberg 1928, p. 99.

Tribunal, could not be appealed to the chamber. This practice reflected the aforementioned tendency to ‘regionalize’ the royal authority, that is, to exercise power by means of existing institutions in the region. It was only the Silesian estate’s acceptance of the growing importance of the royal power in Silesia in the period of absolutism that led Leopold I in 1662 to issue a formal rescript and, in 1674, the order of appeals (*Appellationsordnung*)²³, which in practice transformed the Prague chamber into a court of appeals for all the existing Silesian courts without simultaneously abolishing analogous powers possessed by the regional Superior Office and the ducal tribunal. The Chambers’ central position as a legal agent was connected with the appellate character that it shared with other institutions operating in Silesia. As a central institution, it began to function regularly around 120 years following the moment of its foundation and many internal changes – however, in the case of Silesia, with two important limitations in addition to those already mentioned²⁴. The estates of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor, which in the 16th century managed to obtain the right to reject the superiority of the Supreme Ducal Tribunal over their ducal courts, based on the right to full judiciary autonomy gained together with the privilege issued under the rule of Charles IV, also refused to accept the subordination to the Appeals Chamber in the age of absolutism. The situation continued up until the close of the discussed period. Furthermore, also in relation to the courts of the Duchies of Legnica, Brzeg and Wołów, the scope of Leopold’s rescript was realized only after the local rulers of the Piast dynasty, who maintained their previous autonomous ducal jurisdiction until 1675, eventually died out²⁵. Between 1662 and 1674, the Prague Chamber was an example of formal subordination of the Silesian judicial system to the monarchical organ of authority. At the same time, the monarch took further decisions which hindered the process of unification of the monarchy’s judicature. He expanded the sphere of jurisdiction – among others – by introducing the appellate framework and appointing Bohemian chancellors (to whom from 1698 Silesians were to apply for reviewing court verdicts)²⁶, thereby depriving the chamber of the right to take autonomous actions and of its exclusive right to act as the central judicial body.

Another body whose powers extended to the entire region of Silesia was the Chancellery, headed by the chancellor. In practice, until 1627 this was not an exclusively

²³ Mathias Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen der Frühen Neuzeit*, Köln–Weimar–Wien 1996 (=Neue Forschungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 5), p. 33.

²⁴ F. Rachfahl, *Die Organisation*, p. 253.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 252-3.

²⁶ R.J.W. Evans, *The making*, p. 151; Thomas Fellner, *Die Österreichische Zentralverwaltung. Von Maximilian I. bis zur Vereinigender österreichischen und böhmischen Hofkanzlei (1749)*, vol. 2, Wien 1907, p. 523.

royal office, but at that time it also represented the political authority of the Bohemian estates. Also, in the period following the Battle of White Mountain the Chancellery retained its estate character, but the Bohemian chancellors acted as the king's functionaries only in Silesia²⁷. The great chancellor was appointed by the king from among the Bohemian lords by the consent of the highest officers of the kingdom, and from 1627 onwards, only by the king's will. However, the selection was still made from among the Bohemian lords. Up until the Thirty Years' War, the chancellor's assuming of his position was performed with the participation of the Bohemian estates, for he was sworn in both by the monarch and the Bohemian estates. Having been sworn in, the chancellor could freely and independently appoint his subordinate Chancellery personnel whom he remunerated for their work. The Chancellery hired legal advisers who were familiar with the legal systems of Silesia, and each contained a department where letters in German were issued for Silesia and Lusatia. As for Bohemia, the chancellors enjoyed extensive administrative and legal powers²⁸. Their power over Silesia was at the time extremely limited due to the country's specific legal status and the consciously autonomous attitude of the Silesian elites²⁹. All letters addressed to the king passed through the Chancellery, and legal opinions were issued and attached to these letters by the Chancellery functionaries. Silesians viewed the Chancellery as an instrument of the Bohemian estates' policy, seeking to decide upon Silesian matters without their participation. Perceiving such workings as an impediment to their political rights, they took efforts to establish a separate office for the region of Silesia, which finally bore fruit in 1611 in the form of the Silesian-Lusatian Vice Chancellery³⁰. In the face of strong resistance from the Bohemian politicians, this specific central institution for Silesian and Lusatian affairs did not last long: it was abolished as early as in 1616³¹, which only confirmed the superior status of the Chancellery as a political tool of the Bohemian elites³². The distrust of Silesians towards the Bohemian chancellor was further strengthened by his intervention in Silesian affairs. When in 1576 Duke Frederick IV of Legnica asked Chancellor Vratislav Perstein to help him in a dispute with his brother Henry XI, the chancellor ignored the political status of the duke as a direct vassal of the king, imprisoned Henry XI in 1581 and deprived him of power over his duchy. Other Silesian dukes considered Pernstein's behaviour

²⁷ Pere M. Ribalta, *The Impact of Central Institutions*, [in:] *The Origins of the Modern State in Europe, 13th to 18th Centuries*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard, Oxford 1996, p. 21.

²⁸ F. Walter, *Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte*, p. 73.

²⁹ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 118.

³⁰ Ch. Link, *Die Habsburgischen Erblände*, pp. 505-506.

³¹ O. Peterka, *Rechtsgeschichte*, p. 87.

³² J. Kilián, *Zápas*, pp. 289-306.

highly dangerous. His disregard for ducal independence strengthened Silesian resistance against the chancellors' participation in the internal affairs of Silesia. From 1624, during the Thirty Years' War, the Chancellery began to operate in Vienna. Its relocation from Prague to within the direct reach of the king reflected the attempts to centralize authority. However, the move itself was actually coincidental and did not bring about institutional unification³³. In this way the institutional autonomy of the most important central organ of the Kingdom of Bohemia was left untouched until 1740³⁴. It is worth noting that the Bohemian chancellor did not engage in the internal affairs of Silesia directly and automatically, but he did so when he was summoned to intervene. Following 1627, the scope of his participation in Silesian affairs was dependent on the king's orders. The chancellor acted as a royal official, and not, as previously, as a representative of the estate government. In accordance with the tendencies of the pro-regional royal policy, from the Thirty Years' War onwards he could no longer actively engage in the Bohemian estate policy in Silesia focused on administrative unification, as this would be inconsistent with the royal priorities. Throughout the entire period, both the chancellor and the Chancellery were perceived in Silesia as permanent elements of power, but heterogeneous when compared to the internal system of administration in Silesia.

The court Camera of Vienna enjoyed the privilege of functioning above the Bohemian monarchy; however, this central authority could only be called with significant restrictions³⁵; it could function either as a court-dependent body or as an organ of territorial authority, because its powers only related to royal income from domains and regalia. This organizational structure was a consequence of the fact that the royal finances were treated as personal treasures of the monarch and the estates were unable to effectively oppose them being placed under direct control of the Camera. The Camera of Vienna – which in the years 1527-1558 operated in Silesia through the Camera of Bohemia – throughout most of the modern period was unable to act effectively as a central office³⁶. It did not possess independent executive authority, performed mainly advisory functions and the actual governance of royal finances was dealt with by territorial royal cameras, including the royal Camera of

³³ O. Peterka, *Rechtsgeschichte*, p. 26; Robert Bireley, *Ferdinand II: Founder of the Habsburg Monarchy*, [in:] *Crown, Church and Estates*, eds Robert John Weston Evans, T.V. Thomas, New York 1991, p. 227.

³⁴ E. Hassenpflug-Elzholz, *Böhmen*, pp. 25-26.

³⁵ R.J.W. Evans, *The making*, p. 149.

³⁶ F. Walter, *Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte*, p. 67; R.J.W. Evans, *The making*, pp. 149-150.

Silesia after 1558³⁷. As the issue of regional context is in fact vital for the functioning of the royal Camera of Silesia, all issues related to the attempt at determining its unification and pro-regional characteristics are discussed in a separate section of this paper devoted to institutions operating in Silesia.

The internal political-territorial divisions among the constituent countries of the monarchy were most likely diminished by the activity of the general estate assembly, which were usually convened for all the countries of the Crown of Saint Wenceslas. In the 16th century, they gained the status of a permanent estate institution. In the 16th and at the outset of the 17th centuries the general estate assemblies were convened once every two years, and most frequently in the last decade prior to the Battle of White Mountain³⁸. In order to evaluate their impact on the unification of the monarchy of Bohemia, what should, nonetheless, be taken into account is that in the period when the general estate assemblies were convened, that is, before the Thirty Years' War, their powers were interpreted differently by each of the fundamental political forces of the monarchy. The Habsburg kings attempted to transform the general estate assembly into the monarchy's central body of royal administration³⁹. However, even the very act of summoning a general estate assembly, conceived as an exclusive right of the monarch, was accompanied by conflicts between the estates and royal forces. Apart from the fact that the monarch tried to elevate the act of summoning a general estate assembly to the rank of royal order, neither the Silesian estates nor the estates of other countries felt obliged to pay absolute obedience to the demand, and their representatives frequently failed to attend the general estate assembly sessions. The royal dominance over the general estate assembly was also to be manifested by the fact that the general estate assembly could only deliberate upon the king's proposals, and served for the general estate assembly to be perceived as a body for the reception of royal decisions issued for all the regions of the monarchy. These decisions were also to be regarded as laws relating directly to the executive functions of the estate institutions in each country of the monarchy. This was not compliant with the generally heterogeneous political profile of the kingdom and faced strong resistance from the estates. What is more, this behaviour of the king was seen as a sign of his disregard for the established legal autonomy of the estate assemblies of the countries, including that of Silesia, thereby sparking further opposition towards the general estate assemblies.

³⁷ O. Peterka, *Rechtsgeschichte*, p. 88; K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 123-128; R.J.W. Evans, *The making*, p. 149.

³⁸ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, p. 322.

³⁹ Jaroslav Pánek, *K sněmovní politice Ferdinanda I. (Královův pokus o manipulaci českých stavů na generálním sněmu v roce 1557)*, 'Folia Historica Bohemica', 2 (1980), pp. 209-246.

The transformation of the general estate assembly into a regular general estate assembly made up of all the political estates of each country of the monarchy ended in failure. The general estate assembly comprised specific country representatives and the full composition of the only estate assembly of Bohemia. This resulted not only in the general estate assembly's composition being numerically dominated by members of the Bohemian estates, but also in the fact that they played a major role at the sessions and exerted a crucial impact on the shape of the proposed solutions. To counter this dominance, the countries sought to consolidate procedures permitting groups of envoys of particular countries to debate separately and communicate their opinions individually to the monarch. Formally, the general estate assembly consisted of five country curias, but as their votes were not counted, it was impossible to pass a bill by outvoting a single country⁴⁰. Due to considerable differences in the political-organizational priorities of the king and the countries, and similar differences among the countries themselves, the general estate assemblies rarely concluded by reaching a common agreement on mutually accepted solutions. The Silesian estates consistently had a distant attitude towards the general estate assemblies, mainly due to their reluctance to limit the autonomy of the regional estate assemblies. The delegations which visited Prague were not granted full authorization by the Silesian estates to act on their behalf. The estates consistently insisted on treating the general assemblies' decisions as proposals which would gain the power of resolutions for Silesia only once they had been accepted – or at times amended – by the Diet of Silesia (*Fürsten- und Ständetag*, dukes and estates assembly for the whole of Silesia; most frequently referred to as *Fürstentag* in sources). The general estate assemblies often failed to break the institutional-political monopoly of the Silesian estates for the enactment of laws for Silesia⁴¹. They may be viewed as ineffective top-down attempts to merge the heterogeneous monarchy.

Moreover, the process of establishing a direct institutional link between the general estate assembly and the Diet of Silesia was inhibited by an important political obstacle related to the specificity of the social structure of Silesia, which in turn was reflected in the structure of the Diet of Silesia. What proved to be a crucial determiner of the institutional diversification within the monarchy was the composition of the country institutions of Silesia. The first curia in the Diet of Silesia was composed of the dukes. According to the hierarchy of ranks in the highest social

⁴⁰ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, pp. 323-326; Ernst C. Hellbling, *Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte*, Wien 1956, pp. 116-118.

⁴¹ Norbert Conrads, *Regionalismus und Zentralismus im schlesischen Ständestaat*, [in:] *idem*, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne. Zur politischen und geistigen Kultur eines habsburgischen Landes*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 2009 (=Neue Forschungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 16), p. 356.

group issued for the monarchy in 1501 by King Ladislaus, the dukes were – with the exception of the head of the Bohemian House of Rosenberg – superior to the Bohemian lords who also formed the first curia of the estate assembly of Bohemia and whose role at the sessions of the general estate assembly was of key importance. Consequently, the assembly became the arena of an intense, ongoing rivalry for estate primacy between the representatives of the highest social ranks of Bohemia and Silesia. The formation of the Silesian estate delegation – which was to reflect its political-estate structure – to the general estate assembly was also unworkable, because Silesian dukes enjoyed the right of *votum personalae* which was perceived by them as part of their former ducal powers allowing them to issue – though only at the Diet sessions – collective, but at the same time specifically personal, decisions relating to the issues put forward by the king. Furthermore, an acknowledgement of the authority of the general estate assembly not only by the dukes, but also by the two remaining ranks (the nobles and the burghers of hereditary duchies) which formed the second and the third curia of the Diet of Silesia, would have eradicated the pivotal feature which determined the political status of the Diet of Silesia, namely their operation in direct relation to the authority of the monarch.

A factor which predetermined the degeneration of the general estate assembly as the central body of authority was the abandonment of this form of governance by the royal authority. The cooperation which focused on the strengthening of the general estate assembly's competence as a central authority of the monarchy – which would undoubtedly streamline the process of governance despite its continuously chaotic organization – at the same time acted in favour of the Bohemian estates and, paradoxically, restricted the scope of the king's own sphere of authority. The general assembly was becoming – despite the aforementioned vast number of obstacles in this area – a platform for communication between the estate politicians from across the monarchy and represented an opportunity for them to form a common political force against the power of royal authority. The monarchical authority proved to act as an inhibitor of the development of this potentially meaningful central authority of the monarchy.

By the 1550s, the general assemblies were replaced by royally-appointed estate representatives of individual countries – a custom introduced by Ferdinand I – with whom the monarch personally conducted negotiations⁴². The dualist system of authority, comprising two sources of power forced to engage in mutual negotiations and to coordinate their positions, gave preference to the kings, for whom it was easier to exercise authority along with the co-regent independent estate assemblies

⁴² J. Pánek, *Ferdinand I.*, p. 70.

of individual countries of the monarchy. This new form of communication prevailed throughout the 17th century. Ferdinand's unique alternative to the general state assembly, the act of summoning department-envoys of the estate assemblies to Vienna, took place on two occasions. The estate delegations of the countries of the monarchy were established in 1655 to determine the rates of charges incurred by the countries and to approve the payment of the so-called 10-year tax (1714). This system of communication between the monarch and various country estates could hardly be qualified as the manifestation of institutional unification tendencies, although it functioned at the very centre of power, in Vienna. It appears that such tendencies emerged in the sphere of politics. The tax rates adopted in 1655 and the negotiations regarding the 10-year tax of 1714 related both to the countries of Bohemia and to the hereditary countries of the Habsburg in the Reich, although all the regions continued to carry out their individual administrative proceedings which were necessary for the fulfilment of their previous commitments⁴³.

Although the court council of war was founded in 1556 for the purpose of taking military action across all of the Habsburg territories, the administration of the defence of the monarchy's frontiers was decentralized and depended on the estate authorities⁴⁴. The defence system of Silesia was introduced by a decision of the Silesia-wide estate assembly as part of its country defence policy issued in 1529. Only the consequences of the Thirty Years' War, the takeover of Wallenstein's army and the main executive peace recess with the Swedes introduced in 1650 opened up the possibility for the Habsburgs to form a permanent army, yet little is known about the exact details of this enterprise in Silesia in the second half of the 17th century⁴⁵. At the time of the presidency of Prince Eugene of Savoy (1703-1736) the military council was transformed into a new body which began to act as both the headquarters of the military command and the central authority for military administration whose scope of operation also included Silesia, and whose duties were performed from the 1730s by regional officials.

Only the king was seen in Silesia as an uncontroversial central office of the Bohemian monarchy⁴⁶, although this perception was quite different from the concept of authority that was prevalent in other Bohemian countries. The authorities which remained at the king's disposal did not, however, meet the necessary conditions to

⁴³ H. Toman, *Das böhmische Staatsrecht*, p. 96–102.

⁴⁴ Ch. Link, *Die Habsburgischen Erblände*, p. 501; R.J.W. Evans, *The making*, p. 149.

⁴⁵ Daniel Hohrath, *Militärgeschichte*, [in:] *Historische Schlesienforschung. Themen, Methoden und Perspektiven zwischen traditioneller Landesgeschichtsschreibung und moderner Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke Köln 2005 (=Neue Forschungen zur Schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 11), p. 329.

⁴⁶ J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, p. 2.

provide effective central-royal governance⁴⁷. All of the central institutions, both those well-established at the time when the Habsburgs ascended to the Bohemian throne and as those newly-introduced by them after 1526, were characterized by unstable remits and internal structures, as well as by selectivity as regards the areas they had the power to intervene in and by their fragmented operation across Silesia. Some central organs, such as the office of the chancellor and the Chancellery of Bohemia – the tools of power of the Bohemian estates, whom they were deprived of as a consequence of being on the losing side in the uprising of 1618-1620 – were thoroughly remodelled in the years 1621-1627 and, as central organs of authority, started to implement the royal policy. They ceased, however, to facilitate the institutional penetration of Silesia by the Bohemian authorities. Others, such as the court council of war, the royal Camera or the Appeals Chamber prove that central institutions cannot be perceived as existing from the moment of their appointment due to the linear development of their competence in relation to the region. They attempted to take over particular sectors of governance in Silesia, but success only came many decades after their creation and as a consequence of their numerous transformations which were often performed not on an exclusive basis. Most of them started to operate fully only in the second half of the 17th century under the conditions of the new economic and political system of Silesia. The stripping of the Silesian judiciary system's autonomy (a process which, nonetheless, was not fully completed) to the benefit of the Appeals Chamber did not take place until the comprehensive transformation of its political-estate elites between the 1660s and 1670s. The successful implementation of the centralization strategy was strongly dependent on the 'mental shift' of the members of the political-cultural elites of Silesia, which turned out to be one of the most crucial forces responsible for the progress in the sphere of institutional uniformity.

One of the basic features of Silesia, which was particularly decisive for its political system and internal institutional organization and rather widespread in the modern age, was the composite character of its internal political-territorial structure, conditioned by the feudal bond of individual duchies of Silesia with the King of Bohemia, a process which began in the 14th century based on individual legal acts. The genesis of the formation of Silesia as part of the Bohemian monarchy in the process of the incorporation of separate Silesian political-territorial units was expressed in the modern period through, most notably, its lack of a general administrative name, unlike in the case of Moravia or Lusatia which were referred to as

⁴⁷ Michael Hochedlinger, *Der gewaffnete Doppeladler. Ständische Landesdefesion*, [in:] *Die Habsburgermonarchie*, p. 219.

Margraviates. The fact of designating Silesia as a duchy (principality) stemmed rather from political needs than from its legal-territorial title. This circumstance also points to its relatively shorter existence and also the remarkably unique history of its formation as a uniform political-territorial unit, especially when compared to Bohemia and Moravia.

In the modern age, Silesia – viewed from outside – was to a large extent a conglomeration of continuously self-dependent political-territorial organisms: duchies, free states and other, smaller territorial units, the so-called lesser states and castle fiefdoms. In the modern period both the number of political bodies and their territories in Silesia – as compared to the Middle Ages – were characterized by a much greater stability, although their boundaries still remained subject to certain changes. At the time there were 16 duchies and initially four, later six, free states which were fully independent from the duchies. The duchies, due to their public-legal status, were divided into those ruled directly by the king and therefore called hereditary duchies, and those ruled by the dukes, i.e. remaining in the hands of dukes and therefore vassal. There were also, according to various studies, between 140 to 170 cities, which, depending on the status of the duchy, were divided into ducal or private cities and cities of hereditary duchies, of which about 32 were represented in the Diet of Silesia. In the period in question, most of the duchies changed their status, some of them several times. This was due to the gradual extinction of the old dynastic line of the Silesian dukes, especially in the 17th century, as a consequence of which the duchies were taken in hereditary possession by the king. The most prominent hereditary principalities during the first hundred years of Habsburg rule were the duchies of Wrocław, Głogów and Świdnica-Jawor, which gained this status before 1526, as well as Opole-Racibórz (from 1532), Żagań (from 1548), Opava (in the period 1528-1614) and Ziębice (from 1569). This does not mean, however, that throughout the period all of them retained this status: they were either sold or, most frequently, put into pledge. From the 16th century to the mid-17th century the vassal duchies included: the Duchies of Legnica, Brzeg and Wołów – which remained in the hands of the same dynastic line of Piasts till the year 1675; the Duchy of Oleśnica (temporarily Oleśnica and Bierutów), ruled by the Poděbrady family until 1647; the Duchy of Krnov, ruled by Hohenzollerns until 1622; and the Duchy of Cieszyn, which was also in possession of the local Piast line until 1653. Yet, throughout the 17th century (and in the second half of the 17th century in particular) the landscape of the duchies underwent crucial transformations. On the one hand, the majority of the duchies were under the direct control of the monarch. Furthermore, most of these royal duchies were located in the central part of Silesia. On the

other hand, the 17th-century investitures of the new dukes contained restrictions that weakened their autonomous public-legal status and limited their functions of authority, and so it may be said that the duchies in Silesia became a special form of ownership of landed property and ceased to function as a collection of sovereignties. The new feudal duchies were the aforementioned Duchy of Opava and the Duchy of Krnov, which were transferred under the rule of the Liechtensteins in 1614 and 1622, Żagań (from 1646 owned by the Lobkowitz family), Ziębice (from 1664 owned by the Auersperg family) and Cieszyn (in 1722 awarded as a fief to Francis Stephen of Lorraine). A slight change in the number of free states in the modern period – those which existed from before 1526, including the Free State of Żmigród, Milicz, Pszczyna and Syców, were supplemented in 1696 by the Free State of Siedlisko-Bytom and Bytom in Upper Silesia – was indicative of the unfavourable political and social conditions for the establishment of semi-ducal sovereignties. Recognized in separate registers, especially those of a fiscal and military nature, though not entirely dissociated from the structure of duchies were the lesser states – over a dozen in total – and castle fiefdoms (e.g. Uraz and Piotrowice in 1556 and Leśnica in 1619). The limits of the territorial units determined the internal divisions of Silesia, which were not administrative but territorial-political divisions.

At the same time the ducal authorities and the estate authorities of individual duchies in the previous period were gradually developing common administration bodies that were to play a significant role in uniting the political and social system of the region of Silesia into one whole. It was thanks to them that even prior to 1526 Silesia presented itself as a fully developed political and territorial unified organism, with central authorities acting on behalf of all the Silesian duchies and free states. However, the consequences of the fact that the country of Silesia was formed in the process of establishing bottom-up institutional links between its various duchies were still a cause – at least until the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War – of a certain sort of internal volatility within the region. This volatility was further strengthened by the existence of certain laws (privileges) which regulated the relations of individual duchies with the king, and partly by the royal authority in creating Silesia-wide institutional links. Most frequently the royal authority participated only in the last stages of their formation (for example, in the case of the top-down decisions of Matthias Corvinus in determining the administrative competence of the governor of Silesia).

In the 16th century and at the outset of the 17th century some of the territories attempted to break free from Silesia and join another Bohemian estate: the Duchy of Głogów, Opole-Racibórz and especially the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor strove to

become the members of the Bohemian estate assembly and the Duchy of Opava, together with the slightly less decisive Duchy of Krnov, attempted to become part of Moravia. The composite structure of Silesia became destructive for the region when the estates of individual duchies (which was underlined by the fact that their duchy became engaged in a vassal relationship with the Bohemian king based on a separate feudal act) not only considered that they could also continue to engage in political activity – without cooperating with the estates of other Silesian duchies – but even that by gaining in this way the status of an estate of the kingdom, they were entitled to participate in the Bohemian estate assembly. Situations where the estates of the aforementioned duchies failed to appear at the Diet of Silesia and sent envoys to the Bohemian assembly in order to win their acceptance as its members occurred several times in the 16th century. The estates of Świdnica-Jawor sent their own envoys to the Bohemian estate assembly even when this coincided with the appointment of official Silesian delegations, for example in 1543, 1544, and 1545⁴⁸; at the time this act was also temporarily awarded with the membership in the Prague estate assembly. The estates of these duchies also expressed a desire to join the first uprising of Bohemian estates in 1547, despite the distant attitude of the Silesian dukes and estates of the Diet of Silesia⁴⁹. Matters of a financial nature constituted one important reason for such behaviour. The duchies persistently failed to participate in the Silesian Diet only when the dukes and the estates of Silesia were charged by the king with a standard tax; they expected that the taxes of the estate assembly of Bohemia would be lower than those of the Silesian Diet.

The tendency of the estates of the hereditary duchies to break away from the Silesian territorial relationship was also, perhaps, characteristic of their sense of political backwardness and desire for prestige, especially in the case of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor. Its estates highlighted the fact that the duchy was not a fiefdom and that the estates did not pay a traditional feudal homage to the king, but a pledge of faithfulness only within their own territory instead of the collective homage in Wrocław together with other dukes and Silesian estates. In connection with this, they considered that this fact put them in a more direct and more privileged position in relation to the king, and that this should secure them a better position in relation to other Silesian duchies. Despite these ambitions, their actual position in the institutional structures of Silesia and the degree of their participation in political decisions was lower than that of the vassal duchies (namely, the

⁴⁸ Gustav Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung von Schweidnitz-Jauer. Zur Geschichte des Ständewesens in Schlesien*, Breslau 1912, p. 33

⁴⁹ J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, p. 164.

duchies which still remained under the dukes' rule). According to the established custom, the king, who formally also held the title of duke of the hereditary duchy which remained under his rule, did not have a representative deputy that was entitled to represent him in the ducal curia of the Diet. While the dukes were members of the first and most important curia of the Diet, whose role in the process of making decisions about important Silesia-wide issues was indeed crucial, the second and third curia of the Diet were composed of representatives of the nobility and the cities of hereditary duchies. In the case of the Duchies of Opava and Krnov, their decentralist attitudes were determined by their recent inclusion in Silesia. An important decentralist factor in the case of these duchies in the second half of the 16th century and in the early 17th century was constituted by the policy of the Bishops of Olomouc, especially Stanislaus Pavlovský (1545-1598) and Franz von Dietrichstein (1599-1636), for whom isolation from Lutheranized Silesia was the *sine qua non* condition for the successful realization of their re-Catholicization plans, and, therefore, they fuelled the dissident attitudes among the nobility and the clergy of Opava⁵⁰.

At the beginning of the 18th century, in the face of attempts to introduce a new system of taxation, the attitudes of separation among the dukes and ducal estates of Upper Silesia were revealed, which, during the negotiations over its establishment in the years 1709-1720, demanded to be separated from the duchies of Lower Silesia⁵¹. The cause of the sudden emergence of these decentralist tendencies was probably not only the unfair – in their view – distribution of tax, but also issues related to the system of Silesian administration where the dominant estates were those of Lower Silesia, and conflicts were further exacerbated by growing cultural differences. The existence of factors that differentiated these two parts of the country provides grounds for us to perceive modern-age Silesia as composed of two distinct sub-regions: Lower Silesia and Upper Silesia. Some differences between them were deeply rooted in the past, but their consequences did not lose their validity in the modern age⁵². The much weaker pace of the 13th-century colonization in the early modern period still manifested itself in a significantly smaller number of cities with much less political importance located within Upper Silesia, as well as in the different legal status of its rural population, whose relation to the land was regulated by the so-called *lassyckie* law of possession (*lassitischer Besitz*) – the

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 231-235.

⁵¹ Jürgen R. Wolf, *Steuerpolitik im schlesischen Ständestaat. Untersuchungen zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsstruktur Schlesiens im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Marburg 1978, p. 209.

⁵² Thomas Wunsch, *Auf der Suche nach einer historischen Identität Niederschlesien. Vorschläge für die Kategorisierung von Regionalbewußtsein in Schlesien vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* [in:] *Identität Niederschlesien*, eds Hans-ChristianTrepte, Karoline Gil, Hildesheim 2007, pp. 13-36.

entire ownership of land was in the hands of representatives of the nobility – as opposed to the possession of land by peasants in Lower Silesia, which can be described as peasant fief. The differences this brought about were reflected in the judiciary-administrative divisions within the duchies of Upper Silesia where the system of districts – characteristic for Lower Silesia – was much less established and – even in the 16th century – more likely to die out in places where it had managed to develop previously. Although the Duchy of Opole possessed as many as 12 such circuits, the Duchies of Krnov, Opava, Racibórz and Cieszyn did not introduce any internal divisions. In the modern period, these areas showed strong decentralist tendencies associated with their growing relations with Moravia, which happened as result of their aforementioned inclusion in the late medieval period in the Silesian structure of the existing Moravian Duchies of Opava and Krnov. Yet, at the same time, this led to greater openness of the Upper Silesian duchies to Moravian-Bohemian influences. Among the consequences were changes in the social structure of this sub-region, which stood out against its peers owing to the higher status of its nobility – lords – formed in the process of Moravians acquiring landed properties in the Upper Silesian duchies. Not only did they evolve into the rank of higher nobility, which was genetically alien to the nobility of (Lower) Silesia, but in some duchies – such as those of Opole and Racibórz and Opava – they even managed to create a separate, highest-ranked curia of the estate assembly of the duchy, and to institutionalize their unique social development in relation to the Lower Silesian duchies prior to the period of the intense efforts of the monarch to establish the rank of titular nobility in the remaining territories. However, their high social status was not reflected in the Silesia-wide institutions. There, they still functioned as members of the ‘ordinary’ nobility. The territory of Upper Silesia was also much less influenced by Saxon laws, and at the same time, Polish laws continued to be applied under the strong influence of Moravian laws. Various legal cultures present in these sub-regions were characterized by related language differences: alongside German, Czech was afforded the status of a permissible language to be used in documents and official and judicial proceedings in Upper Silesia, unlike in Lower Silesia, where only German was permitted. The most important legislative act that became the model for all the duchies of Upper Silesia in terms of internal legal order, issued by Duke John of Opole in 1531, was written in Czech and was introduced (along with an optional German-Czech version) in the remaining duchies of the sub-region in that language. It further seems that the faster pace of re-Catholicization of Upper Silesia in the 17th century, and the emergence of a greater proportion – as compared to Lower Silesia – of members of a new Catholic nobility and

higher nobility appointed by the Habsburgs, led to the consolidation of further differences in the cultural, administrative and political formation processes of the Upper Silesian communities.

In the modern period, the sub-region of Upper Silesia witnessed the occurrence of two opposing processes. For the political elites of the Upper Silesian duchies the modern period meant permanent and steady – occurring in line with the established organizational framework – cooperation with Lower Silesian elites within the Silesia-wide institutions, which was one of the most important drivers of the further merging of these culturally-related lands into one region. On the other hand, the modern period also abounded in significant stimuli that spurred the growing independence of the sub-region of Upper Silesia. The permanent state of separation of the two parts of Silesia was reflected in separate socio-political titles of the estate Silesian authorities: they were most frequently referred to as the bodies of dukes and estates of Lower and Upper Silesia.

The factors that led to individual duchies abandoning ambitions to break out of the Silesian organizational structures and suppressed their separatist attitudes towards the central institutions of Silesia in the 16th and later in the 17th centuries included both the counter-actions of the Diet of Silesia and of the king, undertaken on the initiative of the Silesian Diet. Up until the Thirty Years' War the Silesia Diet consistently presented the view that the absence of representatives of individual duchies within its structure does not release their estates from the obligation to execute the Diet's resolutions and transferred the power over the execution of its decisions to the governor of Silesia. The practice of not participating in the Diet of Silesia resulted in orders of the king, issued in 1562 and 1611, which forced the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor to participate in the Diet of Silesia⁵³. A similar strategy adopted by the Upper Silesian duchies would be soon abandoned by them due to the negative reaction of the king. The Silesian assembly, as a Silesia-wide institution expressing the common interest of the estates, engaged in effective consolidation of its regional authority. Another factor which was especially important for the integrity of Silesia was the royal authority acting at the request of a Silesia-wide agent from the second half of the 16th century, or – following political transformations – independently, as a pro-regional force. The assumption of power over the duchies of Opava and Krnov by Karl Liechtenstein in 1614 and 1622 – a loyal follower of the monarchical policy towards Silesia – and the change of their status from hereditary to vassal duchies, where the position Karl Liechtenstein as duke

⁵³ G. Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung*, p. 33.

was dominant, reduced the problem of these estates' dissent towards the Silesia-wide institutions⁵⁴.

In Silesia during the estate-monarchic rule, until the Thirty Years' War three types of public-legal power existed: royal power, ducal power and estate power, which had the power to appoint institutions and offices and use them to exercise authority. There were also institutions and offices of individual authorities, as well as those which represented more than one of them. During this period, it was the nobility who also participated in the execution of public authority, and they did so primarily through the judicial supervision over the resident population of their landed properties. Later on, in the period of Habsburg absolutism, the socio-political elite of Silesia was still performing state administrative functions, but now on behalf of the royal authority, which was increasingly perceived as the only state authority.

In order to understand the potential scope of activity of the royal authority and institutions through which the authority pursued its monarchical functions in Silesia, one needs to take into account the fact that the royal authority of Silesia, treated as a whole, was not homogeneous and was simultaneously multifunctional. In the period of political dualism, 1526-1629, the power of the king in relation to Silesia as a whole found its institutional expression in cooperation with the dukes and the estates within the Diet of Silesia, which was a representative body of the entire Silesian political organism. This type of monarchic power may be defined as power of *proposition* or *initiative*, because its actions required Diet resolutions to be issued⁵⁵. In the age of absolutism, 1629-1740, the king still presented his proposals to the Diet, and it still it was necessary for the estates to cooperate in order to reach agreement on the content of such resolutions, but all legislative actions were performed on behalf of the monarch.

The king was also the suzerain of most political-territorial formations in Silesia and his spheres of authority included feudal lordship over individual princes, and the institutionalization of this authority through feudal homage defined the boundaries between the royal and ducal power, thereby making the governance of the fiefdoms to a large extent impenetrable to the monarch. Another sphere of the king's authority, described by the term *specialis protectio* relating

⁵⁴ Marek Vařeka, *Mocenské aktivity knížete Karla I. z Lichtenštejna a jeho bratrů v Horním Slezsku* [in:] *Šlechtic v Horním Slezsku. Vztah regionu a center na příkladu osudů a kariér šlechty Horního Slezska (15.-20. Století) / Szlachcic na Górnym Śląsku. Relacje między regionem i centrum w losach i karierach szlachty na Górnym Śląsku (XV-XX wiek)*, eds Jiří Brňovjak, Waclaw Gojniczek, Jiří Brňovjak, Waclaw Gojniczek, Aleš Zářický, Katowice–Ostrava 2011, pp. 177-196.

⁵⁵ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 116.

to the ecclesiastical Duchy of Nysa-Otmuchów, was also in place despite the fact that the bishop was also the king's vassal due to his ownership of the land of Grodków. Furthermore, the king enjoyed full territorial rights in relation to the hereditary duchies, for the estates – locally, within each of the hereditary duchies – paid him feudal homage and treated him as their territorial prince. The king's authority – as that of the prince – was, however, limited by the privileges of state which varied for each of the hereditary duchies. The widest range of these privileges related to the Duchies of Świdnica-Jawor, while the most extensive ones were secured by the laws issued in 1353 by Queen Anne, the wife of Emperor Charles IV⁵⁶. Moreover, following the Thirty Years' War the estates of the hereditary duchies were effectively performing the demand that royal tax claims be passed by the king through the Diet of Silesia, which means that the duchies agreed to be charged more than Silesia-wide taxes only, which had been guaranteed by the royal authority in the form of privileges granted some time earlier⁵⁷.

In Silesia, the king could exercise power personally – in a manner limited by certain privileges – and by means of decisions issued in the form of mandates, instructions and rescripts. He could also act through the bodies of the royal authority. Until the Thirty Years' War, the execution of royal resolutions was fully dependent on the Silesian institutions. In the second half of the 17th century, the royal regulations were already granted proper execution, although still by means of offices of Silesia, but which were now acting on behalf of the king. It seems, however, that at the time the monarch relatively rarely issued his decisions directly. He did so only for the purpose of sanctioning the legal *usus*. The introduction of new acts or more detailed regulations regarding particular internal spheres of state operation remained the duty of the Diet of Silesia⁵⁸. Nonetheless, the Diet was bound by a rule according to which their announcement could be made only following the king's approval. The bodies of monarchical authority in Silesia included the aforementioned royal Camera of Wrocław, the governor of Silesia – with the reservation that between 1526 and 1629 this office was treated as a monarchical-estate office – and a collegial body, the so-called Superior Office (*Oberamt*), formed between 1629 and 1639 under the reform of the monocratic office of governor of Silesia.

The difficulties in classifying monarchic actions as anti- or pro-regional may be illustrated by the example of transformation of the institutional administration of royal finances. Between 1527 and 1558, as mentioned, it was the Bohemian Cam-

⁵⁶ G. Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung*, pp. 19-23, 173-4.

⁵⁷ F. Rachfahl, *Die Organisation*, p. 290; Marian Ptak, *Zgromadzenia i urzędy stanowe księstwa głogowskiego od początku XIV wieku do 1742 roku*, Wrocław 1991, p. 30.

⁵⁸ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, p. 41.

era that played the role of a royal institution with a trans-regional character and whose scope of authority also included Silesia. Nonetheless, its presence in Silesia was not in the least widespread. Owing to the insignificant number of camera estates and the limited amount of taxes raised from regalia – especially in the early decades of the rule of Ferdinand I – the Bohemian Camera managed only a fraction of the total income of Silesia. The expectation was that the Bohemian Camera would be subordinate to the court Camera of Vienna. The actual subordination took place only in 1568 after the order of the court Camera was issued. Devoid of individual executive authority, it continued to serve as a purely advisory body in relation to the Bohemian Camera⁵⁹. What was important, however, with regard to Silesia, was that before this event took place, between 1554 and 1558 the Silesian administration of the royal finances was reorganized. Firstly, in 1554, the office of royal tax governor – *victum* (*Viztum*) – was created, and this office was also subordinated to the Bohemian Camera, yet in 1558 the royal fiscal administration was again reformed and the status of the cameras in Wrocław, Prague, Vienna and Pressburg (Bratislava) was made equal and they were all subordinated to the court Camera of Vienna⁶⁰. The direct subordination of the Camera of Wrocław to the Camera of Vienna separated Silesia from the Bohemian centre in terms of administration, which brought two significant consequences. In practice, until the Thirty Years' War the lack of executive powers of the court Camera and the complex process of consolidation of its central character in Vienna⁶¹ brought about the formation of a functionally independent institutional unit in Silesia⁶². In addition, the reform led to – albeit only in the narrow sphere of royal finance – the administrative separation of Silesia and Bohemia, thereby loosening the institutional links of Silesia with the principal country of the monarchy. This was detrimental to the institutional consolidation policy of the Bohemian monarchy. By violating this state of subordination, the king attempted to secure himself a faster, more convenient and more efficient method of making use of the royal income in Silesia and move it out of the potential reach of the Bohemian estates. However, in the mid-16th century, the subordination – excluding the bodies of the Bohemian monarchy – of the Silesian institutions to the Viennese body also involved certain pro-centralization activities focused on the formation of new political structures which extended to all Habsburg-

⁵⁹ J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, p. 73; *idem*, *Das Herzogtum*, p. 46; F. Walter, *Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte*, pp. 66-67.

⁶⁰ O. Peterka, *Rechtsgeschichte*, p. 90.

⁶¹ Ch. Link, *Die habsburgischen Erblande*, pp. 499–500; F. Walter, *Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte*, p. 67.

⁶² F. Rachfahl, *Die Organisation*, p. 325.

dependent territories and which favoured the autonomy of the Silesian body. This autonomy was retained for the most part of the 17th century, and its independent functioning in Silesia lasted until the end of the period. It may be said that the administrative structure of the Wrocław Camera, which was conceptually oriented towards centralization, and in reality took credit for the state-like character of this institution, in practice favoured the process of Silesian regionalization. The Camera was a strictly royal institution. Its employees were required to submit to the king statements of loyalty and official secrecy, which was important for keeping the Camera separate from the estate organs, despite the fact that all levels of the Camera were populated by Silesians.

The Camera's importance grew following the decision in 1637 on the possibility to enrich the Camera's budget by estimated tax income, which was to open the way for its transformation into the central summary financial organ of Silesia⁶³. It is more difficult to determine the extent to which this decision was implemented, for as early as 1640 the Higher Office of War (*Oberkriegs Commissariat*) began to take control over taxes paid to the military in Silesia after its formation. In the end, therefore, the Camera did not replace the general estate tax office, it merely partially duplicated its functions. However, the importance of the Camera is indirectly proven by the steady increase in the number of its employees. By the end of the 17th century, the total number of its highest and mid-level officials was estimated to be around 60⁶⁴. The Camera was a symbol of the growth of the importance of the royal power in Silesia, but also one of the elements that strengthened the institutional independence of the region. The body's one-dimensionality in terms of performed functions, taking over revenues that were due to the king, which in consequence were not allocated to internal needs of the country, resulted in the fact that the Camera was not associated by the Silesian estates as an appropriate tool of country administration.

In the following decades, especially in the 18th century, most of the pro-centralization activity of the royal authorities was still focused on the financial sphere. This was manifested in planned changes in the organizational subordination of the Wrocław Camera, which was to take place in connection with the financial reform across the entire political-territorial Habsburg system, while in 1714 a central bank, *Bancalität*, was set up in Vienna. This body was also to serve as the central financial office⁶⁵ and at the same time an order was issued to make the bank a direct recipient of all income from Silesia, excluding the Camera of Wrocław. The attempt to create

⁶³ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 203.

⁶⁴ *Idem*, *Materiały do dziejów urzędników, funkcjonariuszy i służby na Śląsku*, Wrocław 1980 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 516), p. 61.

⁶⁵ Thomas Winkelbauer, *Nervus rerum Austriacarum*, [in:] *Die Habsburgermonarchie*, pp. 189-190.

a central bank, as it soon turned out, proved unsuccessful, and the function of financial administration returned to the competence of the court Camera and no violation of the competence or system of cameras in particular regions took place⁶⁶.

The most important agent of royal authority in Silesia, which until 1629 was of a clearly mixed monarchic-estate character, was the governor of Silesia. Formally, the king personally appointed people to this position, but the 1498 privilege of Ladislaus Jagiellon imposed significant limitations as to the choice of the person to hold that office; the post could only be entrusted to one of the dukes of Silesia. Due to the fact that all Silesian dukes underwent a conversion to Protestantism, following 1536 the king managed to introduce a custom of filling this office with the bishops of Wrocław. This new practice remained in line with the aforementioned privilege, for the Wrocław bishops were holders of the title of duke in Silesia. This personal policy of the king was balanced by the policy of the estate forces which managed to force through the requirement for the governors to take a separate oath to the Diet, pledging that they would look after the interests of the dukes and estate. In addition, the bishops, as dukes of Silesia, were part of the Silesian estate authority and were linked to the remaining estates through common interests. Also, all of the king's claims towards Silesia – especially those concerning taxes – referred to them directly, which engaged them in suppressing the royal demands.

The custom of entrusting the bishops with governorships of Silesia was discontinued in the early 17th century, when the assumption to the office of the Bishop of Wrocław by Charles Habsburg – forced by the monarch in 1608 – and his acceptance of the office of governor coincided with the first confederation of the Bohemian and Silesian estates. The confederation persuaded Rudolph II in 1609 to issue Letters of Majesty granting equal status to Catholic and Protestant confessions in Bohemia and Silesia. In an additional act issued for the Silesian estates, Rudolf undertook to refrain from entrusting the Bishops of Wrocław with the governorship. Formally, this legal principle of 1609 was valid until the end of the Habsburg rule; however, it was observed by the kings only until 1664. In the following years, the procedure of nominating bishops to the office was reinstated. Such practice was, on the one hand, favoured by the narrowing down of the number of suitable candidates to a small group of 'old' dukes, which was brought about by reason of the gradual extinction of their dynasty. When the ruling Oleśnica dukes of the Poděbrady line eventually died out in 1647, along with the dukes of Cieszyn in

⁶⁶ Friedrich Walter, *Die Geschichte der österreichischen Zentralverwaltung in der Zeit Maria Theresias (1740-1780)*, vol. 1: *Die Österreichische Zentralverwaltung*, part 2: *Von der Vereinigung der österreichischen und böhmischen Hofkanzlei bis zur Einrichtung der Ministerialverfassung (1749-1848)*, Wien 1938, pp. 40-43; K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 204.

1653, the only remaining representatives of the Piast line were the dukes of Legnica-Brzeg. Its last male descendant, George William, died in 1675, just a few months after the beginning his reign. For the new Silesian princes – new not only because they appeared in Silesia only in the 17th century, but primarily because their ducal status was not dynastic, but titular, granted by the Habsburgs – the office was rather unattractive. Following the reforms of 1629–1639 it required its holders to be virtually permanently present in Silesia, and they were additionally obliged to carry out hard management and administrative work. These responsibilities often interfered with other functions they fulfilled as Habsburg diplomatic or military servants. However, the bishops of Wrocław, following 1664, were increasingly reluctant to hold this office. From 1719 onwards, the king, having refused to cancel the office of governor, ceased to fill it with new candidates. The functions of governor of Silesia were performed from then on by the director of the Superior Office (*Oberamt*). This office, created around 1672, was not burdened with privileges and the king could freely designate people to fulfil it. This practice of entrusting directors of the Superior Office with executive power, which was described by the king as temporary, continued until the end of the era – up till the year 1740.

The governor of Silesia was simultaneously the chairman of the Silesian Supreme Ducal Tribunal and the Diet, and from the 17th century onwards enjoyed the right of *votum conclusivum*⁶⁷, namely, the fourth vote in terms of importance after the three votes of the Diet's curias. By performing the function of both the head of the estate assembly and the head of the tribunal, the office of governor was not monarchical but genetically related to the regional and estate-institutional structure of Silesia. Moreover, the pro-regional functions of the governors of Silesia were a consequence of their practical approach towards exercising authority. Until 1629, when the centralization efforts undertaken by the king and the Bohemian estates included the liquidation of the institutional autonomy of Silesia, an important factor was that the office of the governor of Silesia was monocratic and held for life. No written instructions were provided by the king on the appointment of this official, and decisions made by the governor during his office did not require the monarch's individual approvals, but were issued by right of the title he held. This therefore constituted the granting to a Silesian duke (who was given the office) of a considerable extent of permanent royal authority – theoretically in perpetuity – and at the same time endowing him with a high degree of political autonomy. The governor

⁶⁷ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, p. 241; Piotr Jurek, *Funkcjonowanie śląskich zgromadzeń stanowych na przykładzie 1715 roku*, Wrocław 1992, p. 88.

was not only the body of royal and estate authority but also a co-ruler, for he also performed authoritative functions.

The prince of Silesia appointed to this position possessed his own legal chancellery and hired lawyers and advisers. The expanding range of the governor's tasks resulted in the fact that his officials became specialists in different areas of state administration. From the last quarter of the 16th century – and not only following the royal reforms of 1629 – this was reflected in the use (though informal) of the name *Oberamt*, that is, the Superior Office, instead of the office of governor of Silesia⁶⁸. This was a sign of the development of this body's collegial structure. With regard to the scope and the role of the governor in the Diet of Silesia, it can be said that a substitute body developed, which may be called a surrogate of the regional government of Silesia. What needs to be made clear, however, is that the aforementioned statements focus on describing the direction of the ongoing processes of the development of the internal administration of Silesia, not on their completion.

The king, whose political power was reinforced in a victory over the Silesian estates at the first stage of the Thirty Years' War, issued a resolution in 1629 which formally established the Superior Office, headed by the governor of Silesia, whose competences and structure was defined in the instructions of Ferdinand III in 1639. This reform, through which the existing monocratic office was transformed into a collegiate institution and the governor was obliged to make pledges only to the monarch, was the major institutional initiative of the Habsburgs' plan to introduce absolute rule in Silesia⁶⁹. Except for the governor, the college included the chancellor and advisers whose number was not strictly specified: according to sources their number varied from three⁷⁰ to – in the last years of Habsburg rule – 24⁷¹. The internal structure of the body was transient; the members grouped themselves into two or three benches: that of princes, lords and scholars. Therefore, the body's structure was volatile. The governor of Silesia could no longer use the services of his own ducal officials. Instead, he could use the services of specially-hired technical personnel. The post of chancellor was designed as counterweight to that of governor. The chancellor possessed almost the same scope of authority and was appointed only by the king; however, he enjoyed less social prestige. All office members were

⁶⁸ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 123.

⁶⁹ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, p. 242; Petr Mat'a, *Wer waren die Landstände? Betrachtungen zu den böhmischen und österreichischen 'Kernländern' der Habsburgermonarchie im 17. und 18. Jhr.*, [in:] *Bündnispartner und Konkurrenten der Landesfürsten?*, ed. Gerhard Ammer, Wien 2007, (=Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, vol. 49), p. 77.

⁷⁰ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 197.

⁷¹ P. Jurek, *Funkcjonowanie*, p. 91.

sworn in and committed to permanent residence in Wrocław. In the last quarter of the 17th century another name, the Supra-Office (*Oberamtsregierung*), started to be used to describe the institution, which highlighted its official character even more accurately⁷².

The appointment of the Superior Office not only facilitated the progressing evolution of the governor office into a modern bureaucratic institution. In fact, the principal aim of the reform was to deprive the governor of his former autonomy. From that moment on he could only perform his functions as a representative of the Office, which functioned in line with the principle of collegiality, both in terms of its structure and decision-making process. From the years 1629-39 it was transformed from a body of self-authority – located half way between the royal and estate authority – into a body of royal administration, which executed decisions neither of its own initiative nor those agreed by the estates, but was the recipient of orders from the very centre of authority. It was given new structural and functional features, which may be perceived as departure from the traditionally Silesian character of the office of governor of Silesia. Nonetheless, the Superior Office still operated in direct submission to the king, yet the communication between the two were at times intermediated by the Bohemian chancellor. What needs to be emphasized is that during the period of absolutism the estate and Silesian character of the office of the governor was maintained, which was manifested by the fact that only candidates with the title of Duke of Silesia were appointed to this position. The fact that the Superior Office, together with the office of the governor it absorbed, developed an exclusively monarchic character – allowing for the king's more intense penetration of the internal affairs of the country – did not affect the Office's role in maintaining the administrative autonomy of Silesia. An important factor in the era of Habsburg absolutism which fostered the maintenance of the institutional autonomy of Silesia was therefore the highly pro-regional administrative system of the royal authority.

The competences of the Superior Office in the second half of the 17th century were continuously extended. By the end of the 17th century, it hired as many as 57 clerks⁷³. In 1639, a military fund was established as part of the office followed by, in 1640, the Higher Office of War whose task was to determine the financial and material needs for military purposes in Silesia, and even, as already mentioned, began to duplicate the Camera and the General Tax Office by collecting financial income for military purposes⁷⁴. All technical decisions regarding the maintenance

⁷² K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, p. 200.

⁷³ *Idem*, *Materiały*, p. 62.

⁷⁴ *Idem*, *Historia ustroju*, p. 220.

of the monarch's armies stationed in Silesia, as well as those concerning the issues of recruitment, march routes, accommodation, etc., were in the early decades of the 18th century still being made by the estates, which appointed both the payers and the marching commissioners. It was not until 1735 that the announcement of the marching ordination caused the formation of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Higher Commissioner, which was also active at local levels⁷⁵.

The most important consequence of the political-territorial structure of Silesia in an institutional sense – which was essential for the constitution of the region – was the emergence of two-level institutional-bureaucratic structures in Silesia, one Silesia-wide and one specific only for individual territorial units, duchies and free states. Both levels were related – but in an erratic, volatile and discontinuous manner – and the competence of their institutions, structure and composition did not fully overlap. In order to present a more complete institutional landscape of Silesia it should immediately be said that the majority of its political territories developed also a two-level, internal, official-institutional estate structure, consisting of institutions and central offices of particular duchies or free states, and local institutions of its individual districts (*weichbilds*) and of rarely occurring lands which were the units of internal divisions within the Silesian duchies. In the case of the vassal duchies and the free states, another separate system of offices was connected with territorial ruler. Some of them evolved in the modern period into the estate-ducal offices. Individual duchies possessed institutions which were linked by their hierarchical arrangement, such as the subordination of the local estate assemblies of a district to the estate assembly of a given duchy. There also existed bodies which, although being part of a single estate system within one duchy, functioned virtually independently of each other, such as the assemblies of cities and nobility. Others were fully autonomous bodies, such as offices dealing with the ducal governance sector, which functioned beyond the estate competences.

The Silesia-wide system of estate institutions and offices, whose power and governance extended over the entire country at the outset of the modern period, should be considered a prominent pro-regional factor. Their formation took place as a result of a bottom-up, independent initiative of the estates. They perceived themselves as representatives of the legitimate public power of Silesia, and their bodies developed through their direct relationship with the monarch. At the same time, they exhibited a clear sense of independence from the king and an attitude of full independence from the political estate forces of Bohemia as the main country of the monarchy. The estate organs included, most importantly, the Silesia-wide estate

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 203.

assembly, the Diet, as well as its numerous substitute forms (general conventions, substitute assemblies, conventions for the collection of accounts, partial conventions), and the Supreme Ducal Tribunal, the General Tax Office, offices such as that of the state payer and the general plenipotentiary, and from 1629 the governor of Silesia.

The most prestigious constituent of the country's autonomy was the Supreme Ducal Tribunal (*Ober- und Fürstenrecht*) which engaged in the settlement of disputes led by the Silesian dukes with the king or among themselves⁷⁶, in this respect performing the monarch's jurisdiction. Its most important characteristic was the finality of judgements⁷⁷. The transformation of this body into a central court of Silesia for the supervision of the functioning of judicial authority in all Silesian territorial units – clearly reflected in the country peace of 1528 – was inhibited by the actions of both the king and the estates of Silesia.

The kings confirmed formally – even in the period of fully-fledged absolutism – that the Supreme Ducal Tribunal possessed *privilegium non appellando*⁷⁸, however they informally extended to the judgments of the tribunal the consent they had obtained from the estates in 1547 for the possibility to submit supplications to the king concerning the verdicts of Silesian courts⁷⁹. The estates, on the other hand, by the Diet resolutions of 1541, which were strengthened in 1571, entrusted the supervision of the courts within the particular duchies and free state to their immediate territorial authorities.

This was due to the fact that the first half of the 16th century marked the maturity and independence of the estate authorities of particular Silesian duchies, which occurred due to an intense legal unification within individual organisms of Silesia and resulted in, from the second half of the 16th century and the outset of the 17th century, the issuance of individual land statutes which defined official systems and precise judiciary procedures, especially in matters of the property of each particular duchy and free state⁸⁰. The estates attempted to freeze both the royal plans to intervene into the Silesian jurisdiction and stop the process which was enforced by part of the Silesian political elites to extend the competences of the Supreme Ducal Tribunal. The suppression of the process of centralizing the judiciary in the region of Silesia was therefore an expression of both the decentralist tendencies of part of the Silesian estates as well as part of the centralization-focused policy of the monarch.

⁷⁶ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 93.

⁷⁷ F. Rachfahl, *Die Organisation*, p. 198.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 216.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 213.

⁸⁰ Marian Ptak, *Śląskie ordynacje ziemskie*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 34 (1979), No. 1, pp. 17-35.

Only in the period of absolutism did the continuous practice of extending the scope of the Superior Office's duties in the area of representing royal authority lead to a similar extension of the Office's judiciary competence in Silesia. What is especially worth mentioning is that in the period of absolutism, the king was focused not only on the strengthening of the central royal institution, that is, the Appeals Chamber, but, instead, focused on expanding parallel competences of the royal regional office. Secondly, the statement that the king took care of the growth of authority of the royal regional office – namely, the Superior Office – to the disadvantage of both regional and estate tribunals, leads to the conclusion that the major purpose of the king's activity was the extension of his power, and not institutional unification.

What remained crucial for the functioning of Diet of Silesia throughout the entire modern period was a feature which had already been introduced in the previous epoch, namely, that the Superior Office communicated directly with the king and that the king communicated with the Diet of Silesia without the mediation of other offices of the monarch. However, his autonomy was expressed by the fact that neither the king, nor the king's commissioners who presented his proposals to the estates, participated in the same deliberations or votes.

The structure of the Diet in the modern period did not formally undergo any major changes. The princes invariably constituted the membership of the first curia. The group of four free-state lords, incorporated into the ducal curia and entitled to only one vote, was enlarged in 1697 by two further members, but this did not extend the number of their votes in the curia. What was important was the transfer of representatives of Wrocław from the third curia to the second curia (ca. 1538), which gathered together representatives who owned landed properties based on the knightly rights of hereditary duchies. This type of social promotion was understandable in an age when one's political importance grew according to the efficiency in fulfilling one's tax obligations, even though its formal basis was the fact that the municipal council held the principal office of the governor of the Wrocław duchy. The city of Wrocław, due to its immense economic potential, belonged to the narrowest governing elite of Silesia, taking part as one of the leading forces in all important political projects. The fact of its leaving the curia of the cities resulted in the further weakening of other cities of Silesia in terms of their political importance, a process which was characteristic for the Diet assemblies in all Bohemian countries⁸¹. The knights of the feudal duchies were not represented whatsoever in the Silesia-wide Diet, for they were collectively represented by the prince.

⁸¹ J. Pánek, *Das politische System*, p. 60.

However, in the mid-17th century, as a result of two important processes that affected the social groups whose representatives participated in the assembly, this autonomous estate institution was transformed into an estate body of the royal administration. The decisive role in this specific exchange was played by the elites. Among the states who participated in the Diet, the dominant role of the dukes – until the early years of the Thirty Years' War – was manifested not only in the fact, as already indicated, that they voted in person, and in their own name, but that the first curia did not actually accept the resolution by vote, yet it was settled nevertheless: according to common custom, it could not be accepted without the consent of all the voters. Also, the fact that the ducal curia's sessions preceded the sessions of the two other curias – the votes of which were conducted after the decisions of the first curia – resulted in the fact that it was the dukes who actually decided on the contents of the Diet acts that were to be put to a vote. This proved that Silesia was under the influence of the ducal group. The dynastic dukes interpreted their participation in the Diet as a manifestation of their co-reign over Silesia with the king and as a specific way of exercising their power within the country. The gradual emergence from the 17th century, and especially from the mid-17th century, of new titular dukes was a novelty in Silesia – they were neither connected with the regional legal traditions nor political principles. The new princes ceased to participate personally in the Diet and they only fulfilled their duty to do so through their deputies. The identification of the pro-royal policy with Catholicism also had consequences as the new princes, with the exception of the duke of Oleśnica, were Catholics, and also only the Catholic representatives of the hereditary duchies and cities were tolerated. They were therefore no longer elected due to their high status in their social circles, but because only followers of Catholic faith were accepted by the royal authorities as members of the Diet. For those new dukes, the issue of loyalty towards the Habsburg dynasty was connected with religious values, which also exerted a negative impact on the political activity of the estates under their command. As we have already mentioned, in the second half of the 17th and the first four decades of the 18th centuries, the kings, still by means of the Diet resolutions, kept collecting taxes, but the estates – especially the princes – lost their ability to negotiate with the king on the matter, other than through making pleas to reduce the level of taxes. The institution of the Diet did not evolve in terms of structure, but what changed were the principles regarding its composition, together with the process of recruiting its members who were no longer focused on representing their distinct political rights, although their role in shaping the relations of the Diet (representing the estates) with the monarchy was crucial. This had a pivotal impact on reducing the autonomy

of the estate elites of Silesia in relation to the king. This was manifested, for instance, by the gradual deterioration of the substitute estate assemblies, whose representatives – up till the Thirty Years' War – were particularly rich. The aforementioned evolution changed the characteristics of the Silesia-wide estate assembly to such an extent that we could perceive the Diet of the second half of the 16th century and that of the second half of the 17th as playing a different role in the maintenance of the regionalism of Silesia.

The issues which had a decisive impact on the shape of the character of the Diet of Silesia in the modern age, and which exerted a crucial influence on the institution's role in the region, were not only those associated with the acceptance of taxation procedures, but included, on the one hand, the acquisition by the Diet of complex functions of country administration, and the monarchs' desire to extend the control over the Diet on the other. From the outset of the era, the kings tried to supervise the Silesian estate assembly by introducing in 1536 a ban on spontaneous conventions of the estates. The Silesian estates, with some reluctance, respected the king's order, thereby accepting the fact that the Diet was an institution of the common authority of the king and the estates. The decision of the king to prohibit independent meetings of the estate representatives was taken without regard to their numerous and ever-increasing – in the 16th century – duties to manage and organize the internal functioning of the country of Silesia, nor to the institutional consequences of the gradual introduction in the first half of the 16th century of the estimated tax as permanent tax. In the face of the lack of the king's institutional initiative, the estates took over the administrative initiative which was manifested in one instance through the multiplication of the Diet's operations, namely, by passing two types of resolutions: one of them, described as 'the answer' (*Antwort*), related to the Diet's attitude towards the issues submitted to the Diet by the monarch, and the other one (*Beschluss*) presented the Diet's decisions regarding the country's affairs. Moreover, from the 1560s new forms of Silesia-wide assemblies emerged whose main focus was the internal affairs of Silesia, of which there were several types. It seems that the first type, which the ducal and the estate assembly organized on their own initiative, comprised the conventions dedicated to the collection of bills, that is to the control over the amount of taxes collected by the governor of Silesia on the basis of a resolution issued by the estates twice a year. Having completed their main task, which was related to the accounting of tax bills, they performed legislative functions centred on the internal affairs of Silesia. This most clearly illustrates the existence of a close link between the introduction of permanent tax rates and the growth of the number of tasks related to internal administration taken over by the

estates. The next aforementioned authority to allow the dukes and the estates to engage in activities connected with the exercise of authority in Silesia was the ducal tribunal assembly held twice a year. Its being part of the Silesian system based on the privilege of Ladislaus Jagiellon made it independent to the extent that it did not require the consent of the king for it to be summoned. Having settled the matters connected with its judiciary function, the estates-participants of the convention passed on to a debate on Silesian affairs. As a result, towards the end of the sessions, they passed resolutions, just as they did during the Diet meetings. Both the dukes and the representatives of estates met together during meetings of the Diet's full membership, summoned by themselves, called general conventions (*Allgemeine Zusammenkunft*). The official who had the power to summon the convention was the governor of Silesia, who acted in this case in accordance with the recommendation of the estates. In order to settle affairs, the estates also appointed departments (*Ausschüße*) or deputations. They did this also from their own exclusive initiative, despite the separate royal prohibition introduced in 1587, this time not observed, relating to the process of their formation. Because they operated in small groups they were also described as replacement assemblies. Finally, there were partial estate assemblies, which were conventions of country's defence quarters. For the operation of the country, including the introduction of financial obligations towards the monarch that were agreed at the Silesia-wide convention, the estates continued to convene spontaneous assemblies, which, however, ceased to be described by the name of Diet, which from then on was reserved only for assemblies convened by the king. As estate assemblies, they exercised executive and legislative tasks fully and independently. The estate assemblies, in all shapes and forms, due to their scope and nature were fundamental institutions in the system of Silesia, and they were becoming crucial determiners of the ongoing process of the country's integration. Paradoxically, the introduction of permanent tax rates by the kings in Silesia – whose consequence was usually extension of competences of central authorities – as a result of its administrative functions taken over by the estate authorities led to the fact that the institutions created by the dukes and estates began to act in this area as bodies of a modern estate authority, which became a highly pro-regional factor.

The Diet was also the stimulus for creating other bodies of Silesian estate management and administration. It was due to the Diet's initiative that the General Tax Office was founded. The royal authority, by initiating the introduction of the estimated tax in 1527, which after a few decades turned out to be a permanent tax paid by the country of Silesia, withdrew from the control of related matters and as

a result it even failed to introduce any royal institution to take possession of the collected tax amounts. A quarter of century later the estates filled this gap. In 1552 they appointed, for the first time – and from 1556 did so on a steady basis – two estate officials, who came to be called general collectors (*Prinzipal-Steuer-Einnehmer*)⁸². Soon, they were supported in their work by a writer-accountant. Together, these three officials were representatives of the Silesia-wide General Tax Office – an estate authority. They took a pledge only to the estates. Their task was to revise and supervise the tax rates. They had the power to enforce the tax payments with the help of the governor of Silesia. However, no separate treasury was introduced by the Silesian estates⁸³, though there was a clear need for such a body. Before their allocation, the collected sums were stored in ‘the country’s chest’ (*Landeskasten*) located in the Wrocław City Hall, equipped with three different locks, the keys of which were kept by three officials of the General Tax Office. The spending of the accumulated sums for military purposes was performed by the country’s payers who were appointed by the Diet from 1557. Supervised by the Diet and sworn in only to the estates, the national payers were responsible for the use of tax incomes for military purposes only. They were therefore required to control the military units proposed for funding by the royal commissioner, and only after their inspection did they draw up detailed registers and obtain the authorization of a special Diet department for the payment of the required sum. The entire process was conducted independently of the king, and it was most significant for the estate control of sums collected for the king.

In addition, the Diet of Silesia, inspired by the institution established by the estates of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor, introduced, most likely towards the close of the 16th century, the office of general country’s plenipotentiary, which was permanent until 1740. The general plenipotentiary was obliged to participate in all kinds of estate meetings, to prepare written opinions on subjects of their discussions as well, and to write down and publish resolutions. Following the creation of the Silesian public convention in 1662, the general plenipotentiaries became a mediator between it and the general governor⁸⁴. It was also through them that the complex Silesian estate bodies communicated each other. From the outset of the 18th century, their duties included taking the minutes of the Diet’s resolutions which were called *Landes Diarium*.

⁸² K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 138.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, p. 146.

⁸⁴ Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Organizacja śląskiego ‘conventus publicus’*, ‘Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka’, 28 (1973), No. 4, p. 475.

A prohibition against summoning a spontaneous the Diet of Silesia in 1536 did not reduce the role of the dukes and the estates in the country's administration. This was due both to the specificity of their sovereign power and the aforementioned slump in the royal activity in the area of administration of Silesia. Finally, it did not lead to the main objective of the king's efforts, that is, the extension of control over the proceedings of the Diet of Silesia. The inactivity of royal power in the process of institutional governance of the country had its consequences not only in creating a number of bodies belonging to the estate, but also in the extension of their political functions. Their actions reflected the political will of the Silesian dukes and estates, which, along with the Bohemian estates from the end of the 16th century until the 1620s, began to represent the political concepts of the Bohemian monarchy based on the estate administration, which challenged the monarchic concept. These were expressed twice in the form of the estate confederations in 1609 and between 1618 and 1621, the latter having a strong anti-Habsburg character. The Bohemian and Silesia estates were ideologically linked by similar religious attitudes based on the broadly-understood Protestant viewpoint, which religiously grounded resistance towards the Catholic monarch. A clear expression of the permanence of this political option in Silesia was the so-called conjunction of 1633 – a military agreement made between the princes of Brzeg, Legnica and Wrocław with Sweden, Saxony and Brandenburg concerning their accession to the union of Heilbronn in 1634, interpreted as an attempt of Silesia to change the state's affiliation. The political defeat of the Silesian dukes and estates during the Thirty Years' War was used by the Habsburg kings to alter the functions of the estate assemblies, above all, by the gradual abolition of their independence in terms of legislature. They also found additional ways for the monarch to communicate with the Diet and new methods of organizing the estate's work within the Silesia-wide bodies. It is significant that the two latter changes were neither institutional nor even formal in character, though they really contributed to a significant increase in the king's control and influence on the estate assembly resolutions.

The control of the assembly took place through the monarch's informal monitoring of the Diet's debates by means of obliging the governor of Silesia to forward to him notifications on the Diet's decisions made at the first ducal curia. In the cases when they were not in line with the king's will, he notified the governor, who then encouraged the princes to re-examine the issue. The king's interference, therefore, took place during the sessions, and not following the passing of the final resolution. In the second half of the 17th century, when this procedure was set up, the king hoped that the princes – who owed their high status in Silesia to him – would

act in his favour. His interference not only accelerated his obtaining of a more beneficial resolution of the Diet, but also made the body – previously fully autonomous – non-cohesive and unable to resist the power of the monarch. At the same time, the monarch, who from the mid-17th century acted as the sole legislative power in Silesia, allowed the Diet to retain a certain degree of initiative in preparing all relevant laws concerning internal affairs until the 1740s⁸⁵.

In the second half of the 17th century, further transformations of the Diet led to the emergence of the public convention (*Conventus publicus*) in 1662 as a specific form of Silesian assembly which began to operate as a permanent working institution. This latter change – albeit from a political perspective keeping in line with the trends of the absolutist rule – is seen by scholars as the result of independent actions undertaken by the estates of Silesia which were not influenced by the authority of the monarchs⁸⁶. This would confirm the existence of the specific inertia of royal power – diagnosed above – regarding the introduction of new institutions in Silesia. The convention comprised the full membership of the Diet, but at the same time was composed only of the deputies of the members who were entitled to participate in it. It functioned on three levels: as the Diet (presided by the governor of Silesia), as the Supreme Ducal Tribunal (presided by one of the princes), and more strictly as a convention, taking a position on all the internal affairs of Silesia that were submitted to it on a regular basis by the Superior Office. The monarch also began to use the convention, although some issues – especially those relating to consent to the taxes – were still reserved only for the formally convened Diets⁸⁷. The reason for the formation of this type of political institution was a substantial growth in the number of administrative tasks that needed to be undertaken on a regular basis.

A considerable degree of political autonomy of particular duchies and free states within the country of Silesia resulted in the fact that – as already mentioned – they developed their own institutional systems, which were split into both estate and ducal branches. In the vassal duchies and the free states the rulers exercised their power personally and had their own officials and ducal offices. Until the Thirty Years' War, the estates of each of the duchies, partially jointly with the ducal bodies, exercised judicial, legislative and executive power by means of periodic estate conventions and continuously active estate offices. Individual territorial organisms reflected – in a way which was characteristic for Silesia – the system of dualist rule at the level of power shared by the dukes and the estates, and in hereditary duchies

⁸⁵ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, p. 41.

⁸⁶ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnos Śląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, p. 195.

⁸⁷ *Idem*, *Ewolucja struktury śląskich zgromadzeń stanowych XVII i XVIII wieku*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka' 32, (1977), No. 4, p. 451-466;

between the estates and the governor of the duchy⁸⁸ who acted as a substitute for the office of dukes. What was characteristic for this period was, however, the fusion of the ducal and estate offices within the duchies.

In the early modern period the scope of the ducal authority was subject to further limitations which were partly the result of the privileges issued for the estates of the duchies; this became a strong basis for the co-rule of the estates and dukes within the duchies. Simultaneously, ducal power was diminished by deliberate actions taken by the king. Investitures, along with the constraints that arose from feudal relationships, guaranteed, in fact, the full extent of inherited ducal rights, yet the kings managed to gradually reduce the external political independence of the princes, and to obtain new financial resources in the duchies through the acquisition of numerous regalia which, according to contemporary legal tradition, were due to the dukes – especially in such areas as minting, mining, customs and salt mining⁸⁹.

The ducal officials were divided into two groups. One of them included officials connected with the functioning of the ducal court and the handling of ducal possessions, that is within the legal-private ducal sphere. The second group consisted of officials appointed by the duke in order to perform the public functions of his authority. The ducal functionaries of the first group were, in the 16th century, included in the ducal camera headed by the leader – who was, depending on the duchy, also designated as the master of the camera or the regent. This group also included officials who provided various services to the duke and his court (steward, cupbearer, cellarer, equerry, etc.). The highest ducal official in the second group was the ducal governor, whose duties included cooperating with the estates on behalf of the duke, and who was supported by advisers. Matters concerning the duchy's external relations were dealt with by the chancellor, who was aided by the chancellery and lower personnel. By the mid-16th century, this group of officials began to be referred to as government of the duchy⁹⁰. In the 16th century, some of them were gradually losing their ducal character, and became mixed ducal-estate offices and bodies, which was reflected even in their different names, as in the case of the most important office of the governor who ceased to be 'ducal' and became 'landed' (*Landeshauptmann*). In the modern period, the governor became the primary executive official in both types of duchies. In the case of hereditary duchies,

⁸⁸ R.J.W. Evans, *The making*, p. 299, called them "lieutenants at the local level". However, in sources this official was referred to as Landeshauptmann, and there were two local levels, at the duchies and at the districts, where this officials functioned.

⁸⁹ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 157.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 161.

where following the expiry of the local dynastic lines, the ducal title was taken over by the king, it was the governor who – until the Thirty Years' War – fulfilled, next to the estates, the functions of the secondary authority as the governor of the permanently-absent ruler. Having been legally appointed to this office, he was entitled to make decisions without the need to always obtain approval for his actions from the king, who was simultaneously the duke of the hereditary duchy⁹¹. Thus, the governor in hereditary duchies, as compared to that of the vassal duchies and the free states, gained more extensive ruling powers. At the same time the estates of hereditary duchies demanded that the governor be appointed only from among the indigenous nobility of a particular duchy and that he concede specific electoral capitulations issued by this estates of the duchy⁹². This illustrated both the growing estate-dependency of this office and the strengthening of its connection with the local ruling elites.

These processes which transformed the nature of the office of governor of the duchy were coupled with a clear tendency to view the authority of the king, who was formally a duke of the duchy, not only as competitive, but also as external. This can be considered an illustration of the growing autonomy of the estates within the individual duchies. What seems problematic, though, is the attempt to perform a more accurate evaluation of this regionalism, for it partially resulted from the growing – throughout the 16th century – sense of exercising real authority within Silesia by the Silesia-wide estate assemblies and was expressed by means of the aforementioned demand of the estates that the king enforced his claims towards the hereditary duchy by means of the Diet. In this sense, it could be associated with Silesian regionalism. However, much more often it had a much narrower territorial range and was related to a sense of independence of the estates of particular duchies, not only from the king, but also from the Silesia-wide bodies representing Silesia as an integrated political whole. The internal socio-political structure of Silesia was still locally imbued with the sense of independence of its socio-politically active groups.

The king, by preventing this policy of estate of the hereditary duchies, sought to recruit governors from candidates from outside the duchy, aiming, in particular – just as Ferdinand I had in the mid-1540s in the Duchy of Głogów – to entrust it to the Bohemian nobility⁹³. However, until the Thirty Years' War this strategy faced strong resistance from the estates, as a result of which – though the king at times managed to fill the offices of the Lower Silesian duchies with foreigners (in the case

⁹¹ M. Ptak, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa głogowskiego*, p. 48.

⁹² G. Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung*, p. 64.

⁹³ M. Ptak, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa głogowskiego*, p. 51.

of Upper Silesian duchies the office remained in the hands of the members of local elites) – he actually appointed candidates with the right of *inkolat* in particular duchies or those who had prospects of obtaining this right quickly. He secured their loyalty by offering them advancement to the higher nobility – whose members were, in principle, Catholic – which, as already mentioned, was a manifestation of his explicit pro-Habsburg policy⁹⁴. Taking advantage of the fact that the character of the governor office in the administrative structure of the duchies was growing increasingly collegial, the king formalized this by introducing the board of councillors – a collegial office headed by the governor – which became a specific feature of the hereditary duchies. It would be, nonetheless deceiving to equate the fact of reorganizing the office of the governor of the duchy exclusively with the interference of the monarch in the shape of the office of the governor of Silesia in 1629. What became the model for the formation of the board of councillors in the Silesian duchies where, as mentioned, the growth in the collegiality of this office began as early as in the second half of the 16th century, was its emergence in the vassal Duchy of Legnica, which indicates that the processes of the formation of multi-member bureaucratic institutions were common across the entire region of Silesia, and not associated with one specific power. This reorganization in the hereditary duchies transformed the governor into a royal official, thereby opening the way for further changes within the sphere of administration of hereditary duchies. The office of governor within the duchies developed independently and – particularly in vassal duchies – was not formally subordinate to that of the governor of Silesia. Only in the 17th century was it common for the king to treat these two types of offices as hierarchically subordinated.

The estates of the duchies managed all areas of public life by means of the estate bodies. The estate assemblies, convened in all the duchies and free states, were the primary form of estate administration. Their structure was either two-level or uniform. Larger units, especially the duchies composed of more than one district, constituted the first type. It was based on both the functioning of the estate assembly of the duchy, that is, the higher assembly – which played a central role in particular territories – as well as the lower assembly – the district estate assembly – which was subordinate to the higher assembly. In principle, these were to gather only representatives of the nobility, but permitted the participation of representatives of other ranks. The free states or duchies without districts – like the Duchies

⁹⁴ Jarosław Kuczer, *Obsada urzędów starościńskich w dziedzicznych księstwach śląskich w obliczu absolutyzmu cesarskiego (1629–1741)*, [in:] *Młodsza Europa – od średniowiecza do współczesności*, eds Jan Jurkiewicz, Roman M. Józefiak, Wojciech Strzyżewski, Zielona Góra 2008, pp. 273–286.

of Cieszyn or Krnov – summoned only the estate assembly of the duchy (or of the free state) – but these were not the only type of central-level estate institution. In Silesia, despite the fact that the actual number of duchies was 16, only 14 estate assemblies were in operation as the Duchies of Świdnica-Jawor and Opole-Racibórz joined together in one estate assembly following their union. This number was further extended by six estate assemblies of the free states. The estate assemblies of the duchies, though they were very similar to one another, were never identical. Nor were they interrelated. The estate assemblies of the district, which were of lower status, performed complex functions, including the election of members of the estate assemblies of the duchies and the adoption of resolutions concerning local (district's) issues, or issues which were subsequently examined by the estate assemblies of the duchies.

The intensity of the activity of the estates of the duchies was manifested in a multiplicity of estate assembly forms, regardless of the fact of whether there was a one- or two-stage system in place. The single-estate assemblies functioned when they were formed only by representatives of the nobility or the burghers. Other assemblies were of a multi-estate nature; they could be organized either based on the principle of personal participation of eligible individuals or on the principle of representation, or they had a mixed character. Consequently, we may also distinguish between 'narrow' and mixed common estate assemblies. There were also assemblies which gathered only Evangelical estates. What is more, at the duchy level, not only the estate assemblies functioned, but also, e.g. as in the Duchy of Głogów, the colleges of duchy, conventions of estate officers, senior land officers and land deputies, conventions of senior land officers, or conventions of district cities. Each one of these bodies occurred in several forms, depending on its composition: the college could be composed only of the nobility (single-estate), an extended composition (multi-estate), or they could include representatives of some of the estates of 'closest proximity' or an assembly of estate members who were of the Evangelical denomination⁹⁵. Due to the fact that the Duchies of Legnica, Brzeg and Wołów remained in possession of one single Piast dynastic line until 1675, there also emerged an assembly of three duchies in the form of a specific department recorded as 'the conference'⁹⁶. A unique case among the Silesian duchies was the bishop's duchy, which contained the following units: the land of Nysa, the districts of Otmuchów and of Grodków, and a number of landed estates (*wiązowski* and *ujazdowski*) in the land of

⁹⁵ M. Ptak, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa głogowskiego*, pp. 79-80.

⁹⁶ *Idem*, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa brzeskiego (1311–1742)*, Wrocław 1996 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 1853, Prawo 249), p. 44.

Nysa and territorially scattered (*kącki wrocławski, skoroszowski* and *przychowski*). Though the bishop's duchy was treated as a unit of political division in Silesia and each subsequent bishop was its exclusive ruler, its internal constituent territories were not fully united. This was manifested in the development in the case of the *wrocławski, skoroszowski, przychowski* and *kącki* landed estates of separate administrative structures of estates which were described in the literature as estate assemblies of the episcopal landed estates⁹⁷. The last of these estates even possessed its own land statute. What is more, the estate assemblies of the duchies appointed their own bodies, as well as land treasuries⁹⁸. Moreover, in each individual duchy and free state judicial bodies of the nobility operated. They were divided into the court of vassals – which had jurisdiction over the nobility who owned the land based on the vassal code, and *czudy* – judging the nobility who owned allodial land, in line with Polish law. Yet the ethnic differences which were formerly characteristic of these two types of land ownership gradually disappeared. The estate assemblies of the duchies appointed vassal court assessors (*Mannrecht*) and a few land-court assessors (*czud* assessors), which at times required the duke's acceptance. Duchies also differed in terms of the specificity of laws used.

The estate offices in most of the duchies also functioned as district offices and central offices of individual sovereignties, and others, including almost all free states, only as central offices. The estates of each of the territories of Silesia developed their own complex system incorporating these institutions. The most important estate offices were the senior land officers – elected by the estate assembly of the duchy – who were plenipotentiaries of the noble district's corporations, and their main task was to protect the estate interests of the nobility. They participated in the justice system by performing these functions independently, and they were also obliged to participate in the estate land court of the free states⁹⁹. The land plenipotentiary (*Landesbestellte*), whose function was similar to that of the land legal adviser, also supervised the land treasury. The office, originally ducal, of land judge or land-court judge who presided over a court of both German and Polish law, became an estate office in the 16th century. The most important official of the estate financial administration was the tax collector (*Steuer-Einnehmer*), who also managed the land treasury. The land deputies were officers empowered by the nobility to deal – together

⁹⁷ *Idem, Zgromadzenia i urzędy stanowe księstwa nyskiego oraz innych posiadłości biskupstwa wrocławskiego*, Wrocław 1988 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 982, Prawo 156), pp. 9-44.

⁹⁸ *Idem, Zgromadzenia i urzędy stanowe księstwa cieszyńskiego*, Wrocław 1992 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 1193, Prawo 191), p. 50.

⁹⁹ *Idem, Zgromadzenia i urzędy stanowe wolnego państwa sycowskiego*, Wrocław 1992 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 1277, Prawo 197), p. 24.

with senior land officers – with current estate affairs. Additionally, operations were assisted by land cashiers, writers and bailiffs, as well as commissioners who were specialized estate marching officers and whose task was to supervise the marches, accommodation and food supply of the army.

Both the estate assemblies and the estate offices were developed through a process which was, to a large extent, unconnected with the process of the creation of the Silesia-wide bodies, and therefore did not result in generic relationships between these two systems, that is the system of the duchies and the system of institution and offices of the Silesia at the central, country level, that would express their linear, direct and full hierarchical subjection. This was linked to, as mentioned earlier, the problem of recognition of the binding resolutions of the Silesian Diet by the estate assemblies of the duchies¹⁰⁰. Only the estate assemblies of hereditary duchies had direct connections with the Diet. Also in this case, the estates of the duchy adopted the provisions of the Diet of Silesia as general guidelines and determined the methods of their execution themselves. In addition, the relationship was not inalienable in character. It could have been stopped at any time at the moment of the king's transfer of a particular hereditary duchy in feudal possession. In this case, the estates were deprived of their previous opportunity to participate in the Diet's proceedings in favour of the new rulers of the new duchy or state. The Silesia-wide Diet and the estate assemblies of the duchies also varied in terms of their internal structure. The Diet had a permanent three-curia structure and the passing of a resolution took place by counting the votes of the three curias, and later – from the 17th century – also of the fourth body – the *votum conclusivum* of the governor of Silesia. The structure of the estate assemblies differed depending on the duchy and free states¹⁰¹. Some of them were divided into curias, but their number varied from two to four, and in the case of others, despite the existence of the curia, the votes were plenary. There were also bodies with no curias at all. What is more, the composition of the estate assembly's curias was varied and never identical to that of the Diet: the curia in the estate assemblies could include both knights and burghers, as in the case of the estate assembly of the Duchy of Wrocław, or knights and clergy, as in the estate assembly of the Duchy of Głogów. Some estate assemblies lacked city curias, and this was so in the case of Cieszyn or Żagań. There was also no set

¹⁰⁰ Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Sejm i sejniki w ustroju feudalnego Śląska*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 31, (1976), No. 2, p. 199.

¹⁰¹ Norbert Conrads, *Die schlesische Ständeversammlung im Umbruch – vom altständischen Herzogtum zur preußischen Provinz*, [in:] *Ständetum und Staatsbildung in Brandenburg-Preußen*, ed. Peter Baumgart, Berlin-New York 1983 (=Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission zu Berlin, vol. 55: Forschungen zur preußischen Geschichte, vol. 4), Berlin 1983, p. 362.

procedure of delegating emissaries to the Diet of Silesia, which would be common for all the estate assemblies of hereditary duchies¹⁰². The existence of the slightly better developed curia structure of estate assemblies in the hereditary duchies at times even made the delegation of common emissaries more difficult: it often occurred that the bodies delegated their emissaries separately – the curia of knights most often delegated estate officials, and the curia of the cities used municipal emissaries. The lack of relations between the estate assemblies of duchies and the Diet of Silesia also resulted in a lack of institutional forms enabling the cooperation among the members of the entire Silesian nobility, which could have created an opportunity for them to present themselves as members of one Silesia-wide social estate. The nobility of feudal duchies did not reveal itself at any of the Silesia-wide forums.

This discontinuous structure of the Silesian institutions and offices, on both a vertical plane (from the level of individual duchies to the region-wide level) and a horizontal one (composed of individual duchies) was evidenced by the continuous presence of the country's internal structural, organizational, political and institutional divisions which inhibited the processes of integration of the region as a whole. This factor, which had a regional-destructive power, can be observed in the period of the co-regency of the king and the estates, that is until the period of the Thirty Years' War. The oscillation of the Silesian elites between attempts to consolidate internal territorial-political fragmentations and aspirations to unify the region by means of Silesia-wide institutions weakened Silesia as a country engaged in a continuous quest to achieve equal status with the stronger and more integrated regions of Moravia and Bohemia within the Bohemian monarchy. When at the end of the 1620s the practical scope of royal authority was far greater in relation to Silesia as a whole, this discontinuous internal structure of Silesian institutions became in turn an inhibitor of attempts to melt the institutions and systems of Silesia into the 'post-Battle of White Mountain' political system of the monarchy. The estates of each of the powers of Silesia enjoyed individual privileges which legally supported the existing institutions and estate offices of individual territorial units. Extending this political-territorial system by new institutions or new ways of administration was a difficult task. The introduction of new rules regarding the Silesian bodies of authority did not have a direct impact on the functioning of the estate offices in individual duchies, because they were not organizationally dependent on the central institutions of Silesia. Nor could they function within the vassal duchies in the second half of the 17th century, for these were not subject to the royal authority.

¹⁰² *Idem*, *Schlesiens frühe Neuzeit (1469-1740)*, [in:] *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europa. Schlesien*, ed. *idem*, Berlin 1994, (=Deutsche Geschichte in Osten Europas, vol. 4), p. 201.

The investitures allowed this type of authority to remain in the hands of the dukes. Despite the fact that the legal importance of the privileges of hereditary duchies significantly decreased in the second half of the 17th century, the monarch – faced with persistent and long-term complaints of the estates – was still required to introduce changes through separate, specific decisions in relation to each of the duchies individually. One example of this is the royal efforts to introduce supervision over the organization of the estate assemblies in the hereditary duchies in the second half of the 17th century, which were completely different from the effectiveness of royal policy with regard to the Silesian Diet. For the estates of the Duchy of Głogów the order prohibiting the estate assembly from being convened by the estates themselves had already been proclaimed by Ferdinand in 1564, but it was not respected and the estate assembly was convened until 1670 by the senior land officers. Only in that year did Leopold I manage to ensure the enforcement of the resolution for the estate assembly to be convened by the government of the duchy, with simultaneous assurances that this was happening on the initiative of the estates¹⁰³. In the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor, from 1549, the ban on the summoning of the estate assembly was in effect, and at the same time, the governor of the duchy was obliged to summon it regularly. The estates of the duchy kept demanding the right to organize spontaneous meetings, and finally managed to obtain this right in the years 1674-1697¹⁰⁴.

Inasmuch as the composite structure of the entire Kingdom of Bohemia was – as has been pointed out – a remarkably strong stimulus in maintaining or even consolidating the regionalisms of its constituent countries, the similar political-territorial structure of Silesia should be perceived as an ambivalent stimulus: one which could potentially lead to its territorial decomposition, and at the same time act as a barrier to it being penetrated by and included in the scope of supra-Silesian offices; that is, it helped protect the region against outside influences but did not protect its internal contents. The possession by each of the Silesian duchies and free states of distinct legal status in relation to the royal office still granted them political-legal distinctness from Silesia as a whole, but at the same time it constituted a barrier against attempts to introduce by the central authority innovations in the area of Silesian administration. The political-territorial system of Silesia in the period of royal and estate rule in the 16th century and up till the 1620s proved to be an obstacle for its being infiltrated by the centralizing powers from outside Silesia, and

¹⁰³ M. Ptak, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa głogowskiego*, pp. 119-121.

¹⁰⁴ G. Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung*, p. 85.

during the period of absolutism it became an important factor which prevented the possibility of the monarch's interference in Silesian affairs.

The power elites in the modern period were increasingly preoccupied with allocating their authority in institutions. The institutions were therefore created for particular purposes. The force of active political and social groups was a crucially important factor in the power between the king, the Bohemian estates and the Silesian estates. But the consequences of particular actions, and the actual extent of the competence of the institutions created by these forces to affect living social processes, were – we have tried to show – already largely independent of the intentional purposes of their creators, but were still being associated with these forces, and it was possible to make adjustments both to their form and scope of operation. The third aspect of the phenomenon, which continues to escape the attention of the contemporary researchers, was the configuration of all elements of social administration. In Silesia, this aspect was uniquely diverse, mostly because of the political forces which used it to exercise power, for it comprised the Silesian estate bodies (the Diet, the Supreme Ducal Tribunal) and the Silesian monarchic-estate bodies (the governor of Silesia), the central-level estate bodies of individual duchies and free states of Silesia (the estate assemblies of duchy, the land colleges) and the local-level bodies distributed according to territorial divisions (estate assemblies of districts), ducal-level bodies of the duchies and of the free states, as well as the estate-ducal, municipal, and monarchic bodies – both central (the Appeals Chamber, the Bohemian chancellor; following 1627) and regional (the governor of Silesia from 1629, the Superior Office), the Bohemian central estate-monarchic bodies (Bohemian chancellor until 1627) and the supra-regional royal bodies linked to the centre of power (the Bohemian Camera, until 1556, the Wrocław royal Camera from 1556, and the court council of war in the 18th century). The presented findings should be, however, supplemented with two important concerns. In the period up to 1740, authority was not entirely manifested by the institutions and their formal administrative structures. An important factor which also strongly influenced public decisions at the time was the social status of a person or a group of persons related to their origin and belonging to a particular social stratum. There were also many non-institutional ways of exerting a political impact, which were especially used by the central authorities in relation to public affairs. If, therefore, one were to raise a question about power and the decision-making centres, and not about the institutions, the presented argumentation would be to some extent different. In addition, most of the modern institutions operating in Silesia did not fully correspond to the institutions in their mature, contemporary form. The institutions of estate

governance, especially those at the local administrative level, only in the modern period managed to complete the stage which may be described as socially recognized forms of regulation of social co-existence within communities matching their sociological characteristics. Also, the institutions introduced by the royal authority, developed with the idea and prior knowledge of their functioning, showed more fluency in their basic characteristics, such as the organization of people within their structures and stability of their competences within individual institutions.

The centralizing modern-age institutions of the monarchy which operated in Silesia were characteristic for the fact that they either did not develop administrative links with the Silesian bodies or they did so to a very limited extent. Even the most deeply rooted, newly-reorganized institution in the country, the royal Camera, which began to function in an institutionally-undeveloped space of the administration of royal finances, functioned alongside the institution created by the Silesian dukes and estates. In the mid-17th century, conditions were created for its functional, though not directly institutional, connection to the country's revenue institutions, but at the same time, an additional military authority was established which duplicated both part of its competence, as well as the competence of the general estate tax office. This was one of the manifestations of the inconsistent institutional policy of the Habsburgs, but also an expression of the difficulties faced in overcoming the specificity of the contemporary regional estate administration. The central institutions were also incompatible with the Silesian ones which potentially corresponded to them. This was best illustrated by the relationship between the general estate assembly in Prague and the Silesian Diet, as well as by official relations between the governor of Silesia and the Bohemian chancellor.

The group of institutions operating in Silesia did not form a homogeneous system of country administration. This comment applies principally to the system of estate institutions of various levels within Silesia. Silesia had no legal order which would govern its general internal affairs, either constitutional or institutional, nor did it have a general codification of the common law – as opposed to Bohemia (where such an act was in effect from 1500) and Moravia (*Tobitscher Buch*). The only document relating to the whole of Silesia, the privilege of Ladislaus Jagiellon of 1498, revealed the incompleteness of centralization at the Silesia-wide level. The failure to endow Silesia with a similar act which was issued separately for Bohemia and Moravia (in the years 1627 and 1628 respectively) entitled *Odnowiony porządek ziemski* (which thoroughly transformed the structure and the functioning of the institutions of these countries, bringing them closer to absolutism), was partially caused by the so-called Dresden Accord (1621), which virtually guaranteed the

political *status quo ante bellum* in Silesia, but above all by the very difficult to interfere in the unclear and highly complex legal-structural-institutional system of Silesia. In relation to each other, the bodies developed by the Silesian communities were often incompatible or to some extent they duplicated their competences. The internal institutional diversity, both difficult to manage and reform consistently by the central, monarchical power, became one of the reasons for which the region of Silesia continued to be preserved between the 1629 and 1740.

The discussion on the heterogeneity of the systems of administration in different areas of Silesia also applies to the relationships between the structures of Silesian and supra-Silesian institutions. Up until the Thirty Years' War its loose configuration resulted from attempts to reactivate old institutions, mostly those dating back to the Luxembourg period, or to create new institutions of governance in Silesia by the Bohemian king and Bohemian estates. Applying them to the network of Silesian institutions which were either developed bottom-up by the estates or made independent in the 15th and early 16th centuries, and the enforcement of their spheres of competence, resulted in the fact that until the Thirty Years' War, the regionalization of the elites of Silesia was identified with the protection of institutional autonomy against pro-centralist political forces. From the time of the political transformations that took place during the war until the end of the era in 1740, despite the limiting of the spheres of political regionalization, the institutional regionalization of Silesia was still maintained, which was determined by two factors: the development of the regional and to a large extent effective system of institutions for the country's administration, and the possibilities for its adaptation by the royal authority in order to obtain two basic benefits from the country of Silesia: tax income and financial resources for military purposes. The royal authority initiated resolutions in terms of finances and military defence, and when it comes to the regulation of the country's internal life, the principal role continued to be played by the representative estate institutions and their bodies and offices, which, in order to legalize their workings, were obliged to submit them for the ruler's approval. Therefore, the Habsburgs, in the period of absolutism, continued to make use of the Silesian administration bodies formed by the Silesian estates, and modified their operation through their supervision and consequent abolition of the monocratic character of offices for the sake of their collegiality: the division of responsibility brought about the reduction of the independency in the execution of power by Silesian officials. In the period of absolutism, regionalization became the principal method of exercising authority both in Silesia and in other Habsburg countries. The strong

centralization of power policy consistently pursued by the Habsburgs was accompanied by a much weaker institutional centralization imperative.

Integration and the economy. Silesia in the early modern period

Abstract:

Despite having distinct features due to economy, Silesia was no different, in context of events shaping conditions of development, from the neighbouring regions, especially the Bohemian Crown from the 16th to the 18th centuries. The particular interests of the Silesian economy since the 17th century were required, possibly enabled by the political distinctiveness of the region and the complex structure of the monarchy. Also relevant were strong external relations (transit, export and import) long maintained despite divisions, both political and at customs. Said „interests” could themselves be considered an additional factor integrating the region, (certainly, that became so in time) if not for their existence stemming from earlier political integration and specifically being an unexpected (since mercantile times intentional) result of the “external” factor, specifically state politics. Although lacking the influence it enjoyed in earlier times, Wrocław remained the primary beneficiary, as its economic interests were typically considered synonymous with interests of entire Silesia.

Keywords:

Silesia, 16th-18th centuries, economic policy, tax policy, tariff policy, communication

As has been repeatedly pointed out by Kazimierz Orzechowski, an eminent historian of law, since the close of the 15th century Silesia had been a separate political entity (as a result of being merged from ‘outside’) but it had not been a state¹. The following considerations result from the adoption of this thought, and are focused on the determinants of the Silesian economy arising from continuous confrontation between the needs of the state agent, which in this case acts as an external factor, with the interests of the forces binding the local community of dukes and Silesian estates². The text further presents a brief description of the leading sectors of the Silesian economy, and attempts to identify their regional specificities, as well as to discern some universal determinants located in the context of society and settlement.

¹ Recently: K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 103, 141. Other: N. Conrads, *Książęta*, p. 95, assuming, due the language of the original, the existence of the ‘the state of Silesia’ in the 1st half of the 18th century.

² For a broader context: J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, pp. 446-457.

The state-enforced structures and operations distinguishing Silesia and bonding it as a separate economic area within the monarchy, or integrating it with the state organism; the dynamics of the situation

Under the rule of the Habsburgs, all parts of the region, regardless of their political status, had a common fiscal burden to the state. Since 1527, the monarch had imposed financial charges not on individual duchies, regardless of whether they were inherited or feudal, but on the whole of Silesia, thus emphasizing both its distinctiveness within the structure of the state and its internal integrity. The fiscal policy of the monarchy – pursued separately in each of its parts – continued to be directed at the region, whose residents were then united by a common level of benefits and institutions enforcing them. These comprised brand new (modern) solutions that could be compared only to the earlier attempts undertaken by Matthias Corvinus (1470–1490) to create a common fiscal and customs policy for the whole of Silesia. From that moment, the monarch entrusted every division, collection and transfer of basic taxes imposed on the region (a direct tax on assets and income, the so-called estimated tax) to the Diet of Silesia – the regional representative body of the estates. Thus, a local agent participated in the management of the fiscal policy (a consequence of the ‘grand privilege’ granted by Ladislaus Jagiellon in 1498, which, among others, made the introduction of taxes and customs conditional on the consent of the Silesians), which was integrated at the level of the region and forced to establish its own procedures and a permanent executive body (General Steuer-Amt in Wrocław, which held the keys to the ‘domestic treasury’ in the local town hall). However, no separate regional budget was created.

The estimation of wealth and the collection of taxes by institutions of the estates, which began in 1527 in the name of ‘aid’ to the monarch to repel the Turkish threat, was carried out smoothly, which indicates that there was a social acceptance of the procedure that the goal of the king was shared by the estates. The threat, however, continued and the estimated tax resolution had to be repeated a further ten times by the dukes and the estates, so that from 1556 the annual management and collection of ‘ordinary Turkish aid’ (also called an ‘estimation’ or ‘forecast’) began, and from 1570 it was supplemented by an ‘extraordinary resolution’, which meant an additional tax for the army compensating the tax collector for the decrease in value of the inflowing coin³. The system of state and internal duties referred to the ongoing sense of military threat. Regardless of the name and form of the duty,

³ See Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Podatek szacunkowy na tle systemu daninowego dawnego Śląska 1527-1740. Studium historycznoprawne*, Wrocław 1999.

a dramatic justification was always required to persuade the dukes and estates deliberating in the Diet of Silesia that they should implement it. Such was the case with the subsequent fixed indirect tax on barrels of beer (*Biergeld*), described as an ‘aid’ to settle debts (*Schuldenlasthilfe*), with *Scheffelgeld* – an internal duty, which was a conglomerate of the provision on sowing grain and overheads charged on selected food products, as well as any other indirect taxes (initially referred to as *Ungeld*). Since the debt of Silesian estates to the state was gradually increasing, particularly in the late 16th and the early 17th centuries when they increasingly failed to deal with outstanding payments of direct taxes, the monarch still received indirect ones. Especially important were those duties which aggravated large-scale trade throughout Silesia, i.e. ‘cattle duty’ (*Viehgeld*) and border duty, which could prove to be lucrative for the royal office of tax collector (of whom more will be said below), unless its very activity would not lead to the collapse of such hitherto prosperous trade. Fiscal pressure revealed again at the turn of the 16th century, when fees on selected local products (paper, leather) were dramatically increased and an excise duty, i.e. a tax on consumption, was introduced. The pressure strengthened once again during the Thirty Years’ War, as from 1631 the system of ‘extraordinary’ tax was gradually expanded, culminating in 1645 in 13 amazingly diversified duties, such as a tax on milling and excise duty on alcohol. After a long period of introducing a variety of taxes (which temporarily operated as expedient ones), in order to simplify the system in 1706 the monarch imposed a provision on the trade of all commodities – a universal excise tax. The introduction of this tax was performed in several stages: it was applied to the upper part of Silesia a year before it covered the whole region of Silesia⁴.

Only one indirect tax (the *Biergeld* of 1546) and the import duty which was in operation (of which there is a description below) were chosen by the office of royal tax governor – victum (*Viztum*), a position which had existed in Wrocław since 1554 and whose owner was appointed to manage royal privileges at the regional level, and was subordinate to the Bohemian Camera. Since 1558, the apparatus had been subject to a collective body – the royal Camera of Silesia in Wrocław. The latter, at the same time, did not constitute an independent institution, but was placed within the supraregional structure of the tax administration of the king through direct subordination to his court Camera of Vienna⁵. This condition was one of the few achievements of the Habsburgs’ unification policy, which in this case was based

⁴ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 145-150, 215-219.

⁵ Subjection to the Bohemian *camera* in customs issues lasted until 1572. Cf. Arthur Kern, *Der 'neue Grenzzoll' in Schlesien, seine Begründung und Entwicklung 1556-1624*, Berlin 1892, pp. 11, 39; K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 119, 124; N. Conrads, *Książęta*, pp. 92-93.

on integration at a regional level⁶. The intensification of efforts aimed at increasing the royal revenues arising from the enforcement of a royal privilege led to the appointment of specialized services at the regional level, such as services for the use of newly-created monopolies on sea salt (1562) and tobacco (1706), for the supervision and minting of coins (the Monetary Office) or for mining supervision (the Higher Master of Mining). The free development of their territorial competence – the case of the Higher Salt Officer, who had supervised saltworks in Silesia and Lusatia since 1572⁷ – indicates the pragmatic nature of the activities performed by the apparatus of the monarchy. Its structures, as can be seen through the example of the Camera, were not dependent on formal and political barriers that are idealistically treated here as a factor influencing the processes of the creation of public awareness.

What became a part of the fiscal policy of the monarchy implemented at a regional level after 1556 was the so-called border duty selected by the aforesaid state apparatus. External and transit trade were subject to uniform charges across the region which, since 1623 – as formulated in historiography – constituted a separate customs area within the Bohemian monarchy⁸. Uniform operating conditions enforced the sense of community among the merchants of Silesia. The unfavourable customs policy of the monarch gave rise to local agents first defining the economic interests of the region, and then fighting for their protection.

Activities related to the implementation of new tax charges repeated different countries of the monarchy unified the conditions for economic activity existing within the state, but at the same time – since they were adapted to local specificities and the existing legal situation – they maintained regional autonomy. This was especially true in cases where the new charges supplemented rather than replaced existing duties and city entrance tolls, as they constituted a further influence on local conditions for the functioning of economic life. For example, by gradually expanding the list of goods subject to export duties over the years 1546–1564, Bohemia became a separate customs territory whose specificity lied within the fact that import duties were replaced there with *Ungeld*, later called an excise duty, collected from foreign and domestic goods imported into the cities⁹. Moreover, in Silesia the export duties were established as the foundation of the system which was

⁶ See Gabriela Wąs, *Dzieje Śląska od 1526 do 1806 roku*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, ed. Marek Czapliński, Wrocław 2002 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 2364), pp. 120-121.

⁷ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 127.

⁸ Józef Gierowski, *Struktura gospodarcza i społeczna miast. Przemysł i górnictwo. Handel*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 3: *Od końca XVI w. do r. 1763*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, Wrocław 1963, p. 229; Waław Korta, *Historia Śląska do 1763 roku*, introduction and prepared for printing by Marek Derwich, Warszawa 2003, p. 369.

⁹ A. Kern, *Der 'neue Grenzzoll'*, p. 14.

introduced in violation of the great privilege of 1498, that is only on the basis of the imperial mandate of the 1st of May 1556, issued in Wrocław on the 20th of September, 1557. Import duties were imposed only on a few commodities (gold, silver and silk), and attempts to expand their range (e.g. to wool) failed because of the resistance of Silesian residents (although here sale taxes constituted a supplement to duty; the list of items this applied to was constantly expanded)¹⁰. Border duty did not serve to protect local production, but at the same time it did not pose difficulties in importing raw materials from outside of the region. At its core, the border duty was a tax levied only to meet the needs of the royal treasury, but at the same time it undermined the competitiveness of the goods exported by Silesian cities. Since exports included not only domestic products, but also goods passing through it in transit, the border duty was harmful to the functioning of the great international trade routes running through Silesia, which were commonly considered to have been the true wealth of the land¹¹.

The unequivocally negative assessment of customs duty both by contemporaries and historians¹² should not obscure the fact that the monarch also issued orders which resulted from considerations not related to taxes, such as separate resolutions introducing export bans on saltpetre and gunpowder, firearms, gold, silver and horses (goods which were consequently smuggled out), not to mention the temporary prohibitions related to catastrophic crop failures affecting export of grain, flour and bread¹³. The consequences of the conscious economic policy of the officials of the Bohemian Camera to which the Silesian Camera was initially subjected are indicated in Danuta Molenda's research. To prevent a deficit of lead supplies, which were necessary for the Bohemian silver smelting industry, an export duty was imposed on lead mined in Upper Silesia, which thus lost its competitiveness in foreign markets, while maintaining the principle of individual exemption from the duty of the transport of lead from Poland, through Silesia, to Kutná Hora¹⁴.

Royal duty ordinance evoked criticism from the Wrocław city council, the dukes and the Silesian estates, which were thus forced to analyze the relationship between trade prosperity and public welfare. The legitimacy of the complaints was also examined by the royal tax authorities, (referring for example to the analysis of the cost-effectiveness of trade routes from Cracow to Leipzig and Nuremberg via

¹⁰ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 44.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 15, 17, 19, 23, 25.

¹² J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 228; W. Korta, *Historia*, p. 369.

¹³ A. Kern, *Der 'neue Grenzzoll'*, pp. 16, 43, 47-48.

¹⁴ Danuta Molenda, *Polski ołów na rynkach Europy Środkowej w XIII–XVII wieku*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 70-71.

Poznań, bypassing Wrocław, performed in 1559 by the commissioners of the Silesian camera)¹⁵, which undoubtedly contributed to the deepening reflections on economic issues among political classes of Silesian contemporary society. Exaggerated claims were made declaring that the trade-based Wrocław economy had crashed – this was incorrect, though they shaped the assessments formulated by the historians hundreds of years later (which was already pointed out in different times by Heinrich Wendt, Józef Gierowski and Leszek Ziątkowski)¹⁶. They failed, however, to stimulate any change in the fiscal policy of the monarchy for a long time, as was witnessed in 1578 and 1600 when the border duty mandate was renewed. Especially in the latter case, the list of items subject to export duty was extended to include goods hitherto underestimated by imperial officials, including books and old and new clothes traded by the Jews, which was accompanied by the increasingly bold imposition of import duties on luxury goods, foreign cloth, furrier's goods and copper not derived from the imperial mines¹⁷. On the other hand, the tightening fiscal policy did not exclude the emergence of some elements aimed at protecting the local economy, weak though they were. More importantly, as emphasized over one hundred years ago by Arthur Kern in his dissertation, the mandate of 1600 expanded the concept of 'foreign countries' to which the export of goods from Silesia was liable to duty. Thus far the countries belonging to this category were considered to be those which did not fall under the direct authority of the German line of the Habsburgs, but from that moment they included all lands which were not part of the Bohemian Crown¹⁸.

The whole series of temporary royal ordinances at the turn of the 17th century, starting with the patent of 1599, was aimed at eliminating foreign merchants and middlemen from the export of goods to Silesia, mainly the export of madder, yarn, linen, wax and wool. This issue, similarly as in the case of the recognition of Hungary and Austria as 'foreign countries' despite their remaining under the authority of the same monarch, which was nagging for the merchants, was presented many times to the Diet of Silesia, which was thus perceived as the authority to speak on matters of regional economic interest. Finally, the new customs mandate of 1613 seemed to indicate that the fiscal policy of the monarchy was changing, partly due to the economic demands of the region having been taken into account. Duty rates

¹⁵ A. Kern, *Der 'neue Grenzzoll'*, p. 25.

¹⁶ J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 227; Leszek Ziątkowski, *Wrocław w czasach habsburskich (1520-1740)*, [in:] *Historia Wrocławia*, vol. 1: *Od pradziejów do końca czasów habsburskich*, eds Cezary Buśko, Mateusz Goliński, Michał Kaczmarek, Leszek Ziątkowski, Wrocław 2001, pp. 249-250.

¹⁷ A. Kern, *Der 'neue Grenzzoll'*, pp. 42, 46-47.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

of exports to Hungary, Austria and their 'peripheral countries' were reduced by half as compared to other countries, and goods which had been declared once when imported into Silesia were exempted from being declared again when exported. The political and fiscal actions of the monarchy, which were by no means motivated by an economic strategy, were fully revealed by another customs mandate of 1623. Silesians, humiliated after the defeat of the uprising of Bohemian estates which they had supported, were subject to the terms by order from the superior authority only. The duty rates were increased, the double declaration of goods passing through the province was restored and, most importantly, the concept of 'foreign countries' was also extended to all lands of the Bohemian Crown other than Silesia! Thus, the products exported to Bohemia, Moravia, and Lower and Upper Lusatia were liable to the same duty imposed on exports to other lands¹⁹. From that moment on, Silesia normatively became a separate economic organism within the borders of the atomized Bohemian state, which can be considered as crucial for the issue under discussion.

Of course, from a contemporary perspective, of more importance were specific errors in the tariff which made, for example, the export of raw materials – such as wool – more profitable than the export of highly processed products – such as cloth – and, above all, roads which bypassed Silesia became more attractive for the merchants from Rzeczpospolita, which must have been reflected in the income to the cameras. As a result, when the duty patent was revised in 1638, the pleas of the Silesian estates were taken into serious consideration and the double declaration on transit duties was cancelled (restrictions directed against foreign traders were avoided by them entrusting their merchandise in consignment to the residents of Wrocław)²⁰. Finally, neither these or other regulations concerning Silesia changed the problems that arose from the corresponding tariff barriers which fenced off the remaining lands of the Bohemian Crown and divided them into regions and even micro-regions of a similar economic character, especially concerning the developing textile production. This condition was further aggravated by a change of political affinity – the transition in 1635 to the reign of the Saxon Wettins, whose trade links with Silesian Lusatia had up to then been strong – which involved an open duty conflict with the Silesians and repressions for the exchange which were mutually disadvantageous. Acting in isolation had developed mechanisms of mutual competition even between the countries within one Crown, so that when the barriers slowly began to be lowered in the 18th century, it led to resistance among parties which

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 63, 66-68; *idem*, *Das Zollwesen Schlesiens von 1623–1740*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens', 44 (1910), p. 1; Cf. J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 229.

²⁰ A. Kern, *Das Zollwesen*, p. 2; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 229.

believed that their economy would be threatened with an overabundance of products from their neighbours (as was the case with the defence of the Bohemian cloth industry against stronger competition from Silesia)²¹.

The actions of the apparatus which executed royal privileges were aimed at monetary unification in the country, which would simultaneously facilitate its other tasks such as the elimination of local autonomy in the area of monetary policy. Defining the region's economic self-interests also contributed to the policy of monetary integration, and not so much to integration with the rest of the monarchy. The dukes, however, acted as decentralist agents, effectively protracting the state of monetary diversity, which was not controlled by the monarch before the 18th century.

The fact that since 1527 the Wrocław mint had been beating coins of all successive rulers of the Habsburg dynasty is primarily evidence of the consistency with which they enforced royal privileges over the area of their hereditary duchies, while the copying of Austrian patterns applied across the Bohemian monarchy confirmed practical benefits resulting from the unity of the state. The symbolism used after 1556 generally displayed imperial emblems (e.g. the double-headed eagle), whereas the legend – located only on large-denomination coins – contained the lengthy titles of the rulers, as the listing of all their crowns and the title of Archduke could serve as a means to manifest the primacy and universality of the Habsburg's power. The words *dux Silesiae* were engraved on the 'Silesian' coins even in the abbreviated version of all the titles, which, due to the obvious historical and legal context of the aforesaid title (still used by other heirs of the dukes of Silesia, the Dukes of Legnica-Brzeg), in the 16th and 17th centuries did not express the policies aimed at integration of the entire region. It appears that in this way we can interpret the symbol of a Silesian eagle accompanying the imperial emblems, inconsistent though it was, in a similar way to that of the S-initial (standing for Silesia) on small-denomination coins²².

At the same time, the old privileges held by the dukes and the city of Wrocław allowed them to continue minting their own coins whenever they decided it was viable or desirable for prestige or ideological reasons (hence religious threads in the legends and symbolism on the coins); however, a problem arose when not all of the interested parties were able to show a relevant document to the ruler (not every feudal act contained provisions on ducal minting rights). Subordination to the policy of unification with the royal currency system advised by the royal authority was, in

²¹ J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, pp. 230, 233–234.

²² The Silesian eagle even appears on the coins of Friedrich Wilhelm Hohenzollern, the Margrave of Brandenburg, as the Duke of Krosno in the second half of the 17th century.

practice, dependant on the habits and particular benefits of the issuer resulting from the adoption of a given rate of mintage. The Dukes of Cieszyn used Polish and Lithuanian stamp designs in their mintage (including the Upper Silesian eagle, which was identical to the eagle of the Polish Crown) and copied their monetary systems, while imitating the royal coins of Wrocław whenever it seemed to be convenient. The coins, which were on the verge of causing of political insubordination due to their originality, were fought over by the royal apparatus, who threatened to close the mints and withdraw the coins from circulation. The same was the case with the emissions of Frederick II, Duke of Legnica, which referred to the Polish patterns, or in the 17th century to some Duke coins of his successors, beaten in Złoty Stok (acquired in 1599) and Oława, which more or less deviated from the standard of state monetary system, which was to be followed by the order of the royal regulations. In the 17th century, the production of silver coins for circulation was joined by Wrocław bishops and the dukes of Ziębice–Oleśnica, although previously the mints in Nysa and Złoty Stok which they owned by them issued only gold ducats, based on the indigenous raw material extracted in the Sudetes. Monetary policy, or rather monetary practice, was, therefore, of a double nature: on the one hand it did not serve to help integrate the region as it maintained local autonomies, while on the other hand it contributed to the identification of the subjects of the Bohemian king with the family of the Habsburg countries, or even with the Reich, which was represented in the person of the king. The former character of the monetary system common to all of medieval Silesia disappeared in the 16th century with the spread of the thaler, followed by new German units of account (mainly guilders) unrelated to large-denomination coins, which were actually beaten. Both belonged to the system adopted in 1559 in the Reich and in both places a variety of money existed due to the minting of small-denomination coins according to its own, local rate, on an enormous scale.

The resistance of the dukes and the estates prevented the unification of the monetary systems of Silesia and the monarchy. Nonetheless, the Silesian estates, which at that point acted as a disintegrating agent within the state, became involved in efforts to achieve unification at the regional level and, moreover, in what was a logical step considering their main economic ties, they engaged in further projects to adapt the Silesian rate of mintage to the Polish one (and even to the Hungarian one). The crisis of a small-denomination coin, which, since the close of the 16th century, was increasingly a copper coin because of the depletion of silver, led to the saturation of the German market with coins so corrupt they were almost worthless (Kipper und Wipperzeit, 1619-1623). This crisis naturally affected Silesia – here

the coppers from the mint of the Dukes of Legnica appeared in Złoty Stok in 1619. In the unanimous opinion of historians, long-term monetary anarchy, chaos in the supply of coins of different rates and of various origin, the development of ducal mintage, and the debasement of money disrupted economic life. Monetary relations were thus a disintegrating factor for the region, or perhaps vice versa, they only reflected the strength of destabilizing elements in the form of the particular interests of mint owners, the inflow of foreign coins and the benefits derived by trade-related groups, and even forgery during the aforementioned monetary disaster from the beginning of the 17th century. Due to the logic behind the political events, in that unfavourable moment, at the threshold of the Thirty Years' War, the rebellious Silesian dukes and the Silesian estates were forced to collectively acquire from the monarch the role of the main issuer on the territory controlled by them, a task which can be interpreted as taking advantage of the circumstances to use money as a factor constituting the autonomy and integration of the region (which became a kind of quasi-state). In accordance with the resolutions of the diet of 1620, regional coins minted jointly from 1621 to 1623 in the mints in Wrocław, Oława, Oleśnica and Legnica wore a clearly comprehensible *moneta Silesiae* inscription and the sign of a Silesian eagle, although because of the aforementioned reasons they discredited the message which they contained – their actual value was many times lower than the nominal value. Certainly, as particular ducal coinage was maintained²³, including the mintage of the dukes participating in the aforementioned joint coin issues, and even taking into account the vigorous revival of city mintage in Lower Silesia which had long (i.e. after 1528) disappeared outside of Wrocław, any real monetary integration of the rebelled territory was in practice impossible²⁴.

Only the military pacification of Silesia created the conditions in which the victorious monarch was able to act as a repairing agent, albeit not entirely successfully, yet he undoubtedly acted as an integrating agent in the monetary area through royal privileges, which had been strictly enforced since that time. In 1623 (i.e. at the same time as the reform which began in the Reich concerning the exchange of money for new according to a false rate) the imperial mint in Wrocław was reopened, which confirmed its monopoly on beating the new circulation coin for Silesia – a coin which was no different from the existing royal coin in terms of its symbolism and inscriptions on the rims. That exclusiveness was due to the patent

²³ Not to mention the issues of the Bohemian 'winter king' Frederick in Oleśnica (1620-1621); we shall add here however the bestowing of the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz to Gabor Bethlen, the Prince of Transylvania, which automatically resulted in his own emissions (1622-1623).

²⁴ To illustrate the scale of the practice of mass production of small coins, a chronicle account of a 264-person staff of the Mint in Świdnica in 1622 is often quoted.

issued on the 14th of December 1623 which withdrew all the previously granted mintage privileges, and which was put into effect despite the protests of the dukes. Temporarily, the role of the former princely and city mints was undertaken by five additional royal mints operating in 1623-1626 (Głogów, Żagań, Nysa, Opole, Racibórz), which helped the mint in Wrocław to quickly distribute better coins in the region²⁵. This Lower Silesian episode of state coinage was repeated in 1634-1635, when the management of the imperial mint in Wrocław was overtaken by the association of Evangelical dukes and estates appointed in 1633, which included the city of Wrocław and the Dukes of Legnica-Brzeg and Oleśnica. The Silesian eagle was at that time accompanied by the explanatory inscription *moneta principum et Wratislavia statuum evangelicorum Silesiae*, which not only did not serve regional unity, but also perpetuated a sense of division according to new religious and political patterns.

Despite the return in 1637 to the status quo which existed prior to 1634, from the 1640s imperial centralization trends were disrupted by a gradual consent to the reopening of ducal mints (Cieszyn, Legnica, Brzeg, Złoty Stok, Wołów, Opole, Nysa, Oleśnica and Ziębice, the problem of which was partially resolved itself through the imminent deaths of the owners) and subsequently, at the turn of the 18th century, with the same monarch referring to the old mintage traditions in the duchies acquired or recovered by him (imperial coinage in Brzeg and Opole). For reasons of royal mintage monopoly, restrictions on the production of ducal coins were imposed to prevent the ideological and economic disintegration of the state, and in the case of the Duchy of Oleśnica after the Poděbrady family had come to an end, the surveillance of the camera was stretched to include the ducal mints in Oleśnica and Bierutów. The gradual phasing-out of minting coins, whether the non-monarchical one or the one located outside of Wrocław, came to an end in 1717. Only the bishop's duchy was excluded from this trend, but nonetheless in the 18th century bishops did not beat small-denomination coins, only large-denomination ones which were not used in everyday transactions and reached only a limited audience²⁶.

The breakthrough of mercantilism, which manifested in the application of a theory formulated in the second half of the 17th century concerning a top-down

²⁵ The inconsistency—resulting from the political situation—resulted in toleration of the production of coins by Generalissimo Albrecht Wallenstein Wenceslas, the Duke of Żagań carried out between 1629 and 1631. Similar political priorities led to overlooking the problem of the emissions of the coins of Charles Ferdinand Vasa, the Bishop of Wrocław (Polish Prince), the more that they were occasional and of commemorative character.

²⁶ On monetary policy see *Schlesiens Neuer Münzgeschichte*, [in:] *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 19, ed. Ferdinand Friedensburg, Breslau 1899; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 242; Józef A. Szwa-
rzyk, *Pieniądz na ziemiach polskich X-XX w.*, 2nd edition, Wrocław 1990, pp. 114-123, 172-209.

policy to protect the economic interests of the enlightened absolutist state, resulted, from a regional perspective, in a picture as ambiguously complex as the contemporary economy. The quest for stronger ties between the province and the entire Bohemian state, and even with Austria, was at odds with a too-tentative elimination of internal trade barriers, which in turn was at odds with the concern to maintain the privileges for local producers, whose interests, in the final analysis, were not the same as those of the merchants. Nonetheless, the formulation of the customs policy, as well as additional integrating activities (the standardization of weights and measures in Silesia in accordance with the system in place in Wrocław) and the stimulation of the development of the industry (supporting manufactures) were achieved with the participation of local agents combined with the state agent embodied by the Silesian College of Commerce (*Merkantil* or *Kommerzkolleg*), a form of a joint regional authority which had existed in Wrocław since 1716²⁷. Defining Silesia's own economic interest in contrast to the aspirations of competition was to some extent facilitated by the mercantilist policy of the neighbouring absolutist monarchies, namely Saxony and Prussia, which was openly unfavourable for the merchants of Silesia. In a world where 'economic policy' became both the goal and an instrument of the state apparatus, the genuine commitment of imperial diplomatic efforts to maintain the best possible conditions for the commercial interests of Silesia and Bohemia in the neighbouring countries tied the regions and made them dependant on the operations of the central power authority, demonstrating the need for such an inward direction of integration.

The essence of mercantilist assumptions, and thus the core of creating favourable conditions for the development of domestic production, was a new customs mandate of the 24th of October 1718. It clearly differentiated the rates levied on local goods (which were lower) and foreign goods (which were higher), cancelled duty on raw materials imported for production (such as flax, hemp, wool, raw cloth and leather) and banned the export of unique raw materials (such as dyer's woodruff, potter's clay), which, depending on the circumstances, was expanded to other products (e.g. grain, horses). The policy of protective tariffs on imports, which affected the turnover of foreign goods, threatened transit trade, hence it sparked the strongest protests among the merchants of Wrocław. As a result, due to the actions of the

²⁷ Five of its members represented the state apparatus, four represented the interests of Wrocław, supported by honorary advisers taken from the landed gentry. Interestingly, this fact does not prevent historiography from applying the term 'trade policy of Silesia' to an earlier period, i.e. the 17th century, for example when discussing relations with Eastern Europe. Cf J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 236. For more see Siegfried Tschierschky, *Die Wirtschaftspolitik des Schlesischen Kommerzkollegs 1716-1740*, Gotha 1902.

College of Commerce, the years 1721-1722 witnessed partial revisions of the tariffs and the introduction of concessions for the merchants from Rzeczpospolita and from the east. Hoping to initiate the formation of larger, and therefore stronger economic regions, Viennese authorities in 1727-1728 undertook a project – which was abandoned after a short time – of integrating the lands of Austria and the Bohemian Crown into one customs area (the so-called uniformity), which, as was mentioned above, sparked successful local resistance resulting from the concern for the protection of local producers²⁸. It may have been potentially far more important for both integration and updating relations in the region to institute a policy of reducing and standardizing local customs, as was achieved in Wrocław in 1739. However, the mere elimination of hundreds of region-disintegrating tariffs and city entrance tolls, both private and ducal ones, remained beyond the reach of the state agent, considering the legal and proprietary legacy of the past centuries and the fact that the executive apparatus was slow and corrupt. For example, the appalling cases of military commanders arbitrarily imposing tariffs, which began during the Thirty Years' War, lasted until 1705. Similarly, illegal duties were introduced by local agents, from dukes to innkeepers²⁹. The recurring periods of crises which occurred once every decade (and even more frequently from the second quarter of the 18th century), including starvation periods which brought about a need to stabilize food prices – alongside an appropriate custom policy – led to the establishment of Provisions Offices located in the three Silesian fortresses (the location was not incidental, given their role in the event of war). Their activities were based on inventories of grain collected in the four state-owned stores assigned for the entire region in the abovementioned strongholds in Głogów, Brzeg and Namysłów, and in Opava³⁰.

Since the late Middle Ages, basic trans-regional transport routes led not through the peripheries but deep into the heart of Silesia, intersecting the region. Given the preponderance of large-scale transit through the region on its east–west line, the various connections along the central part of the longitudinally-shaped province must have held a dominant position. It may, therefore, be assumed that the same economic factors, combined with geographic elements, had, over the centuries, created the communication network which bonded the region, while, in addition, the central role played by Wrocław, clearly visible in the network's structure,

²⁸ A. Kern, *Das Zollwesen*, pp. 5-10; S. Tschierschky, *Die Wirtschaftspolitik*, pp. 92-107; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, pp. 230-231.

²⁹ A. Kern, *Das Zollwesen*, pp. 3, 14-17.

³⁰ Gustav Otruba, *Schlesien im System österreichischen Merkantilismus Die Auswirkungen des Verlustes Schlesiens auf die österreichische Wirtschaft*, [in:] *Kontinuität und Wandel. Schlesien zwischen Österreich und Preußen*, eds Peter Baumgart, Ulrich Schmilewski, Sigmaringen 1990, pp. 90-91, 106.

became the focal point of a large number of routes used both for the transport of export and transit goods³¹. However, for a long time this did not mean that the roads and permanent river crossings were assumed to be of strategic importance, or that this network was analyzed from the perspective of collective needs. No meaningful road investments were undertaken by the rulers, and, excluding issues of safety on the public high roads, which unified the cities and the nobles, taking care of their condition was left to the local agents who drew profits from customs and tolls. The choice of route by the merchants depended on the legal and customs conditions imposed on them and on the aforementioned security situation, and not on the length of the route or its quality, which was linked to the relative technical primitivism of the means of transport. In this context, there seems to be absolutely no relationship between the state of the roads network and the fact of establishing institutional postal services in Wrocław starting from the 16th century (for the use of trade service) and finally launching in 1625 a permanent state-owned service of post riders between Wrocław and Vienna. The network of postal connections, including imperial ones and those belonging to the neighbouring monarchies, had been rapidly expanding since the 18th century, and, running inwards (via Wrocław), as well as directly between the cities, it consolidated the territory to some extent³². But how strong was the impact of the acceleration of the flow of information (including the benefits following the actions performed by the bureaucratic apparatus subordinated to the centres of state power), and the ties established between individuals, companies and institutions through regular exchange of correspondence on the integration processes within the region? This issue requires more thorough investigation, not only through analysis of the network of postal connections, but also through a statistical survey of senders/recipients of correspondence prepared using a dynamic approach (how the share of individual groups designated by their location in an area changed over time). This research, however, need not focus on subjects whose activity specifically determined the geographical location of their contacts (such as export companies and owners of landed property complexes). The postal system, a new information exchange channel, facilitated the operation of a previously unknown medium, newspapers³³. An analysis of the content of such news reports is not the subject of our discussion here, but again, the choice of

³¹ Cf. *ibidem*, draft on p. 93.

³² Eduard Kutsche, *Postgeschichte von Schlesien bis zum Jahre 1766*, Breslau 1936, pp. 8-208, 319-320; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 249; N. Conrads, *Książęta*, p. 169.

³³ Cf. Wolfgang Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur. Reichspost und Kommunikationsrevolution in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Göttingen 2003, pp. 412-436.

contemporary information could have resulted from their sources and not only from readers' expectations³⁴.

Another, more holistic, perspective on the network of roads, crossings and the river (as both a transport route and a road barrier) was taken by military commanders who ably manoeuvred troops across Silesia during the Thirty Years' War. They were interested, however, in an area of military operations reaching beyond the political boundaries of the region, otherwise ruthlessly exploited, but they did not develop logistics services to maintain the communication infrastructure (they were replaced instead by a system of ransoms and contributions provided by civilians)³⁵. The authorities, following the foresight of the military, expressed an interest in infrastructure but not before the beginning of the 18th century, along with attempts to further develop a programme which began after the Thirty Years' War concerning the maintenance (by Silesians themselves) of three modern fortresses with imperial garrisons (Brzeg, Namysłów, Głogów)³⁶. Provisional considerations, especially new opportunities to improve the speed and scale of military responses in times of peace and in the first days of war provided now by the existence of a permanent army, were the catalyst of road investments, in particular on the strategic routes connecting Bohemia with Silesia³⁷. In the face of threats stemming mostly from the area of unstable Rzeczpospolita, the critical marching routes of the potential enemy leading to the Odra crossings and to the capital of the region were supposed to be blocked by fortresses, guarded by the state, and by the state army arriving from other parts of the monarchy. (A sign that a military system worthy of the modern state was not obvious for all, and that the old, non-integrating structures did not disappear, was the functioning of the city fortress of Wrocław and its *ius praesidii* – the privilege of having its own force, which remained unchanged over centuries). Since 1727, the routes of the troops were to be established by the Superior Office (*Oberamt*) representing the monarch in agreement with the Silesian state body – General Tax Office (*General Steuer-Amt*). Although the office of the Higher Office of War, a specialized body

³⁴ Cf Willy Klawitter, *Die Zeitungen und Zeitschriften Schlesiens von den Anfängen bis zum Jahre 1870 bzw. bis zur Gegenwart*, Breslau 1930, pp. 11, 23 (on the significance of the earliest press titles); Lucyna Harc, *Z problematyki badawczej gazet pisanych ręcznie*, [in:] *Monastycyzm. Słowiańszczyzna i państwo polskie. Warsztat badawczy historyka*, ed. Kazimierz Bobowski, Wrocław 1994, pp. 196, 200.

³⁵ See Jerzy Maroń, *Wojna trzydziestoletnia na Śląsku. Aspekty militarne*, Wrocław–Racibórz 2008, pp. 85–87, 96–99, 141–171.

³⁶ In 1652, the Diet of Silesia created a 'fortification tax' for the national fortresses. Willy Klawitter, *Geschichte der schlesischen Festungen in vorpreußischer Zeit*, Breslau 1941, pp. 35–145; Werner Bein, *Schlesien und die habsburgische Politik. Ein Beitrag zur Entstehung des Dualismus im Alten Reich*, Sigmaringen 1994, (=Quellen und Darstellungen zur Schlesienschen Geschichte, vol. 26), pp. 138–139.

³⁷ J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 247.

within the Superior Office supervising military affairs, had existed since 1640, it did not create its own field apparatus. From a logistics standpoint, total reliance was placed on the estates and their institutions, which were slowly being subordinated in this regard. This was clearly visible at the level of districts, where the beginning of the local administration appointed by the estates of those lands from the second half of the 17th century comprised, incidentally, marching commissioners. Such a system of cooperation being replaced by subordination – clearly reflecting the transformation of the estates into a society – was confirmed by the new marching and stage ordinance of 1735³⁸.

Repeated attempts to encourage navigation on the Odra river and transform it into a trade route with the west of equal importance to the land routes, in light of success of the Habsburgs in the integration of the region with the simultaneous loss of control over its historical north-western borderlands (the Duchy of Krosno ruled by the Hohenzollerns, to which the river led), were already less significant in domestic politics than they had been in the 14th century, for instance. In other words, efforts concentrated on a more intense use of the natural axis formed by the river which the land stretched along may not have resulted from an ideological desire to bond the region, but were primarily the result of economic calculations³⁹. The river transport of bulk cargo (copper, salt, wheat) was at the time several times cheaper than wheel transport, especially considering the disastrous conditions of the roads. The growing dependence of several sectors of the economy of Silesia on the trade with the west, which specifically took place through Hamburg, meant that the development of the leading route in 1668 could not be ignored – following the opening of a channel connecting the Odra river with the Elbe through the Spree, it was possible to travel from Wrocław to Hamburg by water, without transshipping goods onto carts in Magdeburg. Although the implementation of a probable vision in which perpendicular road connections ran to and from the ports located along the entire river (almost like veins of an oak leaf, which symbolizes the land of Silesia with its river system)⁴⁰ would revolutionize communication relations and, as a result, would make the functioning of the economy of the region dependent on the situation on the river, it would have meant pursuing a pipe dream, not least because

³⁸ Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Ustrojowe zmiany na Śląsku po wprowadzeniu w monarchii Habsburgów rządów absolutnych*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, vol.1, part 3: *Od końca XVI w. do r. 1763*, ed. Karol Malecziński, pp. 466, 468; *idem*, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 202-203, 220.

³⁹ In spite of the observations expressed from different perspectives. Cf for example Jan Harasimowicz, *Odra jako oś transferu kulturowego w średniowieczu i czasach nowożytnych* [in:] *Odra – Oder. Panorama europejskiej rzeki*, eds Karl Schlögel, Beata Halicka, Skórczyn 2008, pp. 125-132 (p. 130 on the motif of the Odra river in the Silesian culture).

⁴⁰ N. Conrads, *Księżęta*, p. 218.

of the seasonality of navigation through the irregular channel in the climatic conditions of the 'Little Ice Age'. It was also made impossible by the difficulties arising from external political and legal conditions (in its lower reaches the river flowed through territories which were part of other political bodies pursuing different objectives, and cities situated at the river banks which had the staple right)⁴¹, and above all, by the impact of other environmental factors enhanced by human activities. The progressive deforestation of Silesia, especially in mountainous regions, resulted in an increased erosion of the soil which flowed down the rivers and thus slimed the already-shallow Odra, resulting in recurring severe floods from the 16th century⁴².

In such conditions of limited navigability, people seldom decided to use the river to transport goods along its whole length – periodic connections using only a few sections was more a more commonly chosen strategy. Wood was practically the only one, albeit very important, material that was often transported by water all the way from the place of production to the point of sale. Thus the Odra lost the chance to become a potential bonding agent for the Silesian economy. Interventions at the regional level aimed at improving navigability since Luxembourgian times had been confined to strenuous attempts to reconcile navigation with the presence of artificial barriers on the rivers, such as mills, dams and bridges. Regulations, changes to the course of the river and the construction of embankments were activities performed at the local level – projects of a broader range were not implemented, although in the 18th century the Superior Office definitely had concerns for the whole subordinate territory, as can be seen by its admonishing the authorities of various duchies in matters of proper maintenance of the river. Political changes that took place in Silesia after 1740 impeded attempts at regulating the Odra, the development of which had been pointed as necessary in 1739 by the merchants and public administration in connection with the plans to improve navigation from

⁴¹ See Uwe Müller, *Miejsce Odry w środkowoeuropejskiej sieci transportowej a pruska polityka budowy dróg wodnych w okresie industrializacji*, [in:] *Odra*, pp. 150-151, highlighting lack of interest in the Odra river in the economic policy of Brandenburg and Pomerania. This was the case regardless of the diplomatic success of Silesians or in the interest of Silesians in 1646, 1667 and 1727, in attempts to solve difficulties in Frankfurt upon Oder, Szczecin and Krosno. See J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, pp. 232, 246-247; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, pp. 90-91; Kazimiera Chojnacka, *Handel na Warcie i Odry w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII wieku*, prepared for print by Bogdan Wachowiak, Poznań 2007, pp. 23-108, 148-195.

⁴² Julian Janczak, *Człowiek i przyroda. Przegląd zmian w środowisku geograficznym Śląska w ostatnim tysiącleciu*, Wrocław 1985, p. 72; U. Müller, *Miejsce*, p. 149, among the adverse hydrographic conditions of the Odra ranked large fluctuations of the water level, the formation of shoals and the long-term presence of ice, cf K. Chojnacka, *Handel*, pp. 111-122.

Wrocław to Hamburg⁴³. This was especially the case given that river transport of light and valuable textiles, the main export commodity of Silesia, was not an economic necessity but merely one option among others available and economically acceptable means of transportation⁴⁴.

Distinctive resources and dominant economic factors of the region⁴⁵: the production of grain, fish, beer, textile and clothing, leather, metal, metallurgy and transit trade

According to the model of spatial and functional division of the European economy introduced by Marian Małowist, Silesia was placed within the Sudeten–Carpathian zone of strong economic growth, a territorial unit whose common feature was the exploitation of underground natural resources of prime importance for the European economy (gold, silver, lead, copper, tin, and iron)⁴⁶. In the case of Silesia, however, despite all the intensity of mining searches conducted there, and despite a wide range of raw materials exploited, due to the specific conditions of their occurrence, most of the ore resources extracted at that time using very primitive means did not provide enough quantities of excavated material to ensure long-term continuity and profitability of production. Apart from gold (Głuchołazy, Złate Hory, Złoty Stok) and periodically lead (Bytom, Tarnowskie Góry), such production did not have any tangible significance on a supra-regional scale, as it was unable to significantly stimulate the development of production based on non-ferrous metals, and it even failed to satisfy local demand for them. In the first half of the 16th century almost half of local gold mining was controlled by the Fuggers of Augsburg and the Turzos of Cracow, but the access to capital and technology provided by them did not save Silesian mining from the collapse in the 1560s,

⁴³ Cf *Die schlesische Oderschiffahrt in vorpreussischer Zeit. Urkunden und Aktenstücke*, [in:] *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 17, ed. Konrad Wutke, Breslau 1896, pp. 305–318; S. Tschierschky, *Die Wirtschaftspolitik*, pp. 86–89; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 247; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, p. 96.

⁴⁴ U. Müller, *Miejsce*, p. 151.

⁴⁵ In connection with the study by Grzegorz Myśliwski, *Czy Śląsk stanowił region ekonomiczny w XIII–XV w.? Czynniki spajające i dezintegrujące terytorium regionalne pod względem ekonomicznym*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 67 (2012), No. 4, pp. 79–102; *idem*, *Did Silesia constitute an economic region between the 13th and the 15th century? A survey of region-integrating and region-disintegrating economic factors*, [in:] *The Long Formation*, pp. 93–128, <http://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=49790&from=publication>, concerning an earlier period.

⁴⁶ Marian Małowist, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w XIII–XVI wieku. Konfrontacja struktur społeczno-gospodarczych*, Warszawa 1973; Cf Tadeusz Dziekoński, *Metalurgia miedzi, ołowiu i srebra w Europie Środkowej od XV do końca XVIII w.*, Wrocław 1963; See also Mateusz Goliński, *Ludzie, przyroda i gospodarka na Dolnym Śląsku (1526–1618)*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*, ed. Wojciech Wrześniński, Wrocław 2006, pp. 207–225.

which sealed the withdrawal of the aforesaid central European business magnates. In Złoty Stok, mining was brought out of a long-term crisis only by the exploration of arsenic ores at the close of the 17th century. Lead extraction in Tarnowskie Góry reached its peak in the first half of the 16th century, about a quarter century following the beginning of exploitation of local deposits, after which it suffered a sharp decline, so that since the 1570s it played a secondary role on the central European market, and was gradually decreasing. The general cause of ore mining coming to a standstill after the mid-16th century was the exhaustion of the richest parts of the deposit and reaching a depth from which it was impossible or uneconomical to drain groundwater in those days. The deadlock could not have been overcome as capital was taken out from mining in the 17th century, and what remained were only small-scale operations such as the recycling of old slag, or the processing of less-processed raw materials imported from Poland. On the other hand, as the 18th century witnessed the growing concern of land owners to increase the viability of large landed properties, the introduction of small-scale mining and metallurgical operations by this group became increasingly common. A wide-ranging (at least in its theoretical assumptions) mining revitalization programme was initiated as part of the mercantilist policy by the state agent, which therefore appointed a mining director in Silesia (1711) and the Camera commissioned the prospecting of ores in the 1720s⁴⁷.

In contrast to non-ferrous metallurgy, the collapse observed since the late 16th century did not concern iron and steel manufacturing, although it is difficult to assign outstanding development trends to it (we do not consider the period of collapse during the Thirty Years' War, as this was derived from the demographic, settlement and economic crisis that gripped the whole of Silesia). There were no economic factors conducive for progress in metallurgy: primitive techniques prevailed (bloomeries), which were especially characteristic of the lowland centres based on the exploitation of the ores of bog iron. Large-furnace technology, apart from sporadic earlier cases, was adopted only from the 18th century. What was characteristic for iron metallurgy was therefore its dispersion, its presence in almost the entire region, with major concentrations in the Sudetes (the lands of Opava, the south of

⁴⁷ Erich Fink, *Die Bergwerksunternehmen der Fugger in Schlesien*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 28 (1894), pp. 294-340; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, pp. 221-222; Tadeusz Dziekoński, *Wydobywanie i metalurgia kruszców na Dolnym Śląsku od XIII do połowy XX wieku*, Wrocław 1972; Danuta Molenda, *Kopalnie rud ołowiu na terenie złóż śląsko-krakowskich w XVI-XVIII w.*, Wrocław 1972, p. 280; *eadem*, *Polski ołów*, pp. 14-15; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, pp. 88-89; Eufrozyna Piątek, Zygfryd Piątek, *Górnictwo rud metali w Górach Sowich*, ed. Stanisław Januszewski, Wrocław 2000; W. Korta, *Historia*, p. 368; Herbert Schmidt, *Der Silberbergbau in der Grafschaft Glatz und im Fürstentum Münsterberg-Oels – von mittelalterlichen Anfängen bis zum Niedergang*, Marburg 2003.

the Episcopal duchy of Otmuchów-Nysa, the district of Jelenia Góra with Kamienna Góra and Kowary, where metal crafts developed) and in the vast forests on the border of Silesia and Lusatia (with selling centres and forges in Żagań and Bolesławiec). Not disregarding the importance of exports of metallurgic products, especially steel, historians used to emphasize that they were primarily regarded as a manufacturing base for Silesian craft, both in the forges located directly next to ironworks which generally provided tools for agriculture, as well as more diverse and specialized craft (e.g. locksmithing) practised in the cities. Therefore, only the products of metal craft were exported from the region on a large scale. Among the entire spectrum of Silesian economic sectors based on their own mining (including carbon and rock mining) and metallurgy, only iron metallurgy could be included in a group of the leading factors that determined the nature of lasting economic links with the outside world. Glassworking was another prominent area of Sudetian production, which also included production located on the Silesian side of the border with Kingdom of Bohemia. Although local products had for a long time been of rather low quality, this changed with the implementation of technology for the production of a sophisticated type of glass known as Bohemian crystal, which influenced the development of glassmaking artisanship from the second half of the 17th century. At that time, large landowners also invested in the glass industry⁴⁸.

The textile industry – wool weaving and linen weaving – is considered to be the most important area of Silesian non-agricultural manufacturing. The biggest centres of wool weaving in the early modern period were Lwówek, Żagań, Żary, Koźuchów, Zielona Góra, Głogów, Ścinawa and Góra. In contrast to a more balanced development of this industry in the Middle Ages, we can clearly observe its shift to the cities of the western and north-western parts of the region. It is considered that the linen weaving centres which developed in the villages and cities of Sudeten Foothills (Pogórze Sudeckie) became the districts of Jawor and Gryfów, and since the second quarter of the 17th century, also of Jelenia Góra. In the southern part of Lower Silesia, the movement of the production centres from the city to the countryside took place in the 16th century, much earlier than in the case of its neighbours and competitors, in northern Bohemia and Lusatia. A third avenue in the development of weaving was the production of mixed fabrics, especially cotton-linen

⁴⁸ Hans Grabig, *Die mittelalterliche Eisenhüttenindustrie der Niederschlesisch–Lausitzer Heide und ihre Wasserhämmer*, Breslau 1937; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, pp. 223-226; Marian Haisig, *Rzemiosła kowalsko–ślusarskie na Śląsku do połowy XVIII wieku*, Wrocław 1962; Anna Chrzanowska, Wojciech Gluziński, Zbigniew Kwaśny, Wojciech Trznadel, *Z dziejów szklarstwa na Dolnym Śląsku*, Wrocław 1974; Anna Chrzanowska, *Artystyczne szkła śląskie XVII i XVIII w.*, Warszawa 1987; Eufrozyna Piątek, *Historia dolnośląskiego górnictwa węgla kamiennego od XV do połowy XVIII w.*, Wrocław 1989; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, p. 89; W. Korta, *Historia*, p. 369.

fustian, and since the 17th century, the wool-linen *mazelan*. The centres in which those fabrics were produced were located in the districts of Kamienna Góra and Dzierżoniów and in Wrocław. The capital of local and Upper German merchants competed and mingled with each other in the organization of exports. The agents of the latter concluded collective contracts with the guilds of small towns in Silesia, Bohemia, Saxony and Lusatia, buying such an important part of production that it led to local crafts being dependent on them. A strong branch of Silesian manufacturing was the paper industry, which was closely linked to the availability of raw material in the form of rags and waste in the production of linen. As early as the second quarter of the 16th century Silesian printers used only local paper, which was also exported to many destinations, including first and foremost the Polish market, to which exports lasted the longest.

The main destinations for the export of Silesian wool fabric since the Middle Ages had been the lands of Rzeczpospolita – from where the raw material was imported, especially from Greater Poland – as well as Hungary and more distant regions of Eastern Europe. Exports were made on a mass scale. The production was based on the manufacture of low-cost, common materials that customers regarded as inferior to average-quality cloth from Meissen, Lusatia, Moravia and Bohemia. It is believed that the Silesian specialty was lighter wool fabrics, not intended for felt, which supplemented the availability of local cloth on the Polish market. Hence the productive capacity in the number of weavers and their looms usually went beyond the local power of providing finishing touches (fulleries, dyeing houses, cropping houses). In the 16th century the commodity imported from Silesia was referred to in Poland as both ‘simple cloth’ and ‘Silesian cloth’; the latter name was also in use in the 17th century. When more specific names were necessary, the terms in use included dozens of regional varieties, coined from the names of the settlements. Up to the 16th century the name which dominated among them was ‘Wrocław cloth’. It is believed that the parallel naming system referred to the types of fabrics mimicking English and Dutch patterns. In contrast to the exports of woollen cloth, exports of linen weave were destined for many locations. Simultaneously, raw material, i.e. flax, was imported from Greater Poland. A niche on the Polish market, was a range of medium-quality Silesian linen fabrics which were a bit more expensive than local offerings. Appropriate development prospects for the sales of linen fabrics of cheap and average quality, lay, however, not in the neighbouring territories of Rzeczpospolita, but across the whole of Europe and beyond. The influx of Silesian products onto German markets assumed a mass character from the second half of the 16th century. Further stages of the distribution would fall primarily in the

ports of Germany, England, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark. These destinations were primarily chosen for the export of veils and coutil. As far as non-European trade is concerned, Silesian fabric, or cloth of Silesian origin, was further traded in the west and was also exported to the Middle East, Africa and America. Wool-linen *mazelan* began to play an important role in exports to Poland from the third decade of the 17th century, at the expense of cloth. From the 17th century, growing cotton imports had resulted in the export production of fabrics made with it, but due to the disruption to the importation of raw material the names of the fabrics partly made of cotton (fustian) could have hidden imitations. However, one consequence of the development of specialized manufacturing craft was the dependence on the supply of various components which were indispensable in the technological process, yet not available locally, which contributed to the strengthening of complex inter-regional cooperation. Less significant was the export production of finished textiles. Tablecloths, napkins, towels, aprons, dresses, hats, caps and knitted goods such as stockings and socks were transported to Poland and Hungary. The advantage of the economic situation was especially favourable for Wrocław, where the capacity of craft guild increased⁴⁹.

The level of agriculture in Silesia was considered to be considerably varied, due to diverse natural conditions (soil, altitude) and social conditions (relations of ownership, traditions). This basic branch of the contemporary economy was therefore difficult to include among the integrating factors within the vast region. Earlier local achievements included the use of alternating farming on the seasonally-drained ponds, and the development of garden (cabbage, turnips, peas, radishes) and industrial (dyer's madder, flax, hemp, canola) crops on smaller peasant areas which bordered bigger cities. Grain production in Silesia was often too small to satisfy the needs of the region (it was necessary to supplement it with the import from Poland and Moravia) and not large enough to enable occasional export. Brewing had a major share in the consumption of barley and wheat, and their products were widely consumed in urban and suburban districts. What was specific for Silesia was the existence of brands of beer that were well-known outside of the region and were mass-exported to other cities and even abroad, which contributed to the maintenance of exceptionally high levels of production in several centres (Wrocław, Świdnica, Strzegom, Lwówek). Silesian beer in the modern period, however, usually did not

⁴⁹ Władysław Rusiński, *Tkactwo lniane na Śląsku do roku 1850*, Poznań 1949; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, pp. 203-213, 218-221; Kazimiera Maleczyńska, *Dzieje starego papiernictwa śląskiego*, Wrocław 1961; Marian Małowist, *Śląskie tekstylia w Zachodniej Afryce w XVI i XVII wieku*, 'Przegląd Historyczny', (55) 1964, No. 1, pp. 98-99; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, pp. 86-87, 95; W. Korta, *Historia*, pp. 364-365, 367-368.

travel far from the borders of the region (as opposed to the product of Świdnica in the Middle Ages), and the scale of exports remained highly variable, depending on the specific situation in the areas of production and sales (e.g. yields and grain prices). The amount of commercial brewery production was also reduced as a result of the monarch increasing the tax on it. The second half of the 16th century saw the peak of the development of the Silesian fish and pond economy, whose presence alone perpetuated special features of the contemporary landscape of the lowland parts of the region. In view of the demand for wool, the rearing of sheep was of considerable importance, and it was the most intense in the central, right-bank area of Silesia. However, native livestock production did not satisfy consumption demands, so wool, skins and live animals were imported. One of the main routes of driving cattle exported (but also smuggled) in bulk from the lands of Rzeczpospolita to the west passed through Silesia, satisfying the local needs at the same time. From the second half of the 16th century, local markets had become a stage for the international trade of oxen (Brzeg, Świdnica, Wrocław)⁵⁰.

Wrocław had remained the largest centre of metal production since the Middle Ages; the number of workshops located there was unmatched in the region, although one exception worth mentioning in this business was the small town of Kowary, where in 1618 there were 68 knife makers masters alone. Such large numbers of metalworkers was a unique feature of Silesia. In the large metropolis of Cracow, with its wide range of metallurgical services from Lesser Poland, at the close of the 16th century the metal branch was nearly three times smaller than in Wrocław. The share of metallurgy in the total craft services in Wrocław of 13 per cent went beyond the typical proportions of larger cities, which were usually characterized by a variety of manufacturing operations and services. The accumulation of certain areas of manufacturing, typical for Wrocław, which manifested in the supply of products in amounts exceeding the needs of the internal market, was encouraged by the way the city functioned as a commercial emporium – it served as a central point of distribution for goods entering and leaving the region (not just those of the metal industry). Such large-city production was also combined with the

⁵⁰ Fritz Wiggert, *Das Brauwesen der Stadt Breslau*, Berlin 1930; Walter Bunke, *Das Brauwesen der Stadt Schweidnitz*, Breslau 1935; Stefan Ingot, *Wieś i rolnictwo*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, vol.1, part. 3: *Od końca XVI w. do r. 1763*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, pp. 28-140; *idem*, *Okres folwarczno-pańszczyźniany (1527-1763)*, [in:] *idem*, *Historia chłopów śląskich*, Warszawa 1979, pp. 106-169; Friedrich-Wilhelm Henning, *Die Produktion und der Handel von Färberröte (Krapp) in Schlesien im 16. und im beginnenden 17. Jahrhundert*, 'Scripta Mercaturae', 10 (1976), No. 2, pp. 25-51; Aleksander Nyrek, *Kultura użytkowania gruntów uprawnych, lasów i wód na Śląsku od XV do XX wieku*, Wrocław 1992; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, pp. 90-91.

production of complex and labour-intensive products, mechanics and artistic crafts⁵¹. The export of finished goods, as well as prefabricated steel, headed mainly for Rzeczpospolita. It was dominated by the mass craft products from Kowary, Wrocław and Świdnica: scythes, sickles and knives, which meant items aimed at countryside dwellers. Silesia usually produced about three-quarters of the scythes which passed through Polish customs chambers on routes leading from the region in the 16th century.

Confusion over trade statistics on the basis of data from the customs chambers is caused by the combination of long distance and border trade. Directions of cross-border trade exchange sometimes did not coincide with the regularities listed in the overall scale. While scythes were generally exported from Silesia to Poland, due to border traffic it sometimes occurred that they were transported from Poland. We can even talk about the impact of local exchange centres located on the other side of the border at less economically developed areas of the borderlands. Such impact had for example Częstochowa (town located in Rzeczpospolita) market on neighbouring areas of Upper Silesia, but Częstochowa links with the Silesian market reached Namysłów and Brzeg in the case of driving cattle. A similar situation might be expected to have taken place, therefore, at other cities in the neighbouring countries⁵².

Since the Middle Ages, furs and skins had been exported in bulk from Eastern Europe to the west and south of the continent, which was to an important extent carried out by the merchants of Wrocław, and some goods were processed in Silesia before being further transported, which was advantageous primarily for the furriers from Wrocław. Leather and fur purchased in Poland by the merchants from Wrocław and Nysa, as well as further afield from places such as Brzeg, Świdnica and Głogów, were transported from Silesia to further trade points in Germany and Bohemia. At the same time, Silesian craftsmen purchased goods in Rzeczpospolita. The furrier and leather industry had for a long time been a good example of a massive drain of resource from less economically developed areas of Eastern Europe, where Silesia played the role of a re-exporter. The change in the structure of Polish exports – since the 17th century, its share of leather and saddler exports grew – hit the Silesian craftsmen, just as the increasing role of the Leipzig markets deprived Wrocław of its previous role of the main distribution centre of goods from Eastern Europe⁵³.

⁵¹ M. Haisig, *Rzemiosła*, pp. 26–45.

⁵² Henryk Samsonowicz, *Handel na pograniczu polsko-śląskim w świetle danych komory celnej w Częstochowie z 1584 r.*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 99 (1992), No. 4, p. 3-16.

⁵³ Fritz Wiggert, *Entstehung und Entwicklung des Altschlesischen Kürschnerhandwerks. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Kürschnerzünfte zu Breslau und Neumarkt*, Breslau 1926; Roman Rybarski, *Handel i polityka handlowa Polski w XVI stuleciu*, vol. 1: *Rozwój handlu i polityki handlowej*, Warszawa 1958 (reprint from 1928); Marian Wolański, *Związki handlowe Śląska z Rzeczpospolitą w XVII wieku ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Wrocławia*, Wrocław 1961; *idem*, *Statystyka handlu*

Intensification of rural settlements and stagnation in the urbanization process as a determinant of the economic nature of the region

Awareness of the limitations and inaccuracies inherent in early modern directories created for the purpose of defence and tax has not stopped researchers over the last two centuries from trying to use them as a basis for the estimates of the population of Silesia. Therefore, according to the still-most-frequently cited calculations made 60 years ago by Władysław Dziewulski, in 1577 Silesia was supposed to be inhabited by approximately 1.25 million people, of which 20.5 percent of people lived in the cities, however, they were very unevenly settled, because as much as about 930,000 people were supposed to have lived in Lower Silesia. In 1619, there were already 1.56 million people (including hypothetically about 1.08 million in Lower Silesia), which is evidence of a considerable population growth. The poles of settlement comprised the most densely populated region of sub-Sudetes (Podsudecie) on one side, and the lands on the right bank of the Odra and in Upper Silesia on the other side, where the average population density was two to four times smaller than in the south-western part of the region. After the demographic crash from the period of the Thirty Years' War, in 1648 the population was supposed to have dropped to 1.04 million, which would mean a shocking loss of a third of the population (520,000 people)! However, in 1663 there was supposed to be 1.25 million people in the region, so again a rapid growth was recorded. According to other, much more modest estimates, in 1618 Silesia was inhabited by just one million people, and in 1670 by 834,000, so the loss resulting from the war would be estimated at about 200,000 lives. However, all researchers agree that the aforementioned loss was compensated only in the first half of the 18th century, which is usually confirmed by the data concerning individual settlements. According to the calculation estimates from the 18th century, in 1736 the population of Silesia reached 1.209 million people, and according to Dziewulski, in 1742 it was 1.775 million people, demonstrating a continuously high pace of growth. Apart from Sudeten Foreland and Upper Silesia, the cities did not keep pace with the growth in population with the (overcrowded) villages, so the share of the urban population had fallen to a low percentage, and only one centre – a 40,000-strong Wrocław at the beginning of the 18th century – could be considered as large in the context of Central Europe at the time⁵⁴.

Śląska z Rzeczpospolitą w XVII wieku. Tablice i materiały statystyczne, Wrocław 1963; J. Gierowski, *Struktura*, p. 225-277; G. Otruba, *Schlesien*, p. 88.

⁵⁴ Cf Władysław Dziewulski, *Zaludnienie Śląska w końcu XVI i na początku XVII w.*, 'Przegląd Zachodni', 1952, additional volume, pp. 419-492 (edited also in: *Studia śląskie*, Poznań 1953, pp. 419-492); Karol Maleczyński, *Krajobraz, klasyczny elementarne, osadnictwo, stosunki etniczne i narodowościowe*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, vol.1, part 3, pp. 11-14; N. Conrads, *Książęta*, pp. 130-133,

Apart from periods of reconstruction after great demographic and economic crises (in the fifteenth century and during the Thirty Years' War), when more or less deserted villages were re-settled and the abandoned fields were plowed again, the largest development opportunities for modern settlements were looked for outside the previously populated areas, in areas which had earlier been wastelands. In the case of the Sudetes, this meant moving the settlement boundary higher. Unfavourable ownership relations (scarce farming areas of the newly settled farms, including those arising in older settlements, where common parts were divided into smaller plots) and difficult natural conditions – the topography, soil type and climate (including a shorter growing season of plants) – led to the evolution of old and the creation of new villages which became of agricultural-craft character. Mountainous regions were settled in spite of the climatic conditions – a cooling period had been ongoing since the 16th century, accompanied by an increased frequency of cold and snowy winters. People using small and stunted, inefficient plots of land were forced to (or were able to afford it due to having free time) take additional work other than agriculture. Thus, the settlement was developing in symbiosis with pre-industrial activities on the foothills lands, including smelting metals and glass, weaving linen and the exploitation of forests. The consequence of exploration, extraction and processing of ores and other mineral resources in the 16th century were mining settlements in the Sudetes which resembled (small) towns. Glassmaking, in turn, more than other branches of contemporary metallurgy spatially associated with the forest, led to the deforestation of the highland valleys, where forest resources had hitherto been regarded as unprofitable to exploit due to their excessive distance from the settlements. Forest clearing, along with firing charcoal and ash (to yield potash) offered new opportunities for unskilled employment outside agriculture. As a result, there was disproportionately high employment associated with the manufacture of glass, which in turn led to the creation of new settlements on the clearings.

Alongside the colonization campaign vigorously carried out in the mountains, the range of settlements in the remaining numerous lowland forest complexes which remained on the borderlands and in the eastern part of the region was also widened. One obstacle to these settlements was mainly the deficit of generally more efficient soil – because areas with better soil had long since been occupied – and instead there was simply too much sand or swampy areas. Hence the connection of the colonists with non-agricultural activities such as metallurgy and forest

206; Joachim Bahleke et al., *Śląsk i Ślązacy*, translated by Michał Misiorny, Zofia Rybicka, Warszawa 2001, pp. 68; W. Korta, *Historia*, p. 363.

‘industries’ was inevitable, and from the first half of the 17th century this activity included glassmaking. The small metallurgical settlements in the forests were not able to last long, moving as they did along with the cyclic exploitation of the ores of bog iron and the nearest forest resources. As a result, these settlements caused deforestation and the devastation of strips of land along the rivers to a greater extent than broader changes in the settlement landscape, although some of such settlements lasted longer in one, specific location⁵⁵.

The availability of potash (potassium carbonate) used in dyeing – obtained from ash as mentioned above – along with the availability of current and clear water and sunny meadows used as bleaching fields, was conducive to promoting technology for making linen through rural weaving. Since the mid-16th century, linen weaving was becoming more and more fundamental source of income for the peasant population, and in the 18th century it even became the only economic justification for the existence of a series of tiny abodes in the mountainous regions, which were the last to be built. When there were no problems with selling wares, peasant craft was profitable for the land owners, both ones who took part in the organization of production in their goods, and those drawing additional revenue through the feudal provisions of peasants. On the other hand, opportunities for the burghers were created by participation of local trade centres in the distribution of flax and yarn and in the purchase of fabrics.

The strongest characteristics of the Silesian economy by no means constituted a distinct developmental path when set against analogous developments taking place on adjacent lands, especially within the Bohemian Crown in the 16th-18th centuries. The particular interests of the Silesian economy emphasized since the 17th century were either forced or allowed, above all by the considerations raised at the beginning of this discussion – the political autonomy of the region and the complex structure of the monarchy. Also of significance were the extremely strong external links (transit, export and import), which were maintained for a long time in spite of political and customs divisions. The very definition of the aforementioned ‘interests’ could be considered to be an additional integrating factor for the region (and it definitely became one), if not for the fact that their existence was the result of previous integration on a political level, which more precisely comprised an unexpected (and, from the time of mercantilism, purposeful) consequence of the impact of the ‘external’ state agent. Although deprived of its old political influence, Wrocław remained the biggest beneficiary of the new relations, and its economic interests were usually identified with the interests of Silesia as a whole.

⁵⁵ See Walter Kuhn, *Schlesische Siedlungsbewegungen in der Neuzeit*, Breslau 1938.

Social structures and social groups in the processes of integration and disintegration of Silesia as a region (1526–1619)

Abstract:

The distinct Silesian social structure, especially its unique ruling group of dukes, territorial rulers as well as heterogeneous groups of higher Silesian nobility, incompatible with the ruling lords of the Bohemian and Moravian lands constituted estate asymmetry when compared to the other lands of the Bohemian Crown. It became a factor detrimental to the formation of social relations at a level higher than regional. Other reasons for the growth of Silesian regionalism in the social context were political by nature, in the 16th and beginnings of the 17th centuries and were the consequences of the centralising policies of the Habsburg monarchy. These were realised in the approval for the Bohemian political agenda, in granting the highest legal and social status in the monarchy and choosing only its members for offices in the central institutions of the monarchy. This marginalised the socio-political importance of Silesian upper classes and their confinement within the region. The Silesian dukes' countered this socio-political alienation in the Bohemian Crown by extending their prestige through marrying abroad, with the houses of the Holy Roman Empire. That became an additional factor disruptive to the social structure of the monarchy. Although groups of higher Silesian nobility had the potential for tendencies for integration, opposition from the Bohemian nobles meant that their approach until the year 1619 was a combination of pro-monarchic and pro-regional approach, while simultaneously including the tendency to individually include themselves in the group of the Bohemian-Moravian rulers. For the population of the Silesian land, including the lower gentry and the townsfolk, who were only in a small extent affected by the common legal solutions, the state division was merely a framework within which heterogeneous communities with individual social and legal rules still functioned.

Keywords:

Silesia, social history, social structure

The most notable feature of the social structure of Silesia in the period between 1526 and the Thirty Years' War – as in the previous period – was the fact that the dukes sat upon the top of the pyramid. Having the ducal right, confirmed by paying homage to the King of Bohemia, consolidated their status as territorial rulers who were only feudally dependent on the king-suzerain. In the modern period, however, this status became increasingly archaic because it rested on the assumption that the

mechanisms of state power would not only be decentralized but also fragmented and spread among a variable number of dukes in Silesia.

Throughout the 16th and at the beginning of the 17th centuries their rights were, in practice, subject to significant limitations as a result of the political and administrative system formation processes occurring in early modern Silesia which induced institutional and legal restrictions on the policy of the king, who, in principle, tried to restrict the political status of Silesian dukes.

However, until the end of the Silesian ducal families whose lineage dated before 1526, the dukes descending from these dynasties formally retained the status of rulers into the 17th century; indeed, this was their own understanding of their socio-political position. These characteristics of the socio-political position of the Silesian dukes were the cause of a strong asymmetry between the elite classes of individual Bohemian lands and determined the differences in social stratification, thus contributing to the disharmony of social divisions from the perspective of the whole Kingdom of Bohemia.

The dukes of Silesia in the 16th century were not uniform with respect to their dynasties. The most prominent were the Piasts and the Poděbrady family, who in modern times prided themselves on originating from ducal dynasties with royal traditions and much of their prestige was contained in their public image as dukes 'by birth' and the 'innate lords' of Silesia¹. The status of a Silesian duke was also enjoyed by George, Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach from the House of Hohenzollern, Duke of Krnov since 1523, as well as by the Duke of Saxony, a vassal of the King of Bohemia from the Duchy of Żagań and by the Elector of Brandenburg from the Duchy of Krosno. Although the latter two paid homage, they did not participate in the Silesian estate institutions, and so in practice they did not belong to the social structures of Silesia. From the king's perspective, this did not produce a qualitative change. The king still had to co-rule with the dukes by birth, and did not govern the people who owed their social position to him.

Therefore, for the ruler the Silesian dukes constituted a highly autonomous social group, not only due to the realm of the dukes which was determined through legal provisions, but also because of the monarch's limited possibilities to initiate changes within this group. The title of a Silesian duke was inherited by birth, which also concerned dukes of other, non-Silesian, origin, but it was not possible to enter this class by means of promotion. Despite minor deviations from this principle in practice, it was still regarded as binding. Therefore, it should be acknowledged that a significant factor which acted as a region-forming agent was the high degree of

¹ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 96.

autonomy from the interference from the central power as regards the composition of the social group which had the highest social status and the most profound political significance.

In the last decade before the Thirty Years' War, two circumstances appeared which could have significantly influenced the extent to which the Silesian dukes were bound by the policy of the monarch. The first one was instigated by political aspirations of the Silesian dukes themselves, who, despite the fact that they shared similar legal grounds and dynastic traditions, were in fact a heterogeneous group in terms of prestige and social importance. When in 1609 the kings agreed not to appoint the bishops of Wrocław to the position of the governor of Silesia, but to appoint only secular dukes to this office, Duke Adam Wenceslaus of Cieszyn, despite his personal participation in the efforts to issue the Letter of Majesty², converted to Catholicism,³ expecting in return royal support in his quest for promotion within Silesia. In 1617 he became the governor of Silesia, while the dukes who enjoyed greater prestige in Silesia had been ignored. However, this appointment transpired to be of limited consequence, as the Duke of Cieszyn died in the year of his promotion to the office of the governor of Silesia.

Another possibility of introducing changes in the status of Silesian dukes, which had considerable consequences in the following period, began with the transition of the Duchy of Opava, which was given by the king to Karl I, Duke of Liechtenstein, in 1614. The difference lay in the fact that he was a magnate that was elevated to the position of a duke by an act of grace of Archduke Matthias in 1608, making him, therefore, a titular duke. Similarly to the Silesian dukes, he paid homage to the king, but he received the duchy as a kind of property and not as a form of ducal power⁴. This method paved the way for the gradual replacement of the existing dukes-rulers with titular dukes, which was characteristic of the royal policy in the following period. However, it strengthened the resolve of the existing dukes to maintain the autonomy of Silesia, since the attempts at enabling the central power of the monarchy to penetrate into it were inextricably connected with processes which reduced the socio-political status of the Silesian dukes.

These events did not shape in any negative way the individual attitudes of particular dukes towards the king. Some of the dukes of the 16th and early 17th centuries, such as George II of Brzeg, Joachim Frederick of Legnica-Brzeg, Duke

² T. Winkelbauer, *Österreichische Geschichte*, vol. 2, p. 66.

³ Joachim Köhler, *Das Ringen um die tridentische Erneuerung im Bistum Breslau*, Köln 1971, p. 275; Norbert Conrads, *Die Rekatholisierungspolitik in Teschen und die Ambitionen des letzten Herzogs von Teschen*, [in:] *idem, Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, pp. 21-38.

⁴ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 188.

Charles I of Ziębice-Oleśnica, Wenceslaus III Adam and the aforementioned Adam Wenceslaus – the Duke of Cieszyn – were perceived as loyal to the House of Habsburgs, regardless of the fact that their religious status differed to that of the monarch. The ranks of the Silesian dukes who had a positive attitude towards the royal power should also include dukes-bishops for whom the support of the king was crucial for maintaining both the Catholic Church in Silesia and their socio-political position. At the same time, however, this social group in Silesia also included active political opponents of the king. The creation of an anti-Habsburg coalition in the years 1526–1528 was pursued by Frederick II of Legnica-Brzeg-Wołów, who, together with Albert von Hohenzollern, Duke of Prussia, constructed plans to put forward the Polish King Sigismund I the Old as a counter-candidate to the Bohemian throne⁵. A similar political option was represented by his son, Frederick III, and then by one of his successors, Henry XI. In the years leading to the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, this anti-Habsburg political stance, underpinned by conversion to Calvinism, was adopted by George Rudolf, Duke of Legnica, John Christian, Duke of Brzeg and John George of Hohenzollern, Duke of Krnov, who were determined to topple the Habsburgs from the throne after joining the Bohemian Uprising in 1619. By the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, the activities of this group of dukes and the authorities of the city of Wrocław revealed in the clearest possible terms the idea of political regionalism in Silesia, because of which Silesia was perceived as a separate country within the monarchy with its own political system, religion and culture. Therefore, although it cannot generally be concluded that Silesian dukes in the 16th and early 17th centuries were characterized by having an anti-royal attitude, the dukes as a group of regional rulers facing political confrontation can be classified as an anti-central, or, at minimum, a politically unpredictable force.

At the same time, two examples are illustrative of how some Silesian dukes actively functioned in the environment of royal power. It is noteworthy that during the reign of Rudolf⁶, who had been the only monarch before the Thirty Years' War to have widely opened his court to allow a greater influx of people from all territories under the Habsburg sovereignty, the Silesian dukes showed readiness for greater assimilation with the royal power, including in cultural and political terms, and

⁵ Christel Krämer, *Beziehungen zwischen Albrecht von Brandenburg-Ansbach und Friedrich II von Liegnitz. Ein Fürstenbriefwechsel 1514-1547*, Köln 1977, pp. 102-130.

⁶ Robert John Weston Evans, *Rudolf II: Ohnmacht und Einsamkeit*, Graz 1980, pp. 83-112; Václav Bůžek, *Konfessionelle Pluralität in der kaiserlichen Leibkammer zu Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Konfessionelle Pluralität als Herausforderung. Koexistenz und Konflikt in Spätmittelalter und Frühen Neuzeit. Winfried Eberhard zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Göttingen 2006, pp. 381-395.

for gaining additional prestige from being in close proximity to it. In 1581, George II of Brzeg and Charles II of Oleśnica, both Lutherans, took part in celebrations connected with the Habsburgs' arch-Catholic Order of the Golden Fleece, and also attended the Mass at St Vitus Cathedral in Prague⁷. Nevertheless, Rudolf's policy of an open court had remained unique up to the Thirty Years' War.

The functioning of the courts of other monarchs in the 16th and early 17th centuries was not conducive to the emergence of more direct contact with the Silesian dukes and they were very rarely engaged to perform important political missions not of a Silesian flavour, which contributed to reducing the scope of their activity in political events which went beyond mere Silesian interests. An important cause of the deepening alienation of the Silesian dukes in the Bohemian monarchy in the 16th century was the fact that the royal power abandoned attempts to include them as a social group in the affairs of the kingdom and grant them a place in the system of power, or at least in exercising its commands, which increasingly excluded them from the social ruling elites at the central level. The severity of this observation stems from the fact that this situation concerned not only the dukes, but can also be applied to the majority of socio-political groups of Silesian elite in that period. This observation is, therefore, true for the whole of Silesia. The career paths of distinguished Silesians in diplomatic or military service to the Habsburgs were not uncommon at that time, but they always concerned single cases and relied on the personal merits of prominent individuals, and not on their affiliation to groups which were the source of systemic recruitment to the apparatus of power.

An important determinant strengthening the distinctiveness of the ducal group in the social frame of the monarchy, and at the same time the distinctiveness of the structure of Silesian communities, was the existence of the estate of lords in Bohemia and Moravia, which formed the highest social layer⁸. In the modern period, the resulting estate inequality, combined with religious differences between the Lutheran Silesian dukes and the mostly Catholic or Utraquist Bohemian lords, to some extent explain why marriages between representatives of these groups were so rare. However, these factors should rather be viewed as of secondary significance, and their importance only began to increase over the course of the 16th century, in conjunction with political obstacles which appear to be of major importance.

At the end of the previous period, at the initiative of John of Pernstein, several socially and politically important relationships between the families of lords

⁷ Piotr Oszczanowski, *Silesians at the Court of the Emperor Rudolf II*, 'Studia Rudolphina', 2 (2004), pp. 3-16.

⁸ Petr Maťa, *Svět české aristokracie (1500–1700)*, Praha 2004, p. 53.

and dukes developed in Silesia, such as the family unions between the Pernsteins and the dynasty of the Piast Dukes of Cieszyn and the Poděbrady dynasty of Ziębice-Oleśnica. Throughout the 16th century, connections between Bohemian and Silesian families of comparable rank occurred only in exceptional cases, such as when Duke Charles II of Ziębice-Oleśnica married Katharina of the Moravian noble family of Berek von Duba in 1583⁹. This proves the readiness of Silesian dukes to enter into marital relationships with powerful families of the Bohemian-Moravian lords despite religious and language differences. Moreover, it is also a sign of social processes of mergers between families from the Bohemian lands which, slow as they were, are possible to see in the period before 1526. These processes were, however, hampered in the period which followed.

Indirectly, the inhibition of social integration processes was influenced by the political programme of the new Bohemian monarchs, the Habsburgs, who, unlike the Jagiellonian dynasty, did not intend to continue the political tradition of the Bohemian Crown as a state of dualistic government, that is the co-regency of the estates and the king¹⁰. In this situation, any actions of inter-regional social integration, which included the integration of the families from various Bohemian lands and the strengthening of their political position against the king, were contrary to the royal objectives.

In practice, the relationship between the elites of the Bohemian countries was largely influenced by the policy of royal centralism in the 16th century, the implementation of which included, among others, efforts to expand the competence of the offices and central institutions of the kingdom. This policy stimulated an increased interest in the positions and taking offices among the Bohemian nobility, which led to a substantial increase in the sense of political importance among the Bohemian estates as a main part of the monarchy¹¹. They aspired to be exclusively appointed to all central positions and offices. These political ambitions were expressed in the desire to constitute a new estate structure of the monarchy which would document the inferiority of social structures of the feudal countries of the Crown in relation to the Bohemian ones. These political ambitions were strikingly expressed before the end of the first half of the 16th century, both as open actions and as political opinions, one of the objectives of which was to reduce the social rank of the Silesian dukes.

⁹ J. Bahlcke, *Regionalismus*, p. 219.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 118.

¹¹ Alfred Kohler, *Ferdinand I 1503-1564*, München 2003, p. 158.

In the 1530s the Bohemian lords were exposed to opinions which perceived the Silesian dukes as being only equal, at best, to the Bohemian families of lords. These opinions referred to their shared equality of origin, stating that the two most prominent families of the Silesian dukes, the Piasts of Legnica-Brzeg and the Poděbrady family of Ziębice-Oleśnica, descended from the Bohemian Kuna of Kunststadt family of lords.

The event which revealed the essential objectives of the Bohemian lords' policy, which in that period was far more active and effective, was their struggle for the abolition of the privilege granted to Silesia by Ladislaus Jagiellon in 1498, which reached a climax in events in Wrocław in 1547. In that year Zdislav Berka von Duba, a Bohemian Hofmeister, one of the highest officials of the Bohemian estate, when demanding the annulment of this privilege¹² also argued that the office of the governor of Silesia can be granted only to a Bohemian lord as a representative of the highest social group of the kingdom. Although the Silesian dukes and estates managed to defend the validity of the privilege, they did not stop the Bohemian estates from taking further action aimed at becoming an elite class exclusively entitled to participate in the central offices of power and in key offices in all countries of the Monarchy.

An event of great importance for the whole Silesian community was the so-called King John's Document of (it is believed) 1341, which was forged and spread between 1549 and 1554 by William of Rosenberg, as a result of which the new social order of the highest groups of the state was, in practice, recognized by Ferdinand¹³. King John was supposed to declare in this document that the lineage of the lords of Rosenberg preceded all other families included in the Bohemian estate of the lords. This family was followed by all the other families of the lords of the Bohemian country, listed in order of hierarchy. Rosenberg and other lords were declared at the same time to constitute the main estate of the Bohemian Monarchy. The basis of their priority was the right to freely choose the king in contrast to the duty of the Silesian dukes to accept the king who had been chosen by the Bohemian estates. A further argument for the lesser importance of the Silesian dukes was the submission of their feudal oath to the monarch, which in this document was understood not in medieval terms, as a feudal bond between two types of rulers, but was interpreted as an expression of a specific submission of the dukes to the king and the kingdom. The document ends with a call for the dukes to remain 'in their own

¹² *Lehns- und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzelnen Fürstenthümer im Mittelalter*, vol. 1, eds Colmar Grünhagen, Hermann Markgraf, Leipzig 1881, p. 56, issue 34, and p. 57, issues 35 and 36.

¹³ *Norbert Hermann's Rosenberg'sche Chronik*, ed. Matthäus Klimesch, Prag 1898, pp. 51-55.

estate' in Silesia, which was a recommendation against connecting the social structures of the lands of the Bohemian Crown and the launch of the policy of isolation of the Silesian social elites favoured by the Bohemian lords of the mid-16th century¹⁴. In the period up to 1627, when Ferdinand II announced the Renewed Land Ordinance, it was King John's Document and the resulting ideas, and not the *Order of Estate of the Lords* (*Herrenstandsordnung*) from 1501, which became authoritative in the socio-political reality. It played a major role in the struggle to extend the political influence of the Bohemian estates and to have the exclusive right both to assume central offices and exercise power in the regions. This fact resulted in the need for political rights to be protected not only by the dukes within Silesia, but by all groups of Silesian socio-political elites which took part in the estate government in Silesia, strengthening in each of them their attempts to separate within the region.

At the same time, these events explain the reduced interest of the Bohemian-Moravian lords in entering into family relationships with the Silesian dukes, which had been significant in the previous period. Those connections became significantly less attractive for the lords because they did not open new opportunities for social advancement which could consequently stimulate their political career. On the other hand, for the dukes these relationships would mean accepting their social degradation to one of the nobility estates advocated by the lords. Successful actions carried out by the Bohemian lords at around the middle of the 16th century aimed at diminishing the importance of the highest Silesian social group, along with the trend common among the Bohemian estate politicians to depreciate the social rank of the Silesian dukes within the monarchy, received the royal assent of Ferdinand, and then his successors. Therefore, what may be listed among the factors unfavourable to the emergence of inter-regional social relationships are the royal policy, the Bohemian estates' pursuit of social and political hegemony and the resulting separative tendency of the political circles of Silesian estates. Their reaction to the expansive attempts to widen the scope of power held by the central institutions in Silesia throughout the 16th century was withdrawal and a focus on defending their own political positions within the Silesian country on the basis of the acquired law. One of the main reasons for the increase in regionalism and the separation of the Silesian elites was their inability to fight for their right to conduct political activities at the central level of the monarchy. In the transforming socio-political system of the monarchy after 1526, they were not formally included in the social circles which were the regular basis for recruitment to exercise power in the supra-regional system. It can therefore be assumed that the main reasons for enhancing pro-regional

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 53-55.

attitudes in social areas adopted not only by the dukes but, more broadly, the Silesian elites, stemmed from the political sphere.

This situation was the reason not only for the separation of political elites of Silesia in the region, but it also became the main motivation of the Silesian dukes in the modern era to turn to the ducal families of the Reich. This phenomenon may be seen in terms of social disintegration in relation to the community of the Kingdom of Bohemia as a whole. The positive response from the noble families of Anhalt, Mecklenburg, Palatinate, electoral Wettins and the Hohenzollerns to the initiative of forming matrimonial relationships¹⁵ – in addition to all the specific and ad hoc political and religious goals that kept them motivated – was still perceived by the Silesian dukes primarily as confirmation of their inclusion in a group of territorial rulers. Both matrimonial and religious choices were strongly stimulated by the socio-political processes taking place in the Bohemian Kingdom.

Another important process that affected the social characteristics of the structure of Silesia as a regional structure was a change which had already been occurring at the close of the previous era and which had profound consequences for the modern age: the integration of the dukes into the structure of the Silesian Diet (the dukes and estate assembly). They formed the first curia there, deciding on matters concerning Silesia as a whole. However, the decision reached was a collective one and after its adoption as a parliamentary resolution the dukes were obliged to submit to it as a political decision of all the dukes and estates of the Silesian Diet. A large part of the prestige arising from their social status as individual rulers was thus transferred to the special ducal estate, which they began to form at the Silesia-wide level within the Diet.

The next social group of Silesia whose options regarding Silesian regionalism – its reinforcement or, conversely, its weakening and thus their planned socio-political significance – may be characterized as the layer of higher nobility in the 16th and early 17th centuries. This layer only partially found its legal reflection in the Silesian political system; it was also not uniform. We should rather talk about groups of nobles in Silesia who, by virtue of their different and unique features, were conspicuous when viewed in the context of the general nobility.

The group of free-state lords in the 1526-1618 consisted of four members. Although there were in fact more representatives of the Silesian families bearing this title in the 16th century, the title was associated with the ownership of landed properties with a free-state law, hence the loss of these goods resulted in the loss of

¹⁵ Matthias Weber, *Das Verhältnis Schlesiens zum Alten Reich in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Wien 1992, pp. 118-145.

the title, and thus the number of free-state lords did not change. Accordingly, it was not an aristocratic title in the modern sense: the Free State (*status maiores*) of Syców was owned by the von Maltzan, von Braun (1571-1591) and zu Dohna (1591-1711) families, the Free State of Pszczyna was owned by the Turzo (1517-1548) and Promnitz families (1548-1765), the Free State of Milicz belonged to the families of Kurzbach (1521-1592) and Maltzan (1590-1806), and the Free State of Żmigród was acquired by the von Kurzbach (1492-1592) family and the House of Schaffgotsch (1592-1634). After their creation in the second half of the 15th century, these free states were fully separated from the duchy, and were thus independent from a given duke, and henceforth formed a separate dominion. Until the Thirty Years' War this group also included the Schönaich family, who received the title of free-state lords of the Free State of Siedlisko-Bytom as early as in 1601, but were not granted full political rights, however, before 1697. The initiative in the formation of this social stratum is attributed to the royal power, who followed the desire to group free-state lords into a separate curia, or integrate them into the ducal curia with rights such as those possessed by the dukes, and who sought to create a kind of political counterbalance to the dukes of Silesia, especially in the most important political institutions, i.e. the Silesian Diet and in the Supreme Ducal Tribunal. However, this group was affected by two important limitations: they were granted only quasi-ducal social status, and they were denied the title of the duke. Consequently, in accordance with the law they could not claim the highest offices in Silesia. In addition, in the first curia they could only cast one vote representing all of the free-state lords, and they could cast it only after those of the dukes, who unlike them voted *viritim*. What is more, they were prohibited from exercising the function of chairman of the proceedings¹⁶. In this way, their position as a potential ally of the royal policy in Silesian authorities was marginalized.

Another conspicuous group among the nobility in Silesia were lords of lesser states (*status minores*), who appeared only after the mid-16th century. Additionally, their separate position was secured according to the status of the owned property. Legally, these properties were identified as autonomous entities, and their owners were not a part of any noble corporation¹⁷. The owners of the lesser states did not enjoy any particular political rights. Almost all of the lesser states in the second half of the 16th and the early 17th centuries were formed in Upper Silesia. At around

¹⁶ Marian Ptak, *Pozycja publiczno-prawna wolnych panów stanowych na Śląsku*, Wrocław 1993 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 1477, Prawo 222), pp. 79–102.

¹⁷ *Idem*, *Zur politischen Bedeutung des schlesisches Adels*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft – Kultur – Selbstdarstellung*, eds Jan Harasimowicz, Matthias Weber, München 2010 (=Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa, vol. 36), p. 328.

1610-1611 there were probably about ten of them in Silesia, including Międzybórz, Skoczów, Sułów, Siedlisko-Bytom, Bielsko, Frydek, Frysztat, Olbrachcice, Borek Strzeliński and Rothensierben. Literature also fails to precisely define the position of another group, that of the owners of modern castle fiefs. They appeared, similarly to the previous group, at around the middle of the 16th century. By the Thirty Years' War, the castle fiefs had also included Uraz and Piotrowice in 1556 and Leśnica in 1619¹⁸, probably also Kożuchów and Świebodzin¹⁹. They constituted purchased goods separated from the royal domain, whose owners were recorded separately in cadasters. Possession of this property was associated with holding the office of the governor of the castle city. The owners also held judiciary power and some legislature power for the people in their area. In addition to these indigenous groups of higher nobility, there was also a group of lords coming from Czech-Moravian families, who bought the assets in Silesia. By the Thirty Years' War its size is estimated, after Jacob Schickfus, to be 20 families strong²⁰. The basis of their estate of lords was their non-Silesian status. However, they cannot be treated as a homogeneous social group, because their legal and political status as a whole group had not been defined. Their special privileges, if there were any, were revealed exclusively and separately in the system of each separate Upper Silesian duchy, and yet not in all of them – for instance, they formed the first estate in the estate assembly of the Duchy of Opole²¹ and Opava, but not in the estate assembly of the Duchy of Krnov. At the central level of Silesia as a whole, they were not affected by any regulations. Nonetheless, it is important to note that through the acquisition of landed properties, the Bohemian lords became members of the corporations of the Silesian nobility, which enabled them to perform functions in the Silesian self-governing body of the estates. The settling of Bohemian lords in Silesia is evidence of social integration between the regions which took place as a grassroots initiative of members of individual noble families.

The legal and political position that was achieved by the groups of free-state lords and lesser state lords in Silesia and other groups of the distinguished nobility was different to that of the Czech-Moravian estate of lords. In Bohemia and Moravia,

¹⁸ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 106.

¹⁹ Jarosław Kuczer, *Szlachta w życiu społeczno-gospodarczym księstwa głogowskiego w epoce habsburskiej*, Zielona Góra 2007, pp. 128-133.

²⁰ Jacob Schickfuß, *New Vermehrte Schlesische Chronica und Landesbeschreibung*, Jehna-Breßlaw 1625, vol. 4, chapter 2, pp. 39-41; N. Conrads, *Regionalismus und Zentralismus im schlesischen Ständestaat*, [in:] *idem*, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, p. 169; Jarosław Kuczer, *Zarys problemu*, [in:] *Šlechtic v Horním Slezsku*, p. 39.

²¹ Małgorzata Hatałska, *Sejmik księstwa opolsko-raciborskiego w latach 1564-1742*, Wrocław 1979, p. 30.

the lords created the first large social and political estate in Bohemia, with rights guaranteed in *Constitutionis terrae* of 1500²², which included taking the highest country and royal offices. In Silesia, all of these prerogatives were reserved for the dukes. For the Bohemian-Moravian lords, the abovementioned groups of higher Silesian nobility in the early modern period were therefore not their socio-political counterparts. The existence of the Silesian free-state lords thus contributed to the issue of social groups in Silesia being arranged differently to those within the most important countries of the monarchy. This fact highlights further difficulties encountered by the representatives of this group of Silesian lords – who were not fully codified, and not as privileged as their Czech-Moravian counterparts, yet aspired to a higher position than the ordinary nobles – when planning marriages, which was the most important factor to affect the binding of the members of this layer of nobility with the regions of Silesia, Bohemia and Moravia. Thus, the difference in stratification, deepening the asymmetry in the estate structure of Silesia and other Bohemian countries, may be considered as a potentially pro-regional factor, cementing the families of specific Silesian lords as families of a mainly regional range. However, this was strongly modified by the attempt of members of these groups from the upper layer of the nobility to change their status in the system and their role in exercising power within Silesia.

In the context of regionalism, it is important that these groups of higher nobility provided committed supporters of the royal power. Their disposition to create a pro-royal environment resulted from their ambiguous status in Silesia, as described above. Included in its highest social layer, but at the same time facing the dominance of the dukes, they could not achieve important political positions by their own efforts or take the main estate offices. As a result of this, they were not a group that wished to preserve the status quo of their socio-political position in Silesia. They most vividly responded to the impulses from the central government to promote their political and social significance in return for loyalty and service in the name of the central, i.e. royal, power. Due to such royal influence they were able to gain social and political promotions both by being awarded honorary titles and offices of the court, which brought about social prestige, and by being appointed to holding the royal offices in Silesia. Serving the king provided the members of these groups not only with a position in the Silesian political sphere, but also with the additional prestige that came from acting in the name of monarchical sovereignty. The majority of royal officials acting as the governor of hereditary duchies and officials of the royal-central institutions operating in Silesia originated from this

²² P. Mařa, *Svět*, pp. 53-53.

group, especially presidents and councillors of the royal chamber in Wrocław. The representatives of this group were also the most numerous to appear at the royal court on their own initiative, trying to serve the king or to be awarded honours by him. They also hoped, at least until the 1580s, to be promoted to the most lucrative ecclesiastical office in Silesia, the staffing of which was influenced by the king: the duke-bishop office and the ducal dominion associated with it (von Promnitz, von Logau).

In the modern era these circumstances were conducive to the emergence of new groups within the higher nobility characterized by aristocratic titles awarded at the will of the monarch. However, in Silesia they are difficult to precisely define in the period before the Thirty Years' War because they have not been the subject of systematic research. It seems that the number of members of the Silesian titular nobility at that time was small. By the time of the Thirty Years' War no count was recorded, and all of the honoured men were promoted only to the title of barons²³. At the same time, due to the introduction of this title to Silesia, the differences between this new group of titular nobility and traditional free-state lords and the lesser state lords in Silesia were blurred. The title of baron in German sounded similar to the name of the members of this specific Silesian group (*Freiherr* and *Freier Standesherr*). A barony was awarded, for instance, to several members of the von Rechenberg family from the Duchy of Głogów: the first of them became a baron as early as 1534²⁴, in 1612 the title was given to Melchior of Sława after 35 years of service to the emperor²⁵ and in 1610 the title was awarded to Caspar of Kliczków, the governor of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor²⁶. Also, early in their lineage a barony was acquired by the Kitlitz family of the Duchy of Świdnica²⁷. The title raised the prestige and splendour of the person and the family awarded it, but it did not directly affect the legal status of a nobleman and did not increase his authority to execute power and offices in Silesia. Nevertheless, owing to the title, the barons were preferred by the monarch to take up the offices dependent on his decision. In addition, the king favoured them by awarding them honorary courtly titles. The title of an 'imperial adviser' was awarded in turn to almost all governors in the Duchy of Opole-Racibórz after the mid-16th century²⁸. Efforts to obtain the grace of the

²³ N. Conrads, *Adelsgeschichte*, [in:] *Historische Schlesienforschung*, p. 355.

²⁴ J. Kuczer, *Szlachta*, p. 76.

²⁵ Willy Klawitter, *Melchior von Redern*, [in:] *Schlesien des 16. bis 19. Jahrhunderts*, eds Friedrich Andrae, Erich Graber, Max Hippe, Breslau 1931, pp. 74-79.

²⁶ Tomasz Andrzejewski, *Rechenbergowie w życiu społeczno-gospodarczym księstwa głogowskiego w XVI-XVII wieku*, Zielona Góra 2007, pp. 202-203.

²⁷ J. Kuczer, *Szlachta*, pp. 76, 126.

²⁸ Anton Weltzel, *Die Landesbeamten der Fürstenthümer Oppeln-Ratibor von 1532 bis 1741*, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte Schlesien', 15 (1863), pp. 19-44.

king by members of these groups are also visible in the acquisition of titular offices of the court, such as cupbearer, pantler, or chamberlain, usually before the promotion to the office of the governor of the royal duchy. The office of governor of the duchy was granted, for example, to Johann von Oppersdorf in 1557-1568, Georg von Oppersdorf in 1591-1606, and Hans Christof von Pruskovsky auf Proskau in 1608-1619. Preliminary studies on the groups of Silesian higher nobility at the court showed that during the reign of Rudolf II various functions and offices of the court were awarded to about 50 representatives of the Silesian families²⁹. Although this phenomenon on such a scale was unique, their functioning at the court clearly raised the prestige of those Silesian families among the families of Bohemian lords and also made them a desirable match when planning marriages. This helped some of them to be included in the social systems of Bohemia and Moravia. As a result, it enabled as many as 13 members of Silesian families to be accepted to the Bohemian estate of the lords, including the von Logau, von Promnitz and von Pruskovsky families³⁰. To provide a balanced picture of the importance of the Silesians' participation in Rudolf's court, it should be pointed out that when it came to the exercising of functions at court, a huge advantage was held by the nobility from the hereditary lands of the Habsburgs in the Old Reich and from the Reich itself, and that the nobility of all the lands of the Kingdom of Bohemia accounted for only 9–10% of the total, with the Bohemian nobility comprising the vast majority.

Also of significance was the desire of the members of the separate groups of the nobility to acquire wealth in Bohemia, sometimes to a substantial degree. The free-state Lord of Milicz-Żmigród, Sigmund Kurzbach, through his marriage to the heiress of lord Wilhelm von Illburg in 1550 acquired a large property complex in northern Bohemia. Also around the middle of the century, Hans von Oppersdorf came into possession of the dominion of Böhmisches Aicha and Friedstein, expanding it in the 1570s by further extensive assets in eastern Bohemia. In 1558 Friedrich von Redern bought the estate of Friedland and Reichenberg on the Bohemian-Sorbian border, and George von Proskau, through his marriage to Ursula von Lobkowitz, became the lord of a dominion in eastern Bohemia, Altenburg, in 1571. At the same time, it is apparent that in the 16th and early 17th centuries it was the Silesian lords who bought Bohemian properties and attempted to form marriages in this

²⁹ Petr Mařa, *Der Adel Böhmens und Schlesiens in der Frühen Neuzeit in vergleichender und beziehungs-geschichtlicher Perspektive*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft*, p. 255.

³⁰ Marek Starý, *Přijímání moravských a slezských šlechticů do panského stavu království českého v 16. a na počátku 17. Století*, [in:] *Korunní země v dějinách českého státu*. Vol. 2: *Společně a rozdílně – Česká koruna v životě a vědomí jejích obyvatel ve 14.–16. století. Sborník příspěvků přednesených na kolokviu pořádaném ve dnech 12. a 13. května 2004 v Clam-Gallasově paláci v Praze*, ed. Lenka Bobkova, Praha 2005, pp. 251-288.

social group, thus trying to acquire a similar social status to the status of the Bohemian lords and become a part of their group, although the lack of research in this respect does not allow for a precise determination of the scale of the phenomenon. As early as in the 16th century, and especially in the second half, the practical political significance of some Silesian lords increased so much that the most prominent Bohemian families decided to merge with them through marriage. For example, at the end of the 16th century and before the Thirty Years' War, representatives of the family of Oppersdorf entered a kinship with such families as Berka von Duba, Popel von Lobkowitz, Kolowrat and Žerotín.

This proved to be much more durable than integration through court offices during a transitory period when the imperial and royal court opened itself more widely to enable an influx of nobility from the Bohemian lands. However, making connections between the Silesian and Bohemian communities, and especially between the Silesian and Moravian nobles, was not only a matter of acquiring economic and prestige-related benefits. What followed was also the cultural rapprochement of these communities. This was expressed, among others, by the fact that until the second half of the 16th century several canons and prelates and as many as two bishops of Olomouc came from the Upper Silesian noble families. The bishops of Olomouc were John Grodecky von Brod (1572-1574) and Stanislaus Pavlovský von Pavlovitz (1579-1598).³¹ The court of the latter was an arena for the actions of Bartholomew Paprocki of Paprocka Wola (1543-1614), a Polish heraldist and historian, who developed the armorial of Moravian, Bohemian and Silesian nobility, thus demonstrating their common historical and geographical origins. In this way he expressed the willingness of at least some noble circles of these areas to create a cultural community. What is more, the representatives of the Silesian families repeatedly held Moravian state offices, including the highest office of the governor of Moravia; these included Hanusz (1578-1582) and Joachim (1598-1602) from the family Haugwitz von Biskupitz, and Hynek the Elder (1594-1598) from the family Bruntálský von Würben. Their chronological placement indicates that the integration processes bore fruit in the last decades of the 16th century. Members of these Silesian families also took up royal posts in Moravia, such as councillors of the local royal Camera.³²

However, the most desirable honour among early modern Silesian social circles of the higher nobility remained – rare as they were – the merger of noble

³¹ Joachim Bahlcke, *Bischöfliche Traditionen des schlesischen Adels in der Frühen Neuzeit*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft*, p. 350.

³² Tomáš Knoz, *Die Integration des Adels schlesischer Herkunft in die Gesellschaft Mährens in der Frühen Neuzeit*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft*, pp. 281-282.

families with the Silesian ducal dynasties. The fact that in 1620 Hans Ulrich von Schaffgotsch, whose family was elevated to the status of free-state lords through buying the autonomous Free State of Żmigród in 1592³³, married Barbara Agnes, the daughter of Joachim Frederick of Legnica, was not only permanently etched into the consciousness of the Schaffgotsch family, but also – despite the temporary family crisis associated with the execution of Hans Ulrich in 1635 for treason – in the 17th and 18th centuries gave impetus to the family in their effort to raise their social status, and served as an important argument for their aspirations to achieve a prominent place in the political system of Silesia. Advancement in the social structure within Silesia through marriage was still perceived as the most effective method and one which brought the most permanent results, and was therefore the most desirable among these groups of nobility.

In terms of a clerical career, it was the most desirable in circles of the higher nobility to hold an office on behalf of the king in Silesia. The greatest prestige followed the appointment to the positions in the royal Camera in Wrocław, which had existed since 1558, especially to the office of the president of the Camera, which were all thoroughly dependent on the decision of the king. The first president was Friedrich von Redern, whose loyalty was paid by the monarch by his quick elevation to the estate of free lords. After him, the service to the king in this office was taken by Wilhelm von Kurzbach, then since 1567 this function was held in turn by Matthias von Logau, Seyfried von Promnitz and Siegmund von Zedlitz, and among the members of the Camera were, for example, Hans von Schaffgotsch, a Lutheran, who until 1573 was even, like Redern, an advocate of Schwenckfeldian spiritualism³⁴, and Heinrich von Hohberg³⁵. The formal scope of the functions of the president, as well as the Camera itself, was not extensive. Supervision and management of finances from Silesia which were due to the king consisted of performing small tasks within the system of Silesian finances. Performing this office did not formally empower the president to participate in exercising power in Silesia. Nevertheless, what affected his status was the fact that he was treated as a trusted servant of the king, which was guaranteed by an oath obliging him to hold the office and perform functions loyally and confidentially, and which made him an official of royal power

³³ Ulrich Schmilewski, *Das Geschlecht der Schaffgotsch – ein genealogisch-historischer Überblick vom 13. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Das Haus Schaffgotsch. Konfession, Politik und Gedächtnis eines schlesischen Adelsgeschlechtes vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne*, eds Joachim Bahlcke, Ulrich Schmilewski, Thomas Wunsch, Würzburg 2010, pp.11-12.

³⁴ Jörg Deventer, *Adel und Konfession. Beobachtungen am Beispiel des Schaffgotsch*, [in:] *Das Haus Schaffgotsch*, pp. 179-181.

³⁵ Elisabeth Zimmermann, *Die schlesische Kammer und die Reformation in Schlesien*, "Archiv für schlesische Kirchengeschichte", 14 (1956), p. 145.

in the modern sense. The king also began to commission various political missions within Silesia to the presidents. Even during the attempts to choose Kaspar von Logau as the Bishop of Wrocław in 1562, the king ordered the president and the councillors of the Camera to represent the will of the king when contacting the canons, and at the choice of his successor – Martin Gerstmann – in 1574, the president of the Camera formally entered into the electoral commissariat sent for the election and appointed by the king. At the elections of the next bishops, Andreas Jerin in 1585 and Paul Albert, who stood for election twice (in 1596 and 1599), the successive presidents of the Camera – Seyfried von Promnitz in 1598 and Siegmund von Zedlitz since 1599 – and baron George von Oppersdorf, the governor of the Duchy of Opole-Racibórz, were the main people from Silesia among the king's envoys sent to the Wrocław chapter to present the royal candidate. Especially during the elections of Albert, they fully assumed the role of presenting the royal candidate to the canons gathered for the elections from the Silesian dukes who had been burdened with this task before, Charles II of Oleśnica and Joachim Frederick of Brzeg-Legnica. The dukes refused then to act on behalf of the king, assuming the elections to have been a farce prepared by the victor himself and his party at the royal court. An important element of renouncing this mission by the dukes was also the submission of the relevant chairmanship of the royal commission into the hands of Christoph Popel von Lobkowitz, an *Oberlandhofmeister* of Bohemia. The dukes did not want to work under his charge, the more so since Bohemian politicians propagated the opinion that the king and the Bohemian estates, as the main estates of the kingdom, not only had the right to appoint any candidate, but even possessed the right to nominate the bishop of Wrocław³⁶. None of these circumstances, however, prevented the Silesian heads of the Camera from conscientiously executing the assigned task.

Thus, the Silesian higher nobility represented the potential for social and political integration within the monarchy. The obstacles in its development comprised, however, the absence of formal legal regulation of their position in Silesia, and also the fact that it was not guaranteed within the monarchy, which affects the relevance of the aforementioned favourable attitude towards integration. Members of these groups must have been aware that conditions in the 16th and early 17th centuries meant that only the stable existence of the Silesian region as a separate segment of the institutional and political system under the monarchy would ensure the maintenance of a favourable system of regulation of the important estate-royal

³⁶ Hubert Jedin, *Die Krone Böhmen und die Breslauer Bischofswahlen 1468-1732*, [in:] *Kirche des Glaubens Kirche der Geschichte*, Freiburg 1966, pp. 427-428.

offices, as well as official positions in the royal institutions in Silesia. In the event of the implementation of centralizing policy towards Silesia, they would be threatened by competition from the Bohemian lords to the same extent as the dukes were. In the period of actively pursuing integration plans based on the central offices of the Bohemian monarchy, Ferdinand sought, for instance, to appoint the members of the Bohemian estates to the offices of the governors of the hereditary duchies. A record suggesting that the office of the governor of the Duchy of Głogów may be held only by the Bohemian lords can be found, for example, in a document issued by Ferdinand in 1544³⁷. If these individual events, each time evoking fierce protests from the estates of a given royal duchy, had been established, they could have marginalized the meaning of the members of the groups of Silesian higher nobility, and could have even led to their taking a more inferior position in the competition for offices and titles. In this context it is worth recalling that neither the Order of Estate of the Lords of 1501, nor the alleged *King John's Document* of 1341, which determined the social order of the highest groups and thus affected the determination of their rights to hold important offices in the monarchy, took into account the members of Silesian higher nobility (with the exception of one Silesian family von Dohna, which was included in the Order of Estate of the Lords). In events which tested their loyalty to the king and the monarchy in opposition to their affiliation with a socio-legal Silesian body, such as the first confederation of 1609 and, in particular, the second confederation of 1619, most of them were neutral or sided with the revolt, as did the Rechenberg or Schönaich families³⁸. For this reason, until the Thirty Years' War their attitude had been a combination of pro-king and at the same time pro-regional tendencies, while simultaneously having a strong desire for affiliation of their social status with that of the Bohemian and Moravian lords.

The complexity of the conditions constituting further features of the social specificity of Silesia lay in the formation of the next Silesian estate, the ordinary Silesian nobility. An important factor influencing the integrity of Silesian nobility was the diversity of their political rights, expressed in the right for representation in the estate bodies in Silesia. Participation in the Diet of Silesia and in the Supreme Ducal Tribunal, the tribunal assembly, was restricted to the representatives of the nobility from hereditary duchies. The vassal duchies, including all the estates and the nobility, were, in all areas in the forums common for the whole Silesia, represented only by the duke. Thus only a part of the nobility, derived from hereditary

³⁷ M. Ptak, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa głogowskiego*, p. 49.

³⁸ Jarosław Kuczer, *Arystokracja z przywileju. Czynniki determinujące rozwój śląskiego Herrenstandu w okresie dominacji cesarskiej 1600-1740*, [in:] *Szlachta europejska w strukturach lokalnych XVI–XVII wieku*, ed. Małgorzata Konopnicka-Szatarska, Zielona Góra 2010, pp. 124-126.

duchies, was a political co-decision-maker on matters concerning Silesia as a whole and took part in the dualist rule alongside the royal power in the region. Asserting this feature, some researchers advocate the division of the Silesian nobility into two estates: firstly, given the legal capacity of the nobility of a given duchy to participate in Silesia-wide authorities, their community could be regarded as a political noble estate, in contrast to the nobility who had no such access and who can only be described in a Silesian perspective as a social estate³⁹. The specificity was therefore the lack of full identity between the social and political status of the Silesian nobility. Trying to evaluate this feature of the Silesian nobility in terms of regional stability, first and foremost it can be stated that this internal division factor, preventing part of the nobility from being able to deal with Silesia-wide matters, much weakened their interest in the smooth functioning of Silesia-wide central authorities. An additional complication in this distinction, at the same time increasing the instability factor of the rights of this group in the political system of Silesia, was caused by the fact that the nobility of a given duchy was validated to send their representatives when the duchy was transformed from vassal to hereditary, or was deprived of this right when the opposite case occurred. In respect to such duchies as Opole-Racibórz, Krnov and Żagań, the change of their qualification occurred several times in the modern period, as a result of which the nobility of those duchies gained or lost their political capacity to participate in the central organs of power in Silesia. This was a factor that destabilized regional bonds, hampering the awareness of forming an all-Silesian estate among the nobility, as well as their full identification with the fate of the entire region. Disintegrating effects of the various socio-political positions of the Silesian nobility in the social sphere were revealed in the efforts of the estates from hereditary duchies to acquire the status of a Bohemian estate and belonging to the Bohemian estate assembly, which took place in the 16th century. These operations culminated in a declarative joining of the estates of Świdnica-Jawor to the first Bohemian Revolt in 1546-1547, despite the fact that the political estates of Silesia remained neutral at that time.

The above statements have not yet fully reflected the status of the nobility in Silesia. This group was subjected to yet further division. Silesia as a whole came to be represented by Silesia-wide offices and institutions in the modern period, and its basic constitution and political system meant that it consisted of a limited number of political and territorial units, duchies and free states. Within those realms, organized in a given duchy or a free state individually in separate territorial corporations, the presence of the nobility was, in legal terms, based on the land owned on the

³⁹ K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, p. 109.

knightly law. Therefore, the Silesian nobility as a social estate also failed to create an all-Silesian entity. Each nobleman was a member of a specific noble community of a duchy or a free state country. From a legal perspective, this estate must therefore be referred to in the plural form: it was created from a total of noble estates of each of the Silesian dominions separately. The nobility were divided by the borders within Silesia into several noble communities. However, this did not result in the separation of the nobility within individual dominions. For a nobleman from another duchy, access to the group of nobility in a given duchy remained open, provided, however, that he became a member of the corporation, that is that he acquired the land on the knightly law in a given duchy. Nonetheless, acquiring *Indygenat* and its specific complementary form, *Inkolat*, in Silesia had no meaning in a region-wide sense.

Internal divisions of the Silesian nobility did not end, however, with their division into legal and social organisms determined by the boundaries of duchies and free-state countries. A prerequisite for the creation of a community by the nobility of the duchy was in fact the creation of even smaller communities, corporations at the level of districts (*weichbild*); the division of duchies into these basic units of internal division meant that what was important for the legal identity of a given Silesian nobleman and for his participation in the circles of power was not only the fact that he possessed land in the duchy, but that he owned it in its particular district. This was the source of the legal and political affiliation of a nobleman, and within its framework the nobility realized the first stage of their self-government through self-educated estate district offices, which were held by their representatives. The nobility of a district often had a separate right-privilege, which formed their partial autonomy from the superior state bodies within their own duchy. To put it clearly, the Silesian nobility can be considered a collection of about 70 district corporations⁴⁰, and a corporation within the duchy was, in turn, their highest level of social organization. Only a proportion of the noble communities, as mentioned above, was then reflected in the organizational and institutional all-Silesian bodies. The nobility in Silesia was, therefore, a community of small corporations. This hampered the processes of regional and social cohesion and disturbed the formation of the identity of the communities living there with Silesia as a homogeneous socio-political organism. At the same time, however, for this reason the Silesian group of nobility became a difficult social area to be managed from the centre of power, because it was difficult to introduce uniform top-down regulations in relation to such legally-varied noble communities.

⁴⁰ M. Ptak, *Zur politischen Bedeutung*, p. 325.

Another important factor was the fact that the nobility in Silesia, in comparison to other Bohemian countries, was quite numerous and at the same time controlled relatively small landed properties. Its number is estimated to range from 1,800 to 2,000⁴¹. Being, therefore, numerous and possessing a small income, the Silesian nobility showed rather conservative tendencies regarding its socio-political status, mainly focusing on maintaining their position in local structures. They rarely sought promotion outside their duchy or Silesia, and when they did it tended to be only the wealthier or especially gifted members who displayed such aspirations, because the noble families were usually unable to finance the conditions of such advancement.

These features characterizing the Silesian nobility determined the fact that as a group they mostly showed pro-regional, and even pro-local, tendencies. This statement, however, does not characterize this class in its entirety. Until recently, relying on the unverified statements of modern chroniclers, especially those of Frederick Lucae⁴², researchers repeated his claim that the Silesian nobility was not associated through marriage with Polish nobility or the nobility of other Bohemian countries⁴³, and even less with the nobility of the Reich⁴⁴. However, current research in this area – made so far only for Moravia – has confirmed an intensive integration process of the Silesian nobility in this country, both by frequent marriages, the acquisition of goods and permanent entry to the Moravian noble community by performing official functions, paying taxes, etc. (as mentioned above with regard to the noble lords), and yet these phenomena are related to the ordinary nobility too. Of 265 persons of noble origin compiled from Moravian tax lists until 1619, as many as 67 came from Silesia⁴⁵. It is difficult to predict how further research will change the current image of the separation of the Silesian nobility.

The burghers formed another extensive social group in Silesia. Given the number of towns in Silesia, which stood at about 140 at the threshold of the modern era, the degree of their participation in the economic value of the region as well as their population – some estimates say that urban dwellers accounted for approximately 23 per cent of the population of Silesia – the burghers had favourable conditions to form a strong social layer. Similar to the nobility, however, the borders of the Silesian dominions marked the lines of strong internal divisions within this social

⁴¹ P. Mat' a, *Der Adel Böhmens*, p. 230.

⁴² Friedrich Lucae, *Schlesiens curieuse Denkwürdigkeiten oder vollkommene Chronica von Ober- und Nieder-Schlesien: welche in Sieben Haupt-Theilen vorstellet Alle Fürstenthümer und Herrschafften, mit ihren Ober-Regenten*, Frankfurt am Mäyn 1689, p. 1778.

⁴³ N. Condrads, *Adelsgeschichte*, p. 352.

⁴⁴ Ulrich Schmilewski, *Die Beziehungen des schlesischen Adel zum Heiligen Römischen Reich im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft*, p. 217.

⁴⁵ T. Knoz, *Die Integration*, p. 273.

group. The participation of the towns in the Silesian Diet was even more complicated and limited than that experienced by the nobility. At the beginning of the era this right was held by all the towns that were located in the hereditary duchies of Wrocław, Głogów and Świdnica-Jawor and were at the same time district towns. Among the duchies which in the 16th century became hereditary, this right was granted only to the most important towns, or they did not receive it at all, as was the case with towns in the Duchies of Ziębice and Żagań. In addition, from the middle of the century there had been a regression in this area. Since 1552, the governor of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor, following the decision of the monarch, had forbidden smaller district towns to send representatives to the Diet of Silesia⁴⁶. Therefore, royal power was a factor that not only weakened the political importance of towns, but also narrowed their opportunities for social integration through cooperation on country's matters in central forums of Silesia. This had consequences in the deepening of social disintegration of this class.

At the same time, the division of the Silesian burghers into those entitled and not entitled to political representation in the Silesia-wide governing body influenced, as in the case of the nobility, the lack of identity between the burghers as a political estate and the social estate in Silesia. However, we cannot speak about the existence of one estate of the burghers in a social sense, because the status of urban residents was separately regulated by the rights assigned to every particular town individually. In the modern era, there was only one legal regulation for all towns and it concerned the subordination of the municipal court to the Prague appeals chamber in 1548. The legal status and the way a specific town functioned, both in terms of political participation in the estate assembly of a duchy or a free state, as well as the modification of the rules concerning its economic status, were defined within individual realms. These factors accounted for the diversity of the estate of the burghers and also influenced the strong pro-local orientation of the Silesian towns, which in the modern era was expressed in holding town assemblies almost exclusively within a given duchy. Most often, political rights in the form of conventions of ducal towns were, however, exercised only by the district towns, and then only they were subject to the right to participate in the estate assembly of the duchies: out of the 16 towns in the Duchy of Głogów only seven district towns cooperated in the conventions of towns⁴⁷. This lack of political unification became an obstacle in the creation of a sense of social community among the burghers even within individual Silesian dominions. What is more, Ferdinand's anti-urban policy

⁴⁶ K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie*, p. 234.

⁴⁷ M. Ptak, *Zgromadzenia stanowe księstwa głogowskiego*, p. 69.

was carried out not only at the level of the whole Silesia, but it was also directed against the towns from the hereditary duchies of the Bohemian Crown. It excluded not only the formation of a pro-royal political option of the Silesian towns, even within individual dominions, but – as the royal policy actually supported noble aspirations in economic competition with the towns – it even caused residents to abandon the exercising of their political rights within the estate assemblies of the duchies. As it was impossible for the towns of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor to effectively represent their interests against the political domination of the nobility, around the mid-16th century they relinquished appearing in the estate assembly of the duchy through the burghers and began to participate in it only because of the issues associated with their own landed properties⁴⁸.

Despite the burghers being the social group responsible for strengthening the individuality of individual Silesian dominions and shaping an important part of cultural landscape of Silesia before 1526, in the modern period they lost their status as a unifying force for the Silesian region. The only city that preserved its economic importance for the whole of Silesia and became a significant factor influencing the shape of Silesian policy remained Wrocław. Its government, whose representatives since around 1538 had ceased to participate in the curia of the towns of the Silesian Diet and joined the curia of the knights, had, until the Thirty Years' War, been an integral component of any all-Silesian estate assemblies or narrower departments of the Diet which made important decisions for the region. Their pro-regional political approach was determined by the attempts to remain a part of political life in Silesia and retain autonomy in relation to their community and control of their economic resources, and the efforts to protect these areas of socio-political life of the city from the interference of the monarch. Nevertheless, this policy was implemented by the community of Wrocław alone. The power of the city was not supported by the connections or cooperation with other Silesian towns. Wrocław did not represent the Silesian burghers but its own economic and political interests.

For the residents of the land of Silesia, who in the late 16th and early 17th centuries had not yet formed a society, and for whom the division into estates was merely a framework for the functioning of heterogeneous local communities, groups and social classes, a clear inter-estate factor which can be identified as having a social impact on the region was 'Lutheranization'⁴⁹. In the course of the 16th century it had become a factor contributing to the formation of social regional

⁴⁸ G. Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung*, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁹ Thomas Winkelbauer, *Sozialdisziplinierung und Konfessionalisierung durch Grundherren in den österreichischen und böhmischen Länder im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, 'Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung', 19 (1992), No. 3, pp. 317-339.

identity. The importance of this process had also very strong social connotations. Decentralized Lutheran confessionalization – whose main tool turned out to be police orders⁵⁰ issued by the Diet and by all-Silesian estate assemblies of the duchies, orders issued by the country courts at the level of individual goods, the so-called *Dreidinge*, and highly-developed Protestant church teaching and secondary education on an intellectual level, had led to the Silesian social system and its cultural values being strongly associated with the Lutheran Protestantism and regional political programme of the estates.

⁵⁰ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, *passim*.

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Die Region Schlesien (1618-1740). Die sozialen Gruppierungen und ihre Bedeutung für die Identität des Landes

Abstract:

The social groups of Silesian society in the 17th century included higher nobility (dukes, estate lords, foremen) and lower nobility, to which, due to ennoblements ascended many of the townspeople. Among the townsfolk in Silesian cities were such groups as merchants, guild craftsmen and people with higher education. They had civic rights. Most of city-dwellers did not have civic rights, they were the daily wage labourers, guild-less craftsmen, farmhands and servants. Village-dwelling population was divided into peasant classes, the majority of which were the lower peasants, so-called gardeners, who owned little land and livestock and in order to assure their survival needed to seek additional employ (as village craftsmen, workers on farms or estates). A place in the hierarchy was assured not by an initial economic capital, but rather by symbolic capital. The group that influenced Silesian regional identity the most were educated townspeople, whose roots were in humanism.

Keywords:

symbolic capital, Silesian estates, social groups, humanism, identity, power and authority, status symbol

Die Zuordnung sozialer Gruppen in der Frühen Neuzeit wurde in Schlesien durch mehrere Faktoren bestimmt: Einmal durch die Ständeordnung, dann durch die ökonomisch-soziale Position bzw. das symbolische Kapital, ferner durch die Konfessionszugehörigkeit, nicht weniger auch durch die Zugehörigkeit zu einem bestimmten Geschlecht (Gender-Aspekt). Nur am Rande spielte die ethnische Herkunft eine Rolle. Bei der Differenzierung nach den genannten Faktoren können sich Überschneidungen ergeben.

Die ständische Zuordnung war nicht nur von politischer, sondern in hohem Maße auch von gesellschaftlicher Bedeutung, wie die für jeden Stand vorgeschriebene Kleiderordnung zeigt¹. Entsprechend der Kategorisierung von Max Weber war die Standesgesellschaft des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts weniger durch ihre „Marktlage“, das bedeutet ihre Rolle auf dem Güter- und Arbeitsmarkt definiert, als

¹ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, S. 45, 592; zur Ständeforschung in Schlesien: Joachim Bahlcke, *Ständeforschung*, [in:] *Historische Schlesiensforschung*, S. 207-234.

durch die „Stellung“ der in der Hierarchie um Ehre und Prestige bestimmten Gemeinschaft von Menschen. Diese „symbolische Ordnung“ zeigt sich in „Ehrenvorzügen“, die durch Privilegien und Standesordnungen definiert sind. Die Bedeutung des einzelnen Standes ist also weniger durch sein „Haben“ als durch sein „Sein“ bestimmt, das aus dem Haben nicht direkt ableitbar ist. Es kommt also darauf an, dieses „Sein“ durch Sprache, Bildung und Kultur hervorzuheben, um sich von den anderen Ständen bzw. von den Gruppen der einzelnen Stände zu unterscheiden. Dieses „symbolische Kapital“ der Ehre gilt es zu wahren, sei es durch geschlossene Heiratskreise, Ehrerbietung bzw. symbolische Riten. Wichtig ist die Distanz zu den anderen Ständen, die sich in der Kultur (Bauten, Dichtung) und in der Rangordnung bei öffentlichen Anlässen ausdrückt. Herrschaft rekrutiert aus der durch Privilegien abgesicherten Rangstellung in der Ständegesellschaft aber auch durch Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse, die ökonomisch bedingt sind. Die ständische Ehrauffassung bedeutet allerdings keineswegs einen Verzicht auf ökonomische Vorteile, die zumindest den Status und den jeweiligen gesellschaftlichen Rang sichern müssen. Dem dienen auch die Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse, in die die niederen Stände und Gruppen gezwungen werden. Die einzelnen Stände unterteilen sich – wiederum – in mehrere Gruppen. Von Bedeutung für die Zuordnung sind also das soziale Kapital, der sozioökonomische Status sowie die Partizipation an der Machtausübung, die weitgehend nur den oberen Ständen vorbehalten war².

Den obersten Stand bildete in Schlesien³ der Fürstenadel, der als Lehensträger der böhmischen Krone mit dem König die Herrschaft im Lande ausübte. Zu diesem Stand zählen die Territorialherren, der Breslauer Bischof sowie die Standesherren. Bedingt sind hier die Landeshauptleute der Erbfürstentümer zuzurechnen, die zwar nicht qua Geburt, aber im Auftrag des Königs die Herrschaft ausübten. Als führender

² Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*, Tübingen 1972, S. 257-359; Pierre Bourdieu, *Klassenstellung und Klassenlage*, [in:] *Zur Soziologie der symbolischen Formen*, Frankfurt am Main 1974, S. 42-74; Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Neuwied und Berlin 1969, S. 19-23; Lothar Gall, *Von der ständischen zur bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, München 2012, S. 3-11, 54-61; Dieter Saalfeld, *Die ständische Gliederung der Gesellschaft Deutschlands im Zeitalter des Absolutismus. Ein Quantifizierungsversuch*, 'Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte', 67 (1980), S. 457-483.

³ Zur Geschichte Schlesiens im 17. und beginnenden 18. Jahrhundert: *Geschichte Schlesiens*, Bd. 2: *Die Habsburger Zeit*, S. 48-99; Norbert Conrads, *Zwischen Barock und Aufklärung (1618-1740). Die Konfessionalisierung des Landes* [in:] *Deutsche Geschichte*, S. 258-344; *idem*, *Książęta, pasim*; Joachim Bahlcke, *Die Geschichte der schlesischen Territorien von den Anfängen bis zum Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, [in:] *idem*, *Schlesien und die Schlesier*, München 1996 (=Studienbuchreihe der Stiftung Ostdeutscher Kulturrat, Bd. 7), S. 46-73; *idem*, *Śląsk i Ślązacy*; Gabriela Waś, *Dzieje Śląska*, S. 160-186; Arno Herzig, *Schlesien. Das Land und seine Geschichte in Bildern, Texten und Dokumenten*, Hamburg 2008, S. 70-100; *idem*, Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Małgorzata Ruchniewicz, *Śląsk i jego dzieje*, Wrocław 2012, S. 74-105.

Stand bestimmte diese Gruppe zusammen mit den Vertretern der Stadt Breslau auf dem Fürstentag die Politik des gesamten Landes mit, wenn auch im Verlauf des Dreißigjährigen Krieges seine Machtbefugnisse eingeschränkt wurden. In ihren Territorien mussten die Fürsten die Machtausübung mit den jeweiligen territorialen Landständen teilen. Im Gegensatz zum 16. Jahrhundert kamen im 17. Jahrhundert aus dem hohen Reichsadels in Schlesien als Territorialherren nur noch solche Familien infrage, die das Vertrauen der Habsburger besaßen. Um 1740 stammten nach dem Aussterben der Piasten (1675) und der Podiebrad (1647) alle noch verbliebenen Mediatherren aus dem reichsfürstlichen Adel. Während das letzte von Piasten regierte Fürstenhaus Liegnitz-Wohlau-Brieg als Erbfürstentum an die Krone fiel, blieb das Fürstentum Oels als Mediätfürstentum erhalten. Die Erbtöchter Elisabeth Maria (1685–1686) heiratete den Spross einer Württemberger Seitenlinie Silvius Friedrich (1622–1664), der vom Kaiser als böhmischer König 1649 mit dem Fürstentum belehnt wurde⁴.

Der fürstliche Adel blieb in seinen Heiratskreisen geschlossen, wobei die Piasten wie auch die Podiebrad Angehörige des hohen Reichsadels bevorzugten. Eine Ausnahme bildete hier 1620 die Eheschließung des Standes- und Freiherrn Hans Ulrich von Schaffgotsch (1595-1635) mit der Herzogstochter Barbara Agnes von Liegnitz-Brieg (1591-1631), was nach dem Tod der letzten Piastin (1708) der Familie Schaffgotsch die Ehrenrechte fürstlicher Familien und mit dem Amt des Oberamtsdirektors quasi das Amt des Oberlandeshauptmanns einbrachte. Das Amt des Oberlandeshauptmanns, das oberste Amt im Land, war im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert dem Fürstenadel vorbehalten. Infolge der 'Verneueren Landesordnung' für die böhmischen Lande von 1627 wurden die schlesischen Fürsten zum böhmischen Herrenstand gerechnet⁵.

⁴ Werner Conze, *Adel, Aristokratie*, [in:] *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Bd. 1, hrsg. von Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhard Koselleck, Stuttgart 1972, S. 1-48; N. Condrads, *Adelsgeschichte*, S. 347-382; *idem*, *Die schlesische Ständeversammlung*, S. 335-364; *idem*, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne. Zur politischen und geistigen Kultur eines habsburgischen Landes*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 2009 (=Neue Forschungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, Bd. 16), S. 314-344, 344-358; *Schlesiens Landesvertretung und Landeshaushalt von ihren Anfängen bis zur neuesten Zeit*, Bd. 1-3, Bearb. von Karl Berthold, Troppau 1909; *Stan i potrzeby śląskoznawczych badań humanistycznych*, hrsg. von Kazimierz Bobowski, Ryszard Gładkiewicz, Wojciech Wrzesiński, Wrocław 1990; K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe, passim*; M. Ptak, *Zur politischen Bedeutung*, S. 321-336.

⁵ Eila Hassenpflug, *Die böhmische Adelsnation als Repräsentantin des Königreichs Böhmen von Inkrafttreten der Verneueren Landesordnung bis zum Regierungsantritt Maria Theresias (1627-1740)*, 'Bohemia. Jahrbuch des Collegium Carolinum', 15 (1974), S. 71-90; Maximilian Eiden, *Zum Selbstverständnis der Schaffgotsch als Nachkommen der polnischen Könige und schlesischen Landesfürsten (17.-19. Jh.)*, [in:] *Das Haus Schaffgotsch*, S. 141-175.

Eine eigene Gruppe bildeten die Standesherrn mit ihren freien Standesherrschaften. „Dieses waren mit landesherrlichen Rechten ausgestattete Territorien im Besitz nichtfürstlicher Familien“. Sie zählten ebenfalls zur schlesischen Magnatengruppe. Die Vertreter dieser Gruppe entstammten weitgehend altschlesischen Adelsfamilien. Mit den fürstlichen Magnatsherren bildeten sie bis 1740 die Gruppe des schlesischen Herrenstandes⁶. Auch die Landeshauptleute, die im Auftrag des Königs die Herrschaft in den Erbfürstentümern ausübten, entstammten den alten schlesischen Adelsfamilien bzw. nach 1620 dem neuen aus den habsburgischen Landen zugewanderten Adel, der den Habsburgern loyal ergeben war⁷.

Wie für den fürstlichen Adel bildete v.a. für den Freiherren- und Ritterstand der Sieg zugunsten der Habsburger 1620 am Weißen Berg bei Prag eine entscheidende Zäsur. Habsburg setzte nach der Revolution von 1618 auf entschiedene Loyalität des schlesischen Adels. Dies geschah entweder durch Austausch der alten Adelselite so in der Grafschaft Glatz oder durch Neubelehnung mit Vertretern des Adels aus den österreichischen Kronlanden⁸. Auch änderte sich das Profil dieser Gruppe durch Nobilitierung von verdienten Bürgerlichen oder aber durch Standeserhebungen. Gab es nach dem Historiker und Oberfiskal Jakob Schickfuß bis 1620 keine Grafen in Schlesien, sondern nur fürstliche, freiherrliche und ritterschaftliche Familien, so nennt Johannes Sinapius (1667–1725) in seinen *Schlesische[n] Curiositäten* von 1720/28 bereits 136 gräfliche Familien, 228 freiherrliche und einige hundert sonst adlige Familien. Insgesamt lag die Zahl dieser Gruppe wohl bei weit über 1.000 Familien⁹. Nicht alle von ihnen verfügten über eine Grund- oder Guts-herrschaft. Einflussreiche und einträgliche Positionen bot für diese Gruppe der Hof-, Staats- und Militärdienst. Die Landesordnungen schützten die Rechte dieser Familien, so durch das Ehegüterrecht. Dieses regelte das Besitzrecht der Frauen so im Hinblick auf den eingebrachten Landbesitz wie auch die Morgengabe oder aber

⁶ Hugo Weczerka, *Geschichtliche Einführung*, [in:] *Schlesien (Handbuch der historischen Stätten)*, hrsg. von *idem*, Stuttgart 1977, S. XVI-XCIII.

⁷ Hermann Grotefend, *Die Landeshauptleute der Fürstentümer Schweidnitz und Jauer*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens', 12 (1874), S. 45-63.

⁸ N. Conrads, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, S. 315, 316; Arno Herzig, *Reformatorsche Bewegungen und Konfessionalisierung. Die habsburgische Rekatholisierungspolitik in der Grafschaft Glatz*, Hamburg 1996 (=Hamburger Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte Mittel- und Osteuropas, Bd. 1), S. 112-120. Die Grafschaft Glatz gehörte zwar erst offiziell seit 1742 zu Schlesien, war aber seit der Reformation stark auf Schlesien ausgerichtet. Schon bei der Erhebung des Landes zur böhmischen Grafschaft unter dem böhmischen König Georg von Podiebrad waren dessen Söhne durch Kaiser Friedrich III. zur Reichsfürsten, Grafen von Glatz und Herzögen von Münsterberg ernannt worden. Arno Herzig, Małgorzata Ruchniewicz, *Geschichte des Glatzer Landes*, Hamburg 2006, S. 57, 59 (polnische Ausgabe: Arno Herzig, Małgorzata Ruchniewicz, *Dzieje Ziemi Kłodzkiej*, Wrocław 2006). In den folgenden Ausführungen wird deshalb auch auf diese Region Bezug genommen.

⁹ N. Conrads, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, S. 319-321.

das Erbrecht der Töchter. So hob die Landesordnung des Fürstentums Breslau 1681 die „differentia sexus“ (Unterscheidung der Geschlechter) auf, sodass nun Söhne und Töchter gleich erbberechtigt waren. Eine besondere Form adligen Erbrechts bildeten die sogenannten Fideikomnisse. Hierbei durfte im Erbfall der Besitz nicht aufgeteilt werden, sondern musste an den Ältesten weitergegeben werden. Dies schützte den Adelsbesitz vor Zerstückelung¹⁰.

Gegenüber den anderen sozialen Gruppen, v.a. den Bauern, war der grundbesitzende Adel eindeutig im Vorteil. Trotz der Verluste im Dreißigjährigen Krieg gelang es ihm durch das sogenannte Bauernlegen sein Besitzareal zugunsten seiner Vorwerke abzurunden. Durch die Einführung der Gutswirtschaft wurde der bis dahin freie Bauer zu einem „schollengebundenen Untertan“ herabgestuft und damit persönlich unfrei. Dadurch steigerten sich die Einkünfte des grundbesitzenden Adels, zumal die Bauern auch zu Spanndiensten verpflichtet waren. Außerdem hatte sich der Adel weitgehend das Nutzungsrecht am dörflichen Gemeingut, der Allmende (Wald, Auen, Gewässer) gesichert, sodass den Bauern nur noch das Recht verblieb, ihre Schaf- und Viehherden durch diese Areale hindurchzutreiben. Außerdem wurden die wichtigsten Justizstellen fast ausschließlich mit Adligen besetzt, die somit die Herrschaft ihrer Gruppe sicherten. In den Ständeversammlungen der einzelnen Fürstentümer konnten die Adligen die entsprechenden Landesverordnungen zu ihren Gunsten beeinflussen. Zu dem adligen Grund- bzw. Gutsbesitz gehörte das Patronatsrecht über die Dorfkirchen, sodass der Adel auf dem Lande weitgehend durch die Bestellung der Pfarrer das geistliche Leben mit bestimmte, wobei die mangelhafte Entwicklung des dörflichen Schulwesens auf seine Kosten ging. Im geistlichen Bereich besetzte der Adel zudem weitgehend die einträglichen Dom- und Stiftspräbenden. Der grundbesitzende Adel profitierte zudem von der sich entwickelnden Textilindustrie. Zu den Abgabepflichten der Erbuntertänigen zählte vielfach die Abgabe des selbstgesponnenen Garns bzw. der gewebten Leinwand. Auch als sich die Gewerbeproduktion von der bäuerlichen Wirtschaft trennte, verblieb dem Adligen der sogenannte Weberzins von den nicht mehr zur Hofwirtschaft gehörenden Heimwebern¹¹.

¹⁰ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, S. 74-76; A. Herzig, M. Ruchniewicz, *Geschichte*, S. 149, S. 151; Johannes Kaufmann, *Die Erhaltung der Schaffgotschischen Stammgüter durch Fideikomnisse*, Warmbrunn 1925 (=Hausgeschichte und Diplomentarium der Reichs-Semperfreien und Grafen Schaffgotsch, Bd. 2, Tl. 2).

¹¹ Felix Rachfahl, *Zur Geschichte der Grundherrschaft in Schlesien*, 'Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Germanistische Abteilung', 16 (1885), S. 108-199; M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, S. 82-84, 96; Hermann Aubin, *Die Wirtschaft im Mittelalter*, [in:] *idem, Geschichte Schlesiens*, Breslau 1938, S. 100-132, bsd. S. 108, S. 112-114, 124.

Für die Vorteile, die der Adel durch seine Geburt und Privilegien besaß, erbrachte er im Gegenzug auch Leistungen für das Land. Diese lagen in seinen Verdiensten um die Verwaltung, um den militärischen Schutz und die Kultur des Landes. Er prägte die Landeskultur durch den Bau zahlreicher Schlösser und auch Kirchen, durch Bibliotheken und Raritätenkabinette sowie durch sein Engagement für die Musik und Literatur¹². Allerdings waren es häufig nobilitierte Bürgerliche, die die Blüte der schlesischen Dichtung im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert bestimmten. Das symbolische Kapital behauptete der Adel durch seine Schlossbauten, die sich deutlich von den Stadtpalais des städtischen Patriziats oder aber den Bauernhöfen unterschieden. In den Kirchen genoss er hervorgehobene Adelslogen und Erbbergräbnisse. Ihm stand es zu, bis zu sechsspännige Kutschen zu fahren. Distanz wahrte er zum Bürgertum auch durch seine Kleidung¹³.

Weitaus differenzierter als der Adel stellt sich der Stand des Bürgertums mit seinen zahlreichen sozialen Gruppen dar, die vom städtischen Patriziat Breslaus, den reichen Kaufmannsfamilien Hirschbergs bis hin zu den einfachen Dienstboten und städtischen Unterschichten reichen. Im ständischen Sinn zählen zu dem Bürgertum nur die sozialen Gruppen, die das Bürgerrecht besaßen. Die darunter stehenden Gruppen hatten in den Städten nur den Status von Einwohnern, die nicht durch Privilegien begünstigt wurden und kaum über ein symbolisches Kapital verfügten.

¹² Walter Schmitz, *Neue Kulturgeschichte*, [in:] *Historische Schlesienforschung*, S. 449-476; N. Conrads, *Adelsgeschichte*, S. 370-372; *idem*, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne* S. 323-325; A. Herzig, M. Ruchniewicz, *Geschichte*, S. 171-173, 182-184; Jerzy Gorzelik, *Zwischen demonstrativo catholica und Selbstdarstellung. Künstlerische Stiftungen des katholischen Adels in Oberschlesien im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung*, [in:] *Adel*, Bd. 1, S. 101-114, bsd. S. 102-104; Arno Herzig, *Konfession und Heilsgewissheit. Schlesien und die Grafschaft Glatz in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Bielefeld 2002 (=Religion und Geschichte, Bd. 9), S. 120-136; Maciej Kulisz, *Zu Grabdenkmälern und Grabinschriften des protestantischen Adels in Niederschlesien des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts am Beispiel des Fürstentums Liegnitz*, [in:] *Adel*, Bd. 1, S. 115-134, bsd. S. 120; *Kulturgeschichte Schlesiens in der Frühen Neuzeit*, hrsg. von Klaus Garber, Bd. 1-2, Tübingen 2005; Klaus Garber, *Bücherhochburg des Ostens. Die alte Breslauer Bibliothekslandschaft, ihre Zerstörung im Zweiten Weltkrieg und ihre Rekonstruktion im polnischen Wrocław*, [in:] *Kulturgeschichte Schlesiens*, S. 559-654; *idem*, *Adelsbibliotheken in Schlesien – eine Annäherung*, [in:] *Adel*, Bd. 1, S. 479-478.

¹³ Jan Harasimowicz, *Kunstgeschichte*, [in:] *Historische Schlesienforschung*, S. 649-679; *idem*, *Dolny Śląsk*, Wrocław 2007 (=A to Polska własnie), S. 1908-1910; Artur Kwaśniewski, *Budownictwo dworskie na ziemi kłodzkiej w okresie renesansu 1550-1650*, Wrocław 2000; Rafał Eysymontt, *Stadt, Burg, Hof, Schloß. Wichtige urbanistische Phänomene im Hirschberger Tal unter habsburgischer Herrschaft*, [in:] *Dolina Zamków i Ogródów. Kotlina Jeleniogórska – wspólne dziedzictwo / Das Tal der Schlösser und Gärten. Das Hirschberger Tal in Schlesien – ein gemeinsames Kulturerbe*, hrsg. von Olgierd Czerner, Arno Herzig, Jelenia Góra 2001, S. 101-118; N. Conrads, *Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, S. 337-339; *idem*, *Der Aufstieg der Familie Troilo. Zum kulturellen Profil des katholischen Adels in Schlesien zwischen Späthumanismus und Gegenreformation*, [in:] *Zeitenwenden. Herrschaft, Selbstbehauptung und Integration zwischen Reformation und Liberalismus*, hrsg. von Jörg Deventer, Susanne Rau, Anne Conrad in Zusammenarbeit mit Sven Beckert, Burghart Schmidt, Rainer Wohlfeil, Münster 2002, S. 273-305.

An der Spitze in der bürgerlichen Standesordnung steht das Breslauer Patriziat, das eine adelsgleiche Stellung hatte¹⁴. Es besetzte den städtischen Magistrat und hatte bis 1636 die Landeshauptmannschaft des Fürstentums Breslau inne. Da die Stadt Breslau lutherisch bleiben durfte, gab es für die Breslauer Bürger nicht die konfessionellen Einschränkungen, die für andere protestantische Bürger anderer schlesischer Städte zutrafen. In seiner Herrschaft über die übrigen Bürger der Stadt Breslau, die sich in den vom Breslauer Rat erlassenen Landesordnungen ausdrückt, war der Magistrat, und damit das Patriziat, nur dem böhmischen König untertan. Mit den übrigen Bürgern der Stadt verband die „Herren“ der Kampf um die Konfessionsunabhängigkeit der Stadt, die immer wieder infrage gestellt wurde. Die Reduktion der Rechte des Breslauer Magistrats 1635/36 hatte zur Folge, dass sich das aus den alten Kaufmannsfamilien hervorgegangene Stadtpatriziat den neuen aus dem Land- und Beamtenadel hervorgegangenen Familien öffnete und mit diesen als „zweites Stadtpatriziat“ zu einer „ehrenfesten Schwägerschaft“ zusammenwuchs. Diese Gruppe bildete nun mit dem alten Patriziat, soweit es noch existierte, das neue Patriziat. Das „zweite Stadtpatriziat“ stellte nun weitgehend den Breslauer Rat. Es distanzierte sich von den übrigen Gruppen des Bürgertums, indem es in Karossen, von livrierten Bedienten begleitet, zum Rathaus fuhr. Die Ratsleute wie auch seit 1656 die Schöffen trugen in der Ratsstube ein Seitengewehr¹⁵.

Wie bereits im 16. Jahrhundert so prägte auch im 17. Jahrhundert das Patriziat die Kultur der Stadt mit, v.a. was die Literatur und Architektur betraf. Hier allerdings im Zusammenspiel mit der Gruppe der Angehörigen akademischer Berufe, die über ein hohes symbolisches Kapital verfügten, auch wenn sie ökonomisch nicht mit dem Patriziat mithalten konnten. Diese Gruppe bestand in den protestantischen Städten aus Vertretern der Pastorenschaft, der Gymnasialprofessoren, den Ärzten und Juristen. Sie prägten in ihren aus dem Humanismus herrührenden Gelehrtenzirkeln weitgehend das geistige Potenzial der Städte. Durch ihre Casualgedichte, Epitaphien,

¹⁴ *Deutsches Patriziat 1430-1740*, hrsg. von Helmut Rössler, Limburg 1968; Adolf Weiß, *Chronik der Stadt Breslau von der ältesten bis zur neuesten Zeit*, Breslau 1888, S. 986-1011.

¹⁵ Der Begriff „zweites Patriziat“ nach: Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *Gesellschaft und Religion in Münster 1535-1618* (=Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Stadt Münster, Bd. 13), Münster 1989, S. 20: „formation of a second urban patriciate“. Während in Breslau das „zweite Patriziat“ im 17. Jahrhundert weitgehend aus dem Landadel und Beamtenadel kam, rekrutierte es sich in Münster aus der reich gewordenen Kaufmannschaft. Desgleichen auch in Schweidnitz: Jörg Deventer, *Gegenreformation in Schlesien. Die habsburgische Rekatholisierungspolitik in Glogau und Schweidnitz 1526-1707*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 2003 (Neue Forschungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, Bd. 8), S. 80, 81 und in Konstanz: Wolfgang Zimmermann, *Rekatholisierung, Konfessionalisierung und Ratsregiment. Der Prozeß des politischen Wandels in der österreichischen Stadt Konstanz 1548-1637*, Sigmaringen 1994 (Konstanzer Geschichte und Rechtsquellen, Bd. 34), S. 77, 78; für Breslau liegt noch keine neuere Untersuchung zum Stadtpatriziat im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert vor: J. Harasimowicz, *Dolny Śląsk*, S. 119-144.

Inschriften und Leichenpredigten, zunächst in lateinischer, dann in deutscher Sprache bestimmten sie das literarische Feld. Auf diesem Boden gedieh die Dichtung eines Martin Opitz (1597-1639) und Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664), die Spitzenleistungen deutscher Dichtung im 17. Jahrhundert hervorbrachten. Das symbolische Kapital erhöhte der Kaiser durch Verleihung des Titels *poeta laureatus*. Für diese Gruppe war v.a. in Breslau die konfessionelle Zugehörigkeit ausschlaggebend. Im katholischen Bereich – so auch in den übrigen rekatholisierten Städten Schlesiens – prägten das geistige Profil eher die geistlichen Orden, allen voran die Jesuiten, die eine Konkurrenz zum protestantischen Bildungsbürgertum bildeten. In Breslau wird das in der Konkurrenz der Gymnasien deutlich, die mit ihren Theater-Aufführungen die bürgerliche Kulturszene beherrschten. Eine wichtige Gruppe des intellektuellen Bildungsbürgertums bildete die Breslauer Ärzteschaft, die über die Stadt hinaus im Reich anerkannt war. Wie die Ratsfamilien so trugen auch die Familien der Intellektuellen durch ihre Bibliotheken, Gartenanlagen, Raritätenkabinette und Bildsammlungen zum kulturellen Milieu bei¹⁶.

Für das zünftig bestimmte Bürgertum galt nach einem Rats-, „Vermerk“ von 1658 folgende Rangordnung: Kaufmannschaft, Reichkramer, Kürschner und Goldschmiede. Es folgten in deutlichem Abstand: die Kretschmer (Gastwirte), Tuchmacher, Fleischer, Mälzer, Rotgerber, Schuhmacher, Schneider, Bäcker und Parchner (Leinenhersteller). Die Distanz des Stadtpatriziats bzw. des Rats zu den übrigen Gruppen der Bürgerschaft wird im 17. Jahrhundert deutlich im Empfangsritus anlässlich der Leistung des Bürgereids bzw. der Bekanntgabe der Wahlen in der Kaufmannschaft bzw. den Zünften. Zuerst wurden die Kaufmannsältesten mit der Kaufmannschaft vorgelesen. Ihnen wurde der Bürgereid vorgelesen und sie ermahnt „in allem gegen Gott, Ihre Kaiserliche Majestät und den Rat [so] zu leben, wie freien Bürgern gebühret“. Es folgten dann separat zu derselben Zeremonie die anderen Bürgergruppen in der oben genannten Reihenfolge¹⁷. Es scheint, als habe das Patriziat im 17. Jahrhundert versucht, seinen Machtverlust durch eine Erhöhung

¹⁶ A. Weiß, *Chronik*, S. 994-996; K. Garber, *Bücherhochburg*, S. 562-564; Susanne Rau, *Geschichte und Konfession. Städtische Geschichtsschreibung und Erinnerungskultur im Zeitalter von Reformation und Konfessionalisierung in Bremen, Breslau, Hamburg und Köln*, Hamburg-München 2002 (=Hamburger Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte Mittel- und Osteuropas, Bd. 9), S. 272-274, 447-449; Jens Baumgarten, *Konfession, Bild und Macht. Visualisierung als katholisches Herrschafts- und Disziplinierungskonzept in Rom und im habsburgischen Schlesien (1560-1740)*, Hamburg-München 2004 (=Hamburger Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte Mittel- und Osteuropas, Bd. 11), S. 180-202; Oskar Pusch, *Die Breslauer Rats- und Stadtgeschlechter in der Zeit von 1241 bis 1741*, Bd. 1-5, Dortmund 1986-1991.

¹⁷ A. Weiß, *Chronik*, S. 989, 990; Julius Krebs, *Rat und Zünfte der Stadt Breslau in den schlimmsten Zeiten des 30jährigen Krieges*, Breslau 1912 (= Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte, Bd. 15).

seines sozialen Kapitals zu kompensieren. Die Zünfte – in Breslau Mittel oder Zechen genannt – waren ebenfalls privilegiert. Sie bestimmten die Produktion und waren in Breslau mit vier Mitgliedern, den sogenannten Bezechten, in den Rat eingebunden, der im beginnenden 18. Jahrhundert sonst nur aus Adligen bestand. Im Übrigen bildeten sie die Bürgerschaft der Stadt, die mit eigenen Ausschüssen die Ausgaben des Rats kontrollieren konnte. Als Bürgern und Zunftangehörigen war ihnen das Waffentragen erlaubt, zumal sie als Bürgerschützen zur Verteidigung der Stadt beitragen mussten. Dadurch wurde auch die Distanz zu den einfachen Bürgern deutlich. Da nach dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg in Breslau der Handel wieder blühte, versuchten die reichen Kaufleute, soweit sie nicht in den Adel aufgestiegen waren, ihren Reichtum (und damit auch ihre politischen Ansprüche) durch einen symbolischen Habitus zu dokumentieren, was auf Widerspruch der weitgehend adligen Ratsmitglieder stieß. So verbot der Rat 1727 den nichtadeligen Mitgliedern der Kaufmannschaft das Fahren in kostbaren Karossen und das Halten von goldbetressten Livreebedienten. Den bürgerstolzen Charakter hatte Breslau in der ausgehenden Habsburgerzeit weitgehend verloren, da sogar Mitglieder der Zünfte in den Adel aufzusteigen versuchten, was allerdings nur den Kaufleuten gelang, die dann ihr Bürgerrecht aufgeben und aus der Kaufmannschaft ausscheiden mussten¹⁸.

Zu den Zünften gehörten auch die Gesellen, die zwar der Gewalt der Zunftmeister unterstanden, aber in ihren Gesellschäften, die über die Stadt hinaus vernetzt waren, einen gewissen Grad von Unabhängigkeit in Anspruch nahmen. Dies führte öfter zu Konflikten mit der Meisterschaft. Von dem Zunft Handwerk deutlich getrennt, waren die unzünftigen Handwerker, die sogenannten Pfuscher, die weitgehend aus dem Landhandwerk kommend, sich in den Vorstädten niedergelassen hatten, aber nicht zu den Zünften zugelassen wurden. Meister wie Gesellen unternahmen mehrfach, unterstützt von der städtischen Polizei, Jagden auf die „Pfuscher“ und nahmen ihnen die Werkzeuge weg¹⁹.

Das Bürgertum der übrigen schlesischen Städte lag aufgrund der dortigen kleineren Einwohnerzahl in seiner Bedeutung weit hinter dem Breslauer Bürgertum zurück, obgleich es gesellschaftlich ähnlich strukturiert war. Das Patriziat dieser Städte entsprach von einigen Ausnahmen abgesehen der Bedeutung der Breslauer

¹⁸ A. Weiß, *Chronik*, S. 989, 990; Paul Jacob Marperger, *Schlesischer Kaufmann, oder ausführliche Beschreibung der Schlesischen Commerci und deren ietzigen Zustandes*, Breslau-Leipzig 1714; Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, *Handelsgeist und Arbeitsethos. Zur Diskussion um das Handelsverbot für den deutschen Adel vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, 'Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung', 15 (1988), S. 273-309, bsd. S. 274.

¹⁹ A. Weiß, *Chronik*, S. 993, 994; Andreas Griebinger, *Das symbolische Kapital der Ehre. Streikbewegungen und kollektives Bewußtsein deutscher Handwerker gesellen im 18. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt a.M.-Wien-Berlin 1981.

Kaufmannschaft. Die Stadtgesellschaft gliederte sich auch hier in Patriziat, Kaufmannschaft, Bürgertum, Intellektuelle sowie die unterbürgerlichen Gruppen: Dienstboten, Tagelöhner²⁰. Eine Ausnahme bildete in seiner sozialen wie ökonomischen Bedeutung die Kaufmannschaft von Hirschberg, die durch den profitablen Schleierhandel, der ab 1625 aufkam, zu großem Reichtum gelangte. Der Schleierhandel wurde 1630 durch König Ferdinand III. privilegiert. Die Schäden des Dreißigjährigen Krieges und die Einbußen durch Kontributionen überwand die Hirschberger Kaufmannschaft 1658 durch Gründung einer Sozietät, die im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert den gesamten schlesischen Leinen- und Schleierhandel in dieser Stadt konzentrierte. Der Reichtum einzelner Mitglieder war so groß, dass – obgleich nicht adlig – sie Rittergüter erwarben und damit auch über die dortigen Untertanen bestimmten. Dies trifft für den Kaufmann Christian Menzel zu, der die Erhebung in den Adelsstand durch Kaiser Karl VI. (Reg. als röm.-dt. Kaiser 1711-1740) ablehnte. Sein symbolisches Kapital erwarb und vermehrte er durch großzügige Stiftungen an die neu errichtete Gnadenkirche. Sie war durch die Zahlung großer Geldsummen über den schwedischen König Karl XII. (Reg. 1697-1718) in Folge der Altranstädter Konvention (1707) vor den Toren der Stadt errichtet worden. Durch die protestantische Geistlichkeit und die Lehrerschaft sowie die protestantischen Akademiker gab es auch in dieser Stadt eine protestantische Bürgerkultur. Von der politischen Partizipation blieb die protestantische Bürgerschaft Hirschbergs allerdings ausgeschlossen. Ihre Kultur dokumentierte diese Gruppe – so auch Menzel – in prunkvollen Grabmälern²¹.

Der Ausschluss der Protestanten von politischer Partizipation traf v.a. das Bürgertum in Schweidnitz. Hier rekrutierte sich die politische Führungsschicht im Rat und Schöffenkollegium zu zwei Dritteln aus dem städtischen Patriziat, dessen wirtschaftliche Macht auf Haus- und Landbesitz basierte. Auch diese Gruppe öffnete sich dem „zweiten Stadtpatriziat“, das begüterte Kaufleute, wohlhabenden Reichkramer und reiche Gewandschneider bildeten, die ebenfalls ratsfähig waren. Desgleichen besaßen Vertreter wohlhabender Zünfte wie die Tuchmacher, Fleischer und Bäcker Zugang zu den Rats- und Schöffenstellen. Als gleichrangig akzeptiert galten auch die Akademiker und Künstler der Stadt: Juristen, Ärzte, Lehrer an Gymnasien, Geistlichkeit, Maler und Goldschmiede. Seit 1629 blieben die protestantischen

²⁰ J. Harasimowicz, *Dolny Ślqsk*, S. 120-122; J. Deventer, *Gegenreformation*, S. 77-79.

²¹ Johann Daniel Hensel, *Historisch-Topographische Beschreibung der Stadt Hirschberg in Schlesien seit ihrem Ursprung bis auf das Jahr 1797*, Hirschberg 1797, S. 320-322: „Am 31. Dez. 1659 [wird] den Kaufleuten, wie allerwärts gewöhnlich war, der Vorgang oder Rang über die andern Zünfte oder Innungen zugestanden, besonders da sich auch einige Honoratiores in ihre Innung begeben hatten“. Otto Nafe, *Christian Mentzel*, [in:] *Schlesische Lebensbilder*, Bd. 3: *Schlesier des 17. bis 19. Jahrhunderts*, hrsg. von Friedrich Andreae, Breslau 1928, S. 161-166.

Bürger allerdings von der Stadtherrschaft ausgeschlossen. Doch besetzten nach wie vor die Vertreter des „zweiten Stadtpatriziats“ und der führenden Zünfte die Ämter im Rat- und Schöffenkollegium, freilich nur wenn sie zum Katholizismus konvertiert waren. Die Aussicht auf eine Karriere, aber auch die subtile Missionstätigkeit der Jesuiten sorgten für den konfessionellen Gesinnungswandel²². Dennoch blieben in Schweidnitz wie auch in Jauer und Glogau durch die im Westfälischen Frieden zugestandenen Friedenskirchen ein protestantisches Bürgertum erhalten, dessen geistliches und intellektuelles Profil sich in der Barockdichtung, v.a. im Kirchenlied, dokumentiert. Die protestantische Bürgerelite der protestantischen Fürstentümer in Breslau sowie den anderen Städten mit einer konfessionell gemischten Bürgerschaft studierte an ausländischen Universitäten und brachte „europäische Intellektualität“ nach Schlesien. Doch auch ihr blieb nichts anderes übrig, als zu konvertieren, wollte sie in Staatsämtern reüssieren²³.

Die kaiserliche Bestimmung, den Erwerb des Bürgerrechts und damit auch den Zugang zu den Zünften von der Zugehörigkeit zur katholischen Religion abhängig zu machen, grenzte die Entfaltungsmöglichkeiten des protestantischen Bürgertums stark ein, auch wenn diese Bestimmung nicht strikt durchgehalten werden konnte. Doch führte sie zur Abwanderung sowohl bürgerlicher wie nichtbürgerlicher Gruppen, v.a. aber zum Verlust der Elite. Die im Westfälischen Frieden (1648) durch den Artikel V zugestandene Fortexistenz des Protestantismus in Schlesien erfuhr im Zuge der habsburgischen Politik erhebliche Einschränkungen. So durch die Wegnahme der Kirchen, durch das Verbot protestantischer Gottesdienste und Kulthandlungen, durch die Ausweisung evangelischer Geistlicher und Lehrer sowie den Zwang am katholischen Kirchenleben teilzunehmen. Bedingt durch die habsburgische Kirchenpolitik wurden – von kleinen Inseln abgesehen – die ober-schlesischen Herzogtümer, das Neisser Bischofsland sowie die Grafschaft Glatz im Zuge des Barockkatholizismus rekatholisiert. In den übrigen schlesischen Territorien kam es zu einer gemischtkonfessionellen Bevölkerung²⁴.

Offensichtlich unterschiedlich wurde in den einzelnen gemischtkonfessionellen Städten der konfessionelle Vorbehalt bei der Erteilung des Bürgerrechts gehandhabt. Das 1629 eingeführte und 1669 noch einmal von Kaiser Leopold I. erlassene Verbot „fremde Lutherische zu einer bürgerlichen Nahrung, Handwerke oder Bürgerrechten“ in Glogau zuzulassen, wurde zwar vom Landeshauptmann Graf Bernhard von Herberstein (gest. 1665) bemängelt, doch von den lokalen Gewalten

²² J. Deventer, *Gegenreformation*, S. 79-81, 205.

²³ N. Conrads, *Zwischen Barock*, S. 306, 326.

²⁴ *Geschichte Schlesiens*, Bd. 2: *Die Habsburger Zeit*, S. 72, 76.

offensichtlich befolgt. Nach Einführung einer städtischen Zunftordnung 1699 mussten protestantische Goldschmiede, Maler und Bildhauer die Stadt verlassen, sofern sie nicht konvertierten. Ihr Einwand, dass sie mit ihrer Profession die Stadt in Flor gebracht hätten, verfiel nicht. 1701 verbot die durch Kaiser Leopold I. privilegierte Zunftordnung die zünftische Berufsausübung für Protestanten. Es blieb den Glogauer protestantischen Zunftangehörigen nur die Konversion oder die Migration in die benachbarten polnischen Migrantenstädte bzw. nach Breslau, Liegnitz und Schweidnitz. Für Schweidnitz und Jauer kann nicht nachgewiesen werden, dass die Zugehörigkeit zu den Zünften von der Zugehörigkeit zur katholischen Konfession abhängig gemacht wurde. In Jauer wuchs nach 1648 die Einwohnerzahl aufgrund des Zuzugs von Protestanten²⁵. Bis auf Breslau und Hirschberg sank im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert gegenüber dem 16. Jahrhundert die ökonomische Bedeutung des Bürgertums. Konkurrenz entstand dem städtischen Handel und Handwerk durch die privilegierten adligen Gutsfaktoreien. Wenn auch die Protestanten in den Erbfürstentümern weitgehend von Herrschaftsfunktionen ausgeschlossen blieben, – es verblieb ihnen weiterhin die Zugehörigkeit zu den Landständen – an den sozialen Gegebenheiten der Ständeordnung änderte sich trotz des konfessionellen Vorbehalts kaum etwas²⁶.

Das Gros der städtischen Einwohner bildeten nicht die Bürger mit Bürgerrecht, sondern die Einwohner ohne Bürgerrecht. Dies betraf die Mitglieder aller nichtzünftischen Berufe, v.a. aber die Dienstboten: Knechte, Mägde sowie die Tagelöhner und auch die unehrlichen Berufe. Die Einwohner der Städte ohne Bürgerrecht waren von allen Privilegien ausgeschlossen. Das Dienstverhältnis war weitgehend ökonomisch definiert, betraf aber auch das Privatleben der Abhängigen. Ihr soziales Kapital in der Gesellschaft war sehr gering. Die städtischen Gesindeordnungen regelten die Gesindetermine, Entlohnung, Verköstigung sowie das moralische Verhalten. Sie schrieben vor allem den Mägden vor, in den Häusern ihrer Herrschaft zu wohnen, da eigene angemietete Kammern Möglichkeiten zur Unzucht, aber auch für erträgliche Nebeneinnahmen wie Nähen oder Spinnen bieten konnten. Auch sollte durch das Verbot verhindert werden, dass die Mägde in ihren Kammern evtl. ihrer Dienstherrschaft entwendetes Gut aufbewahrt halten. Wenn es sich hier auch um normative Vorschriften handelt, so sagen die Vorgaben doch Entscheidendes über den Status

²⁵ J. Deventer, *Gegenreformation*, S. 308–311. In Hirschberg scheinen die Protestanten zu den Zünften und der Kaufmannschaft zugelassen worden zu sein, sie waren aber trotz ihrer wirtschaftlichen Bedeutung vom Rat ausgeschlossen. Am 18. Juni 1741 befahl das preußische königliche Kriegskommissariat in Breslau die Aufnahme von protestantischen Mitgliedern in den Hirschberger Rat: J.D. Hensel, *Historisch-Topographische Beschreibung*, S. 357, 642.

²⁶ J. Deventer, *Gegenreformation*, S. 295; A. Herzig, M. Ruchniewicz, *Geschichte*, S. 144, S. 147.

der Dienstboten aus: Sie standen völlig unter der Befehlsgewalt ihrer Dienstherrschaft, die auch das private Leben der Dienstboten fast gänzlich einschränkte. Zudem standen sie ständig unter Verdacht, ihre Dienstherrschaft zu betrügen. Hierbei waren vor allem die Frauen im Nachteil, während die männlichen Dienstboten wohl freier agieren durften²⁷.

Für die Tagelöhner galten die Vorschriften des betreffenden Herrn, der sie für (meist nur) einen Tag in Dienst nahm. Die Wohnungen dieser Gruppe befanden sich entweder in Keller- oder Dachräumen sowie auch in den Kasematten der Stadtbefestigungen. Bei Arbeitsunfähigkeit waren sie auf die kirchliche oder städtischen Armenfürsorge angewiesen, die streng darauf achtete, dass kein Arbeitsfähiger sich eine Unterstützung erschlich. Ein sozialer Aufstieg war für die unterbürgerlichen Schichten kaum gegeben. Es sei denn über eine Militärlaufbahn²⁸.

Das Gros der Bevölkerung in Schlesien bildete die Landbevölkerung, die trotz größerer Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse als dies für die städtische Bevölkerung zutraf, ebenfalls sozial stark differenziert war. Den Adel hier ausgenommen gliederte sich die Landbevölkerung abstuftend vom reichen Bauern, der mehr als über vier Gespanne verfügte, bis hin zu dem landlosen Tagelöhner, der auf die Arbeit auf den Höfen angewiesen war²⁹.

Grob gesehen galt für die bäuerliche Landbevölkerung folgende Verteilung: An der Spitze die Bauern mit einem umfassenden bis auskömmlichen Besitz. Dann die Gärtner (bzw. Chaluppner) mit einem schmalen Landbesitz und geringem Viehbestand, sodass sie auf zusätzliche Verdienstmöglichkeiten angewiesen waren, da ihr Land- und Viehbesitz nicht für ihre Subsistenz sowie ihr Abgaben an den Gutsherrn ausreichten. Ferner das Gesinde, das unter der Verfügungsgewalt des adligen Gutsherrn bzw. der wohlhabenden Bauern stand. Sein Verhältnis war ökonomisch definiert, sodass es zu den vorgegebenen Terminen den Dienst wechseln konnte. Die schmalen Verdienstmöglichkeiten konnten bei sparsamer Lebensführung den Erwerb einer Gärtnerstelle und damit einen kleinen sozialen Aufstieg ermöglichen. An unterster Stelle standen die besitzlosen Landarbeiter, die als sogenannte Inwohner oder Dreschgärtner auf den Lohn für ihre Arbeit auf den Höfen angewiesen waren.

²⁷ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, S. 137, 138.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, S. 137.

²⁹ H. Aubin, *Wirtschaft*, S. 111-113; A. Herzig, *Reformatorische Bewegungen*, S. 139-141; Roland Gehrke, *Besitztypen – Wirtschaftsformen – Einnahmequellen. Die ökonomischen Grundlagen des schlesischen Adels vom hochmittelalterlichen Landesausbau bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Bd. 2: *Repertorium: Forschungsergebnisse, Quellenkunde, Bibliographie*, München 2010, (=Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa, Bd. 37), S. 93-118.

Seit dem ausgehenden 16. Jahrhundert bemühten sich die adligen Grundbesitzer um eine Vermehrung und Intensivierung ihres Grundbesitzes. Das geschah durch die Errichtung sogenannter Vorwerke oder Domänen, für die zahlreiche Arbeitskräfte benötigt wurden. Zudem setzten die adligen Grundbesitzer die Erbuntertänigkeit durch, die nun auch die begüterten Bauern persönlich unfrei machte. Es galt die sogenannte Schollenpflicht. Der Bauer oder Gärtner durfte sich ohne Erlaubnis des Gutsherren nicht von seinem Hof oder der Gärtnerstelle entfernen, um einer anderen Tätigkeit nachzugehen oder aber sein Eigentum zu verkaufen. Zudem trachteten die adligen Grundbesitzer danach, Bauerngut ihren Vorwerken zuzuschlagen. Das eingezogene Bauerngut wurde weitgehend an Gärtner vergeben, blieb also als Eigentum des Adels. Betroffen waren von der adligen Intensivierungspolitik, die durch Landesordnungen begünstigt wurde, die sogenannten gespannfähigen Bauern, die weitgehend die Fuhrdienste für den adligen Grundbesitzer leisten mussten. So waren z.B. gemäß der Oelser Landordnung von 1617 die gespannfähigen Bauern außer für die Fuhrdienste auch für den Bau und die Erhaltung herrschaftlicher Gebäude, die Vorwerke, Schäfereien und Mühlen, zudem für die Heranschaffung von Holz, Ziegeln, Steinen, Mühlsteinen, Kalk, Sand sowie Zaunpfählen zuständig. Dabei galt als Grundlage für diese Pflichten die Größe des bäuerlichen Besitzes nach Hufen gemessen. Je mehr ein Bauer besaß, desto größer waren seine Dienstverpflichtungen. Dazu kamen weitere Verpflichtungen bei der Feldbestellung, Aussaat und Ernte sowie Abgaben des auf den Bauernhöfen produzierten Garns und Leinen. Die Bestimmungen waren für ganz Schlesien nicht einheitlich, sondern in den einzelnen Territorien verschieden. Die königlichen Erlasse schützten vor allem die Rechte des Adels und nicht die der Bauern. Die Forderung der Oelser Landordnung von 1617, die Untertanen nicht „nach Gebühr“ zu überlasten, hatte kaum verpflichtenden Charakter³⁰.

Gravierender waren die Bestimmungen, gegen „unbändige und notorie ungehorsame Untertanen“ – so in der Breslauer Landordnung von 1681 – vorzugehen. Dies richtete sich gegen den verzweifelten bäuerlichen Widerstand, der exzessive Formen annehmen konnte, wie der Widerstand der Bauern in Arnsdorf/Grafenort in der Grafschaft Glatz gegen die Unterwerfungsmaßnahmen des Grafen Johann Friedrich von Herberstein (1626–1701) von den 1650er bis in die 1680er Jahre zeigt. Dieser Konflikt kann exemplarisch die Situation und die Strategien der adligen Gutsbesitzer verdeutlichen. Die Gutsherrschaft des Grafen Johann Friedrich

³⁰ H. Aubin, *Wirtschaft*, S. 114; R. Gehrke, *Besitztypen*, S. 99-101; F. Rachfahl, *Zur Geschichte*, S. 175, 176, 209-211; M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, S. 89-91, 96; W. Bein, *Schlesien*, S. 151, 152.

von Herberstein erstreckte sich 1651 über ca. zehn Dörfer mit 128 Bauern, 80 Chalupnern und 91 Gärtnern. Die Proteste und Widerstände seiner Untertanen richteten sich gegen die überhöhten Robotverpflichtungen, die eine ordentliche Bewirtschaftung des eigenen Hofes stark beeinträchtigten. Zu einem ersten Höhepunkt in dieser Auseinandersetzung kam es 1660. Der Graf hatte gerade seine große und aufwendige Schlossanlage fertigstellen lassen, als zahlreiche seiner Untertanen von Haus und Hof flohen. Der Graf ließ die angeblichen Rädelsführer festsetzen. Die kaiserliche Regierung in Wien versuchte zu vermitteln und erließ im Jahr 1662 eine Robotordnung, die begrenzte Dienstzeiten festsetzte. Als wichtigste Bestimmung sah sie vor, dass jeder Bauer das ganze Jahr über jede Woche einen und einen halben Tag Robotdienste zu leisten hatte, und zwar mit so vielen Pferden, wie er zu seiner eigenen Wirtschaft bedurfte, auch wenn die reale Zahl der Pferde, die er besaß, darunter lag. Zum Schutze der Bauern wurde festgesetzt, dass diese Tage nicht auf bestimmte Wochen, sei es zur Ernte oder Bestellung der Felder, zusammengelegt werden durften, damit diese auch ihre Höfe „gehöriger Maßen bestellen können“. Um bei der Arbeit für die Herrschaft nicht zu bummeln, waren sie gehalten, diese „treuerweis“ zu verrichten, zu rechter Zeit aus- und einzuspannen und auf dem Acker wenigstens sechs Viertel Brachen zu ackern.

Weitere Bestimmungen regelten die Fuhrdienste, vor allem aber die Arbeitsleistung der Frauen und Kinder, die in den hohen Abgaben der während der Winterzeit gesponnenen und gewebten Textilien bestand. Zu Robotdiensten waren auch die Dorfhandwerker, „als da seiend Schuster, Schneider, Bäcker, Fleischhacker“ verpflichtet. Die Zeitfestsetzung in dieser kaiserlichen Regelung war jedoch eindeutig zu hoch, so dass sich Widerstand, Flucht und dementsprechend Gefangensetzung nach Art einer Sippenhaft fortsetzten, bis schließlich bei einer Zahl von fünfhundert Geflohenen über ein Drittel der Höfe leer stand. Die Frauen der Gefangenen versuchten, durch einen Bittgang zum Kaiser nach Wien die im Gefängnis einsitzenden Männer freizubekommen, wurden aber ebenfalls gefangengesetzt und ins Gefängnis gebracht. Einer der Inhaftierten beging sogar Selbstmord. Erst 1683 kam es zu einer Übereinkunft zwischen dem Grafen und seinen Untertanen, die den Konflikt fürs erste beilegte³¹.

³¹ M. Weber, *Die schlesischen Polizei- und Landesordnungen*, S. 88, 89; Maximilian Tschitschke, *Der Bauernaufstand in der Herrschaft Grafenort 1679/90*, 'Glatzer Heimatblätter', 17 (1931), S. 57-69; Józef Leszczyński, *Ruchy chłopskie na Pogórzu Sudeckim w drugiej połowie XVII wieku*, Wrocław 1961 (=Monografie Śląskie Ossolineum, Bd. 2); idem, *Selská povstání v Čechách a na Moravě v letech 1679-1680 a současná hnutí poddaných v knížectví Svidnicko-javorském a hrabství Kladském*, 'Slezsky Sbornik', (57) 1959, S. 313-319; A. Herzig, *Reformatörisehe Bewegungen*, S. 139-144. Im Gegensatz zur Adelforschung gibt es keine neueren Forschungen zu Aktionsformen der schlesischen Bauern im 17. und beginnenden 18. Jahrhundert. Siehe: Józef Andrzej Gierowski, *Die Forschungen*

Die Hoffnungen auf den Kaiser als für alle Untertanen zuständigen gerechten Fürsten wurde häufig enttäuscht, zumal Entlastungen der bäuerlichen Untertanen, wie sie 1717 und 1738 die Robotregelungen vorsahen, von den Grundherren vor Ort vielfach verfälscht wurden. Generell lässt sich festhalten, dass nach dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg die Belastungen durch Hand- und Spanndienste stiegen und das Bauernlegen weiterging. Trotz Bedenkens des Oberamtes 1724 gegen eine weitere Einziehung von Bauernstellen kam es zu keiner grundlegenden Änderung.

Hinzu kam die Belastung der Bauern durch die Steuern, die als Kontributionssteuern aufgebracht werden mussten. Dabei wusste sich der Adel seinen Vorteil zu verschaffen, wenn es um die Umlage der Steuerquote ging. Erschwert wurde das Leben der Landbevölkerung durch kriegerische Beutezüge, Seuchen und Hungersnöte. Als einzige Widerstandsform blieb den Bauern, wie die Grafenorter Ereignisse zeigen, die Flucht von ihren Höfen. Doch waren das eher Verzweigungsaktionen, da die Bauern damit ihre eigene Existenz ruinierten³².

Die unterbäuerlichen Schichten bildeten die Gärtner, die sich in manchen Regionen – wie in der Grafschaft Glatz – in die Gruppe der Chaluppner und der Gärtner aufgliederten. Im Gegensatz zu den Bauern verfügten die Gärtner nur über kleine Landareale, doch war das regional verschieden. Das Landareal der Gärtner reichte allenfalls für die Haltung von einigen Stück Vieh, die Ernteerträge deckten allerdings nicht die Subsistenz, sodass sie schon aus diesem Grund zur Arbeit auf den Gutshöfen gezwungen waren. Das kaiserliche Edikt vom 12. Januar 1662 für Grafenort sah vor, dass Chaluppner, Gärtner und Häusler „auf Befehl“ des Herren erscheinen mussten, sie also nicht über die Einteilung ihrer Arbeitszeit entscheiden konnten. Bei Verköstigung erhielten sie drei Kreuzer pro Tag, ohne Verköstigung das Doppelte. Das bedeutete, in 20 bzw. 10 Tagen verdienten sie gerade mal einen Gulden. Zudem mussten die Frauen sechs Stück Garn zu je vier Kreuzern herstellen und an die Herrschaft abführen. Ferner konnten sie – wie auch die Kinder – jederzeit zu Treiberdiensten herangezogen werden. Es bestand die Tendenz, die Robottage nur mit Verköstigung, nicht aber mit barem Geld zu vergüten. Auch das führte zu Protesten³³. So leisteten zehn Jahr lang die Gärtner und Häusler von Altwilmsdorf in

Józefs Leszczyńskis (1930–1975) zur neuzeitlichen Geschichte Schlesiens, [in:] *Silesiographia. Stand und Perspektiven der historischen Schlesienforschung. Festschrift für Norbert Conrads zum 60. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von Matthias Weber, Carsten Rabe, Würzburg 1998 (=Wissenschaftliche Schriften des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens, vol. 4), S. 157-163; Zbigniew Kwaśny, *Dorf und Landwirtschaft in den Forschungen von Stefan Inglot (1902-1994)*, [in:] *Silesiographia*, S. 165-169; Leszek Wiatrowski, *Stan i potrzeby badań nad dziejami wsi i rolnictwa na Śląsku od XVI do połowy XIX wieku*, Wrocław 1987 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 801, Historia 51), S. 5-16.

³² W. Bein, *Schlesien*, S. 151; A. Herzig, M. Ruchniewicz, *Geschichte/Dzieje*, S. 154/S. 156.

³³ A. Herzig, *Reformatorische Bewegungen*, S. 139; Kaiserliches Edikt, Pfarrarchiv Grafenort / Gorzanów, ohne Signatur.

der Grafschaft Glatz wegen der Heraufsetzung der unbezahlten Robottage Widerstand gegen ihren Gutsherren, den Glatzer Jesuitenorden³⁴. Die Gärtner versuchten vor allem durch Handwerksarbeit ihre Subsistenz zu sichern und sich deshalb der weniger erträglichen Hofarbeit zu entziehen. Sie stellten häufig die Dorfhandwerker und waren auch für künstlerische Berufe nicht ungeeignet. Weil die Gärtner die Hofarbeit umgehen wollten, verpflichteten die entsprechenden Edikte auch die Landhandwerker zu Hofarbeit. Die Gutsbesitzer richteten deshalb im Verlauf des 17. Jahrhunderts keine neuen Gärtnerstellen mehr ein, sondern versuchten ihre Arbeitskräfte aus der unteren Schicht der bäuerlichen Bevölkerung, den Häuslern und Dreschgärtnern zu rekrutieren³⁵. Häusler und Dreschgärtner bewohnten von der Herrschaft auf den Gütern erbaute Häuser und verfügten über ein minimales Landstück.

Wie aber wirkten sich die habsburgische Konfessionspolitik sowie die sozialen Gegebenheiten auf das Regionalbewusstsein der schlesischen Stände aus? In Summa hat sich die habsburgische Konfessionspolitik eher negativ als positiv auf die regionale Identität ausgewirkt.

Fragt man schlussfolgernd nach einem schlesischen Landesbewusstsein im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, so muss man feststellen, dass dieses bei dem Fürstenadel nur schwach entwickelt war³⁶. Da seine Vertreter weitgehend aus dem Reichsadel kamen, waren ihre Interessen eher dorthin gerichtet. Auf das Land bezogen waren sie weitgehend nur am Landessteuerrecht interessiert, das sie gegenüber Wien verteidigten.

Gab es also kein schlesisches Landesbewusstsein? Doch! Träger eines solchen war das Bildungsbürgertum, hier vor allem die Gruppe der Akademiker. Diese war in dem konfessionell unterschiedlich bestimmten Schlesien primär in der protestantischen Gruppe präsent. In der humanistischen Tradition verfassten die Autoren aus dieser Gruppe Landesbeschreibungen, die Schlesien trotz seiner politischen Vielfalt als Einheit betonten. Ihnen folgten hierin die Kartographen.

Somit ist eine schlesische Identität weniger durch die politischen Kräfte, vertreten durch die Stände des Landes, geprägt worden, sondern durch das Bildungsbürgertum, das im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert in Wort und Bild trotz der zahlreichen Einzelherzogtümer den *ducatus Silesiae* als Einheit darstellt und so seine Identität behauptet.

³⁴ *Idem, Die Jesuiten im feudalen Nexus. Der Aufstand der Ordensuntertanen in der Grafschaft Glatz im ausgehenden 17. Jahrhundert*, 'Prague Papers on History of International Relations' 3 (1999), H. 2, S. 41-62.

³⁵ H. Aubin, *Wirtschaft*, S. 125.

³⁶ J. Bahlcke, *Schlesien*, S. 70.

Silesia – issues of language and ethnicity in the long 16th century

Abstract:

The primary issue considered in this paper is the question to what extent Silesia in the long 16th century can be considered a region cohesive in the ethnical and linguistic context. Available research materials indicate deepening bilingual tendencies in the region, however the extent of each of the languages and ethnic groups are impossible to adequately assess due to constant changes in the demographical situation of Silesia, changes brought about by various factors, including economic and political. It is true that humanism formed an integrating factor, which led to the formation of local patriotism. Due to this phenomenon there came to be a belief in the existence of „Silesian Nation” as well as the need to look for a factor binding the population together, something extending beyond the *ius soli* principle. Seeing as both „the love of Motherland – Silesia” and the spreading of the idea of the Silesian Nation were both constructs of groups of humanists and scholars, the first important bridge with the symbolical culture was Latin, quickly replaced by the solidified German-language culture. It dominated lay culture at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century, paving the way for development in the following centuries.

Keywords:

ethnic structure, national minorities, cultural diversity, languages, multiculturalism

Introduction

A key focus of this paper is to determine to what extent Silesia in the 16th century may be regarded as a linguistically and ethnically coherent region. However, a crucial contradiction connected with the issue lies in the very question of the region’s ethnic structure between the 16th and 17th centuries, for both the contemporary perception of the notion of nation, as well as the meaning which we commonly attribute to this notion today, are connected with the processes of forming a nation-state starting from the second half of the 18th century.

The process of the formation of nations, perceived as the second stage of political modernity¹, came as a result of the process of the formation of states initiated in the 14th century, where authority was based not only on personal interrelationships, but first and foremost involved control over a definite territory and its inhabitants.

¹ Otto Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland 1770-1990*, München 1996, p. 13.

The latter model was designated with the Latin notion *natio*, introduced into the German language at the end of the 14th century, and referring, in fact, to shared origins. Up until the 17th century, this notion described a community developed on the foundations of common birthplace and living space (*patria*)². The contemporary distinction between nation and ethnic group (*etnia*)³ with specific features (language, tradition, auto-stereotypes etc.) permits diversity within the national context, but nonetheless it also requires one to consider the possible implication – somewhat crucial for Silesia – of Max Weber’s assertion that an ‘ethnically grounded sense of community is not yet a nation’⁴. This argument, which corresponds with the view that ‘linguistic differences do not constitute an insurmountable obstacle for the development of the sense of national community’⁵, is in fact a very accurate description of changes which took place in Silesia in the early modern period.

This issue is no less complex when viewed from a purely linguistic standpoint. What one must bear in mind is the dubious accuracy of the very notion of linguistic region – this is actually a purely theoretic notion, which designates only a supposed ideal state. For the purpose of the following study, we will define a linguistic region as a fairly geographically-confined space, which stands out against its neighbouring territories through its linguistic specificity manifesting itself either 1) in a unique homogeneity – as compared with other territories – of spoken language in relation to linguistically coherent or incoherent adjacent areas, or 2) as a linguistic incoherence compared with the linguistic coherence of neighbouring territories. When we approach this issue from a general perspective, what becomes evident is that while 16th-century Silesia (strongly influenced by Polish-German poly-lingualism and – in the southern part of the region – the Czech language used for official purposes), when juxtaposed with *Rzeczpospolita*, seems to be a clear example of the latter option, what

² *Nation*, [in:] *Duden. Das Herkunftswörterbuch. Etymologie der deutschen Sprache*, Mannheim-Leipzig-Wien-Zürich 2001 (digital version: CD-ROM).

³ It would be difficult to grasp the crucial semantic distinction between these two notions. What is surely helpful here is the operationalization of the word ‘nation’ in the context of historical-political science, and the word ‘ethnic group’ in the context of ethnology. An exhaustive presentation of numerous problems emerging in connection with these issues was delivered by, among others: R. Koselleck, who discussed the notions of ‘Volk’, ‘Nation’ and ‘Masse’ between 1450-1914 as follows: ‘Erstens handelt es sich um stets mehrdeutige Begriffe mit definierbaren Bedeutungskernen, aber selten randscharfen Bedeutungsfeldern.’ Reinhart Koselleck, *Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse*, [in:] *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*. Vol. 7: *Verw – Z*, eds Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck, Stuttgart 2004, pp. 281-282. In line with the principle of *ius soli*, the word ‘nation’ was usually (though not always) placed by 16th-century Silesian writers alongside such characteristics like, for example, a shared living space and related simply to the whole of inhabitants of a given region.

⁴ M. Weber, *Wirtschaft*, Tübingen 1980, p. 528.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 242.

we also notice is that the aforementioned specificity becomes, to a large extent, relative when compared with equally-multilingual Czech territories.

Multi-ethnicity

In one of the oldest descriptions of Silesia rendered in 1512 by Bartholomew Stein, the region is presented as being torn in two between the influences of German culture (villages and towns located on the left bank of the Odra river), and Polish culture (on the right bank of the river)⁶. The more densely forested and less cultivated half was dominated by the Poles. Uncouth, unresourceful and of poor intellectual culture, they reside in simple dwellings of wood and clay and their towns are meagre and rarely surrounded with fortifications. By contrast, the better and more developed part of Silesia is inhabited by the Germans who – thanks to their openness and diligence – reap profits from blooming trade and arts and live in houses of brick in beautiful and large fortified towns⁷. Hence, the Odra river not only outlined the sphere of linguistic influences, dividing the state between two ethnic groups (*nationes*), but also constituted a border between two different worlds and two different stages of cultural and civilizational advancement. A remarkable similarity between this description and the 19th-century (auto-) stereotypes concerning the two dominant nations of Silesia requires us to treat B. Stein's vision mostly as a kind of auto-stylization of the former immigrant community of German origin. For – and this was a rather obvious fact – while the Polish-speakers also resided at that time on the left bank of the Odra river⁸ (as evidenced by sermons delivered in Polish in Wrocław churches, numerous entries in documentation on inspections of the Wrocław Diocese⁹, the erection in 1590 of a 'Polish Church' of the Holy Trinity in Zielona Góra, records on the functioning in 1666 of a Polish school¹⁰, etc.), even the penetration of the right-bank section of Upper Silesia by Germanic culture is proven by the complaints of Poles over the Bytom and Racibórz courts conducting their proceedings in German, or the demands of counts of Henckel to be sent correspondence in German. Besides the aforementioned Poles and

⁶ Bartholomeum Stenum, *Descriptio Tocius Silesie et Civitatis Regie Vratislaviensis* (Bartholomew Steins Beschreibung von Schlesien und seiner Hauptstadt Breslau), [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 17, ed. Hermann Markgraf, Breslau 1902, p. 9.

⁷ Cf: Hans Heckel, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgange des Barock*, Breslau 1929, p. 95.

⁸ Cf: J. Kuczer, *Szlachta*, p. 36.

⁹ Wincenty Urban, *Materiały do dziejów polskości na Śląsku w wizytacjach diecezji wrocławskiej (do początków XVIII wieku)*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 14 (1959), No. 2, pp. 149-195.

¹⁰ Helmut Glück, *Deutsch als Fremdsprache in Europa vom Mittelalter bis zur Barockzeit*, Berlin-New York 2002, p. 372.

Germans – leaving minor ethnic groups aside – Silesia was also inhabited by Czechs, whose population was most numerous in the south, and by Jews, who – although less numerous – were crucially important for the region’s economy.

Despite the fact that it is relatively easy to estimate the total number of the population of Silesia between the 16th and 17th centuries¹¹, its ethnic structure is more difficult to describe. Firstly, multi-ethnicity characterized the region from the very outset of its existence; secondly, its residents were subject to strong (extra-)institutional forces of acculturation dominated by the German-speaking culture. As a result of both of these factors, the borders between individual groups were transient, and the region’s ethnic structure *per se* was impermanent. Consequently, the very notion of nationality, provided it is perceived in terms of durability and finiteness, is completely useless in reference to 16th- and 17th-century Silesia. A common practice of intermarriage between representatives of various groups (Karl Weinhold), upturns and downturns in the economy, epidemics, the slowdown of the colonization rate, the outflow of part of the residents from previously-settled areas, warfare, etc., resulted in unstable living conditions, which led to a situation when Silesia – in demographic terms – was *in statu nascendi*. The fluctuating-oscillatory dynamics of population processes prevents us from producing a description based on reliable quantitative data, and as such these dynamics should be rather conveyed by means of such notions as transgression, assimilation, integration, naturalization, enculturation and acculturation, cultural diffusion and migration, among others. All of these notions point to conditions of temporariness and transitivity, and even to a partial reversibility of individual phenomena, while at the same time a principal integrating avenue of changes in social life was maintained in Silesia – taking a long-term perspective (Fernand Braudel) – namely the impulse (dominant, characteristic to all Silesians and recurrent over the centuries) to build a German-speaking symbolic culture.

What seems to be a mistake in this context is the automatic association of the character of the German-speaking culture with German ‘nationality’, just as the topos of ‘German colonization’ is a historical oversimplification. In both cases, it is possible for one to distinguish the ideological benefits resulting from such oversimplifications. The

¹¹ Based on the population census of 1577, the total number of inhabitants of Silesia was estimated at ca. 1,252,445 people, 995,120 of which were inhabitants of rural areas. Consequently, the proportion of inhabitants of towns was 20.5%. Over half a million demographic losses brought by the Thirty Years’ War were made up by Silesia no earlier than the mid-18th century, when the region’s population again reached 1.5 million inhabitants (in 1742). The numeric data provided in this article is based on: W. Dziewulski, *Zaludnienie*, pp. 432, 488. W. Dziewulski’s calculations are also mentioned in this very volume in the article by Mateusz Goliński on the economic situation in Silesia in the early modern period.

mystification of – desired or undesired – coherence and unity, at first sight obscures an unfavourable (from the perspective of the region's coherence) ethnic diversity of settlers. Colonists from Western Europe who settled in medieval Silesia included Flemings, Walloons, Franks, Saxons, Bavarians, Thuringians and Austrians. In the contemporary social reality which was dominated by various dialects, they had little chance for successful communication. This brought an imperative of introducing in Silesia a common medium of oral communication, and eventually this role was assigned to the German language, which was a natural facilitator of interactions between various ethnic groups and linguistic influences, and in a longer perspective predetermined the specific character of the region. It is beyond any doubt that among the ethnic components which made up an amalgam of the notion of the 'German nationality', it was the German-speaking Silesians who played a crucial role. In contrast to Franks, Swabians, Frisians etc., whose identity was formed long before by a myriad of long-term historical processes, Silesians were a relatively young ethnic group, produced as a result of constant interpenetration and blending of national and cultural elements, but also through their exclusion and limitation. In this sense, a Silesian, an ethnic amalgam *per se*, constitutes an allegory of all types of integration processes. As the 'Germans' themselves had to begin by developing a medium of communication that was both efficient and understandable for everyone, and the medium itself became a foundation stone of culture which lies at the basis of Silesian identity, there is nothing surprising about the fact that not only the idea of creating a German-speaking literature (Martin Opitz), as well as calls to introduce linguistic norms (Fabian Franck) and make German a medium of high culture (and thus granting the German language the status of being a 'common good'), but also the establishment of an important link between the native language and cultural patriotism¹² (M. Opitz), all originated in Silesia in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The accuracy of the thesis on the necessity of breaking the habit of subconsciously identifying Silesian German-speaking culture with a purely German community is best illustrated by the early stage of its flourish (in the 16th century) in the period when the descendants of former colonists were withdrawing from the previously captured territories¹³. The 15th century had already seen a regression of the German community. This was particularly evident in Upper Silesia, where, as a consequence of a heightened social exchange with Poland, the process of re-Polonization

¹² Jürgen Brokoff, *Poesie und Grammatik. Der Anteil der Sprachgesellschaften an der Entwicklung der deutschen Literatur- und Poesiesprache in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Acten des XI. Internationalen Germanistenkongresses Paris 2005*, Bern 2008, vol. 5, p. 229.

¹³ Cf. Colmar Grünhagen, *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 1: *Bis zum Eintritt der habsburgischen Herrschaft 1527*, Gotha 1884, pp. 391-395.

of the nobility took place; German tenants either deserted or were driven out of the localities they had settled in, or – as a result of a shift in the region’s ethnic proportions – they assimilated into the Polish-speaking community. In Opole, Czech gained dominance over German as the official language of the ducal chancellery, and kept strengthening this position throughout the entire 17th century. The growing bilingualism of Silesia was further consolidated by the 1570 decree of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II, which awarded equal importance to both languages (German and ‘Slavonic’) as the only languages used in courts and offices¹⁴, as well as prohibited any compulsion in this respect¹⁵. The Reformation, which further reinforced national communities, resulted in the fact that Polish came to be used in Silesia as a medium of artistic expression. Together with the aforementioned evidence for the revitalization of the Polish ethnic community, the Polish language constituted a strong impulse for creating a common culture, which, despite German dominance, consolidated Slavonic – and especially Polish – influences.

The contemporary need to introduce a distinction between various national communities and Silesia is illustrated by numerous historic examples. One of them is the letter by the Wrocław canon Stanislaus Sauer¹⁶, dated 3rd of May 1521, where the author differentiates ‘our (Silesian) nation’¹⁷ from the Germans. On the other hand, Anselmus Ephorinus of Mirsk – a Silesian humanist and doctor – protests in an official letter dated 9th of October 1531 against being pigeonholed by Erasmus of Rotterdam as a Pole (‘Anselmus Ephorinus, Silesius non Polonus’). The testimony of Jan Długosz (also known as Longinus) of 1466 is also telling, where he presents Silesians as a nation whose principal features are self-reliance and hostility towards Poland – despite their Polish origin and language¹⁸.

Meanwhile, the aforementioned early signs which proved the existence of regional identity – which appears to already be a consolidated and strongly integrating force at that time – present Silesia not merely as *Grenzland*, but draw attention to its unique culture. According to K. Weinhold, its essence lies in ‘the integration of the German and Slavonic nation’¹⁹, ‘the blending of Slavonic and German blood’²⁰, the strong influence of Slavonic languages on the Silesian dialect, and finally in a bold

¹⁴ Władysław Dziewulski, *Dzieje ludności polskiej na Śląsku Opolskim. Od czasów najdawniejszych do wiosny ludów*, Opole 1972, p. 42.

¹⁵ C. Grünhagen, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, pp. 391-396.

¹⁶ *Stanislaus Sauer's Hirschberger Pfarrbuch von 1521*, ed. Hermann Hoffmann, Breslau 1939.

¹⁷ Quotation from: N. Conrads, *Schlesiens frühe Neuzeit*, p. 208.

¹⁸ *Jana Długosza kanonika krakowskiego Dziejów polskich ksiąg dwanaście*, translated by Karol Mecherzyński, vol. 5, book 2nd, pp. 422-423.

¹⁹ Karl Weinhold, *Über deutsche Dialektforschung. Die Laut- und Wortbildung und die Formen der schlesischen Mundart. Ein Versuch*, Wien 1853, p. 8.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

thesis critical of both dominant national groups, mentioning ‘the cross breeding [of Germans] with Poles’ (‘Wir kreuzten uns mit den Polen’)²¹. What is of equal importance here is the fact that Weinhold also emphasized the great value of this ethnic mixture, and it was to this mixture that he attributed a number of positive characteristics Silesians were known for. Weinhold’s views were repeated by Wilhelm Wachsmuth, who described ‘the German-Slavonic mixture’²² and ‘the combination of German and Slavic element’ (‘Verschmelzung des Deutschen und Slavischen’)²³ as typically Silesian characteristics.

We have scant knowledge of the course of the nation-forming processes in Silesia, and the reason of this fact is the highly mythologized approach which has dominated the scholarly perspective throughout recent centuries. The development of the aforementioned tendencies took place at an unequal pace. German communities, from the very beginning privileged by the ducal courts and the Church, consolidated much faster. This process was to a large extent facilitated by the fact that their members shared both a common language and goals – already determined at the stage of colonization. What took place in parallel to this process was the national conversion of the Piast dukes, who were increasingly associating themselves with the German nation and Silesia – as opposed to the lands of the Crown, which first and foremost influenced the nobility²⁴. The adaptation of Polish names to the German linguistic context resulted in the fact that their primary ethnic origin was gradually becoming untraceable, thereby eliminating the potential obstacle for the Poles to fully blend themselves with the German culture²⁵. Besides, the eagerness of the local nobility to populate their lands with German colonists proves that at the time the ethnic origin was not of such crucial importance, and the fundamental factor which spurred the integration of the European community until the mid-16th century was religion²⁶.

Along with the further progress of integration coupled with further consolidation of the group, there emerged a growing need to acculturate the Slavonic people

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 19.

²² Wilhelm Wachsmuth, *Geschichte deutscher Nationalität*, vol. 3, Braunschweig 1862, p. 159.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 161.

²⁴ *Urkundensammlung zur Geschichte des Ursprungs der Städte und der Einführung und Verbreitung Deutscher Kolonisten und Rechte in Schlesien und der Ober-Lausitz*, eds Gustav Adolf Tzschoppe, Gustav Adolf Stenzel, Hamburg 1832, p. 3.

²⁵ Cf: W. Wachsmuth, *Geschichte*, vol. 3, p. 150; Tomasz Jurek, *Vom Rittertum zum Adel. Zur Herausbildung des Adelsstandes im mittelalterlichen Schlesien*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft – Kultur – Selbstdarstellung*, eds Jan Harasimowicz, Matthias Weber, München 2010 (=Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa, vol. 36), p. 74-76.

²⁶ *Die Grundlegung der modernen Welt. Spätmittelalters, Renaissance, Reformation*, eds Ruggiero Romano, Alberto Tenenti, Frankfurt/M. 2002 (=Fischer Weltgeschichte, vol. 12), p. 83.

to the German way of life. These needs were further gaining in force, all the more so that they were induced by the most influential of all agents: the possessors of political power (clergy, dukes, nobility), rulers of people's hearts and minds (clergy, dukes) and the so-called economic tycoons (municipal patricians, burghers and a wealthy peasantry). 'A key role [in the process of group formation] is always played by two sorts of factors [...]: for one thing, willingness to be part of the group, voluntary access to the group, identification with the group, loyalty towards its members and solidarity with its members; for another: fear, enslavement and compulsion'²⁷. The first group of factors may definitely be connected with the aforementioned dukes, nobility and wealthier burghers, who were the first ones to gain extensive profits from colonization and the generosity of the German law. 'Fear, enslavement and compulsion', also a strong force of assimilation affecting Slavonic people – mainly those of Polish origin – was experienced mainly by the members of lower social ranks: petty burghers and peasants. The mechanism of this forced acculturation, which – on the one hand – exposed the regional power relations, and on the other served as a tool of authority, was described by Frederick Pachaly, who perceived the phenomenon of social stigmatization as a stimulus for the integration of the Silesian community²⁸.

Due to this complex situation, every attempt to describe these processes evolves into a serious evaluative dilemma. Forced adaptation of large masses of people to the German culture, a process which raised serious moral scepticism²⁹, in a longer temporal perspective proved to be an integrating factor of an enormous force, and hence – from the regional perspective – a positive factor. Silesian identity as an amalgam of various influences, ideas and features, with its two predominant features (the German language and Slavonic characteristics of the anthropological profile of a typical resident of the region), could be developed only on the basis of the gradual blurring of the Polish, German and Czech national communities. Phenomena such as national conversions (national identifications) are characteristic for the borderland region³⁰ and closely related 'with the issue of foreignness'³¹. 'Each act of social affiliation' entails the need to determine one's identity, and the reverse is applicable too: 'no identity may be preserved without a sort of social affiliation'³².

²⁷ Ernest Gellner, *Narody i nacjonalizm*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 2009, p. 141.

²⁸ Friedrich Pachaly, *Ueber Schlesiens älteste Geschichte und Bewohner*, Breslau 1783, p. 36.

²⁹ Cf: Heinrich Grüger, *Die slawische Besiedlung und der Beginn der deutschen Kolonisation im Weichbilde Münsterberg*, 'Archiv für schlesische Kirchengeschichte', 21, 1963, pp. 1–37.

³⁰ Antonina Kłoskowska, *Kultury narodowe u korzeni*, Warszawa 2005, p. 137.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 126.

³² Peter L. Berger, *Zaproszenie do socjologii*, translated by Janusz Stawiński, Warszawa 1995, pp. 98-99.

Although Peter L. Berger's principle is an apt summary of the situation of the entire regional community, the issue is best illustrated by the experiences of Silesian Jews. The only economic activity Jews were permitted to perform by the contemporary law was trade and money exchange, which tied them with the ducal courts and towns. Having been frequently evicted from towns (i.e. 1402 – Głogów, 1447 – Legnica, 1457 – Jawor, 1468 – Nysa, 1492 – Kłodzko, 1505 – Oleśnica), in the periods of their increased persecution Jews either moved away to the suburbs, where they were sometimes better tolerated (Legnica) and where they intended to wait through the ordeal, or quickly returned to their homes in hope of a quick change of negative social attitudes towards them (a print house managed by Jewish religious community operated from 1535 in Oleśnica). A particularly painful, half-century-long period of the persecution of Jews which was launched at the outset of the 15th century was directly related to the person of John of Capistrano, a Franciscan preacher from Italy, who operated in Silesia between 1452 and 1455. The apogee of the Jewish ordeal was marked by an execution by fire in the Wrocław Salt Square (1453)³³ of 41 members of the Jewish community coupled with the confiscation of property and eviction of those members whose lives were spared. From that moment Silesian merchants, who were competing with their Jewish counterparts, launched a campaign for the introduction of a new law promoting the intolerance of Jews (*privilegium de non tolerandis Judaeis*) in the area of their towns. The first city to receive such a right from King Ladislaus the Posthumous – a strong supporter of the *pogrom* policy – was Wrocław (30th of January 1455) whose burghers were guaranteed freedom from Jewish presence 'forever and a day'³⁴. Similar legal acts were put into effect in 1457 in Świdnica, and in 1543 in Głubczyce.

This negative tendency was maintained between the 16th and the 17th centuries, when the Habsburgs – who were engaged in a conflict with the dukes (who were rather tolerant towards the Jews) – provided support to the towns where anti-Jewish policies were commonplace. The peak of this process was the 7th of April 1582 act of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II – at the joint request of both states and princes – signing an order of eviction of the entire Jewish community (including women and children) from Silesia. The only concession made to the unwanted citizens was that they were granted permission to participate in street trading during the Silesian fairs. The reason for this was the growing importance of Silesian commercial contacts with Poland, whose further development was highly dependent on

³³ Cf. Friedrich Albert Zimmermann, *Geschichte und Verfassung der Juden im Herzogthum Schlesien*, Breslau 1791, p. 23.

³⁴ Ludwig Oelsner, *Schlesische Urkunden zur Geschichte der Juden im Mittelalter*, Wien 1864, p. 87.

the Jewish business activity. Hence, when in 1630 Jews were granted from the Holy Roman Emperor the right to settle in the suburbs, not only did the previously hostile Wrocław magistrate have nothing against it but also propagated their tolerance (in 1689 and 1699) in contrary to the policy of the royal tax office³⁵. The Jewish community was considerably strengthened in the second half of the 17th century, owing to the emperor's concession to populate Silesia with a large group of Polish Jews who were forced to flee their homeland in consequence of the Polish-Swedish War. Having initially taken refuge in the towns of Milicz, Nysa and Biała, they gradually began to spread across the entire region.

In the face of the clash between two ethnically different communities of Silesia, the integrating processes of culture formation (which included religious conversion and acculturation impulses) assumed a distinct place in the Polish and German national mythology. To justify its presence in the shared space, each side developed its own mode of historical narration and a unique type of stylization. The 'German side' adhered in this context to a peaceful legend of foundation. The crucial impact of such perspective on the identity and consciousness of this particular group of Silesians is best illustrated by Stein, according to whom the Germans were benefactors of the entire region which owed them almost everything: from the modern legal system to culture in its broadest sense. All of these virtues found appreciation among the local community, which is proven by them voluntarily showing the Germans their unanimous support³⁶. What may be paradoxically perceived as evidence for the fact that this myth is much more deeply rooted in German history is the difficulty (between the 16th and the 17th centuries) to maintain the division according to which the German-speaking citizens of Silesia (who occupied the region for generations) were perceived as part of the immigrant community, and the newly-introduced Silesian settlers – Poles and Czechs – as its indigenous inhabitants.

The myth (strongly promoted by German culture) of the peaceful foundation of Silesia – which, slightly modified, was also accepted by the majority of Silesian colonists – was much later juxtaposed with the adaptation of the native Polish myth of the Bulwark of Christianity (*antemurale Christianitatis*). The most impressive version of this myth can be found in Felix Koneczny's work *Dzieje Śląska*³⁷.

Linguistic relations

A frequently repeated mistake when studying Silesia is linking the territory of a particular ethnic group's residence with the territorial range of the language

³⁵ F.A. Zimmermann, *Geschichte*, p. 27.

³⁶ B. Stenum, *Descriptio*, p. 15.

³⁷ Felix Koneczny, *Dzieje Śląska*, Bytom 1897, p. 3.

attributed to this group. In a region characterized by a fundamental multi-ethnicity, where one cultural group is privileged over another by the institutions of power (as was the case in Silesia) the domination of this privileged group over fields that overlapped with the scope of this power was inevitable. Such conditions induce a strong bilingual impulse which stimulates the broadening of the area of knowledge of the privileged language beyond the borders of individual ethnic groups and lays the foundations for the development new national affiliations.

When viewed from the perspective of the strengthening of ways in which linguistic relations developed in Silesia, the examined period of the Habsburg reign may be placed in the context of the German writings of Caspar von Schwenckfeld (1524), and the works of M. Opitz 1617/1618 and 1624, who called for a programme to improve the quality of the German language and reform the German poetry. Schwenckfeld, in line with the ideas of the Reformation, launched a campaign to introduce the German language into the Silesian religious sphere. He openly opposed individuals who called for a ban on ‘conducting services and administering sacraments in German’³⁸. The writings of Opitz not only introduced a new approach to language in a socio-national context, but also, being widely available (especially in the Protestant parts of the Holy Roman Empire), gave rise to a fervent discussion among the members of intellectual elites on the issues of identity.

In order to answer the question on the integrating or disintegrating role of language in 16th-century Silesia, we first need to emphasize the region’s linguistic abundance. It comprised:

- 1) three chancellery languages (Latin, German and Czech),
- 2) four official languages (Latin, German, Czech and Polish),
- 3) five languages of oral communication (Latin, German, French (used by the aristocracy), Czech and Polish),
- 4) two levels of communication: a) official (five ‘literary’ languages) and b) everyday (groups of dialects: German and Polish).

This list shows that numerous languages which were actually used at the time fragmented the region in two ways: vertically (along the lines of ethnic divisions) and horizontally (in line with social stratification). This very polylinguism, defined here as the co-existence within a region of various languages whose function (official, chancellery or everyday language) remains the same regardless of the location within this region or a period of occurrence, was a highly disintegrating factor. This is confirmed by a number of preserved authentic statements of Silesian citizens of different nations, including Jeremiah Roter (*Klucz do Polskiego y Niemieckiego*

³⁸ Caspar Schwenckfeld, *Ermanung des Mißbrauchs etlicher fürnempsten Artickel des Evangelii*, Augsburg 1624, p. nlb [45]. The beginnings of the modern German language in Silesia are usually linked with the work *Geschichten der Stadt Breslau (1440-1479)* by Peter Eschenloer.

Języka, 1616), who encouraged his German-speaking Silesian compatriots to learn Polish, which was perceived by him not only as the ‘most necessary but also most useful’ language in the region. (In the 19th century his opinion was shared by John Gottlieb Schummel.)³⁹ A good example showing the possible benefits that could be derived from bilingualism is the story of Matthias Gutthäter-Dobracki (ca. 1626–1681) of Byczyna, a descendant of a German family of merchants that settled in Poland at the outset of the 15th century and who, only a hundred years later, were accepted as nobility⁴⁰. The evidence for their double national affiliation was Matthias’s father’s decision to extend his German surname by a Polish name. His son’s works owed their unique style – especially appreciated in the 17th century – to perfect writing skills related to the bilingualism of their authors. Among his greatest contributions is a Polish version of the dictionary *Orbis sensualium pictus* by Jan John Amos Comenius (1667). In his commentary, written in German, Gutthäter points to the significance of the Polish language, ‘which here [in Wrocław] needs to be respected more than other languages’⁴¹.

The aforementioned examples prove that Silesians’ first reflections on the polylingual character of the region appeared relatively early in history and were remarkably profound. The maintenance or development within the shared regional space of isolated, mono-lingual communities was perceived by them as a direct threat. Consequently, bilingualism – a medium of communication between various ethnic groups viewed as a cementing force – was unanimously considered to be a positive factor. Another probable option – also integrating but morally ambiguous – was the idea to introduce a monoculture in the entire territory of Silesia. However, due to the specific character of the contemporary power relations, this could be only manifested (despite the 15th-16th century decline) as a tendency towards the gradual dominance of the German language in the region.

Latin

The impact of Latin on the whole region of Silesia in the 16th century was of a twofold nature: from a region-wide perspective its force was integrating, while from a European-wide perspective it was unifying. Having brought together the members of local intellectual elites in the name of universal and supranational culture, Latin

³⁹ Schummel Johann Gottlieb, *Schummels Reise durch Schlesien im Julius und August 1791*, Breslau 1792, pp. 328-331.

⁴⁰ Urszula Gumuła, *Literatura polska na Śląsku w XVII w. Piotr Wacheniusz, Jan Malina, Maciej Gutthäter-Dobracki*, Katowice 1995, p. 91.

⁴¹ Johann Amos Comenius, *Orbis sensualium pictus*, Breßlau 1667, p. nlb.

served to deprive the region of its unique character. In Silesia, just like elsewhere, Latin was also a language of high culture and religion, and was used (except in a religious context), mainly in written form, but also – albeit more rarely – as a medium of oral communication. Silesia – and later other regions also – owed this particular feature to a pedagogical strategy adopted by Valentin Trozendorf, who obliged students of the Złotoryja gymnasium to communicate, both during and after lessons, in one language only: Latin. Latin's well-established position was further strengthened by a dense network of high quality Latin schools and humanistic gymnasiums. Firm evidence of Latin's dominance in Silesia is the proportion of documents written in Latin to those produced in German – the second most prominent language of the region – which in 1570 was 70% to 30%⁴². When we consider the contemporary strong position of humanism, this proportion was nothing unusual and proves – first and foremost – that the integration of Silesian and European culture was at the time, in fact, an ongoing process. The high level of local culture in the 16th century was commented by Philipp Melanchthon in his letter of 1538 to Heinrich Ribisch. Melanchthon presents the community of Silesians as part of the German nation (*gens in Germania*), which excels all others both in terms of the number of scholars and people of low social rank (*ex populo*) who managed to obtain an academic education. The theologian also recognizes the merits of artistic patronage of the Wrocław town councillors and an impressive number of talented Silesian poets and orators, who were praised even in remote Italy. These views do not diverge from the opinion on the level of Silesian culture which was expressed by a member of the Silesian elite Caspar Ursinus Velius: 'Oh Rome, golden Rome. You rejoice in the eternal spring, you abound in so many honourable and talented poets, but our Silesia, although it lies under the cold star of the North, is no less precious than you are'⁴³. A good illustration of the relation between the boom in the linguistic culture of Silesia and the policy of the Holy Roman Empire was the fact of awarding at least nine Silesian poets with the (at that time) very prestigious⁴⁴ title of *poeta laureatus caesareus*⁴⁵.

The cementing role of Latin, whose integrating force transcended the boundaries of nations and opposing denominations, was even further strengthened when the ideals of 'Silesian antiquity' – alive until as late as the 18th century – (Norbert

⁴² Stanisław Rospond, *Polszczyzna śląska*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1970, p. 38.

⁴³ Caspar Ursinus Velius, *Casparis Vrsini Velii E Germanis Silesii Poematvm Libri Qvinqve*, Basilea 1522, p. nlb. [133].

⁴⁴ Cf. Klaus Karrer, *Johannes Posthlius. Verzeichnis der Briefe und Werke mit Regesten und Posthlius-Biographie*, Wiesbaden 1993, p. 73.

⁴⁵ Albert Schirrmeyer, *Triumph des Dichters. Gekrönte Intellektuelle im 16. Jahrhundert. Dissertation*, Köln 2004.

Conrads) spread across the region, having been sparked off in 1503 when Sigismund Buchwald equated the name Wrocław (Breslau) with the name of the town of Budorgis, mentioned in the writings of Ptolemy. This was followed by a series of other astonishing ‘discoveries’. Scholars were pointing to the similarity between the name *Silesia* and ‘*Elisia*’ or, more specifically ‘*Elysium*’; and between the name Odra and the antique name ‘*Viadrus*’. Many localities gained refined, antiquated versions of names: Głucholazy became ‘*Civitas Capricollis*’ and Zielona Góra – ‘*Prasia Elysiorum*’ or ‘*Thalloris*’. The imaginary – hence artificial – creation of ‘*Silesia Patria*’ (Salomon Frenzel), communicated a vision, in which Silesia was everyone’s homeland. It was this vision which became the foundation of the first, common, humanistic form of patriotism, which was not restricted to a tight space of a narrowly defined region but ready to interact with the European community. Its founders – world-famous poets, philosophers and theologians representing all nations and religious denominations of Silesia – were brought together by the idea of Silesia as an ideal country, to the point where they were keen to enrich their own names with references to their home towns and shared homeland of Silesia (i.e.: Abrahamus Scultetus Grunbergensis Silesius, Christoph Pelargus Svidnicensis Silesius, Petrus Vachenius Strelicenus, Thomas Mawer Tribulensis Silesius and Nicolaus Reusnerus Leorinus Silesius). At times, they also demonstrated their ethnic affiliation (i.e. Caspar Ursinus Velius E Germanus Silesius), which, although being in line with humanistic ideals, somehow distracted the community-like character of the strongly varied region.

The integrating force of Latin transcended ethnic divisions and, at the same time (due to its hermetic character) divided the community vertically, according to social ranks. Having opened up the region towards Europe, Latin granted Silesians access to the family of highly cultured nations. However, due to the fact that high culture was restricted to a small group of representatives of the intellectual elite and clergy, it is highly doubtful whether the language itself or the culture it helped to develop could have had any significant impact on the general public.

National languages

The growing reluctance of scientific and literary circles towards national languages is characteristic for the majority of European countries; Silesia is no exception in this respect. The causes of this aversion were partially of an ideological nature (the increased popularity of antiquity), and partially of a pragmatic nature. Both Polish and German in their general, literary form were at the time only sprouting and

as such, they were not effective enough to be used by ambitious writers and speakers as adequate tools of expression. A crucial change in this respect and an immensely strong impulse towards the improvement of the situation was brought about by two factors: the wave of the Reformation, which swept rapidly over the entire region, and the formation of the modern Silesian state – induced by the Habsburg dynasty – along with its entourage: centralization and bureaucracy. ‘A modern state is focused on the areas of knowledge – formulated in a national language – which are crucial from the perspective of cameralism and etatism. [...] Furthermore, bureaucracy supports the development of the practical and utilitarian understanding of language’⁴⁶. The relationship between the interests of the state and language was aptly commented on by a Lusatian named Christian Gueintz: ‘the German language is necessary/for the maintenance of the German superiority’⁴⁷.

Polish

The benefits brought by the Reformation to the Polish language were also of a twofold nature. Direct benefits include the language being promoted to the status of a language of theology, scientific and artistic expression, the education of the clergy⁴⁸, and arousing growing interest from German-speaking Protestant circles. Even greater was the significance of the early signs of interest in the Polish language showed by Silesian Protestants, followed by the emergence of the first literary works in Polish. Paradoxically, the introduction of new religious denominations translated into the improvement of the situation of the Polish Catholic clergy, whose ranks – depleted as a result of frequent Catholic-to-Protestant conversions – were often enriched by imports of new forces from Poland.

The significance of the Reformation for the Silesian culture is well-illustrated by the writings of Polish and Reformed Protestants, who – contrary to less active Catholics – have made a considerable contribution to its development. All meaningful works of the period, with no exception whatsoever, were produced by these very circles. Next to the aforementioned J. Roter and his successor M. Gutthäter-Dobrcki, both of whom made great contributions to the development of Silesian bilingualism, it is also worth mentioning a quasi-scientific work by Olbrycht Strumiński entitled *O sprawie, sypaniu, wymierzaniu i rybieniu stawów* (1573),

⁴⁶ Steffen Martus, *Sprachtheorien*, [in:] *Die Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Albert Meier, München 1999 (=Hanser Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur, vol. 2), pp. 143-144.

⁴⁷ Christian Gueintz, *Deutscher Sprachlehre Entwurf*, Köthen 1641, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Władysław Czaplński, *Wpływ reformacji i kontrreformacji na stosunki narodowościowe na Śląsku (XVI-XVII w.)*, ‘Przegląd Historyczny’, 40 (1949), pp. 151-152.

a unique work – in terms of content and literary style – by Valentine Rożdżeński entitled *Officina ferraria, abo huta y warstat z kuźniami szlachetnego dzieła żelaznego* (1612), and poetic polemics by Peter Wachenius. The fact that the output is limited to the eastern territories of the region points to the fact of the progressing isolation of both its parts – the predominantly Polish, more backward in terms of the economy, civilization and culture of Upper Silesia and well-developed, wealthy and scientifically- and culturally-strong Lower Silesia. The dark side of the Reformation was the deepening of the existing divisions, which led to ever-greater divisions between the Catholics and Protestants, not according to the criterion of nationality, but of economic status⁴⁹. The first group established themselves in impoverished, predominantly rural territories, with poorly developed cities, which were – especially in Upper Silesia – populated mainly by members of the Polish-speaking community. Wealthy and influential towns of Lower Silesia dominated by the German-speaking community were harmoniously and quickly brought to the side of the Reformation, whereas the majority of higher nobility and princes remained Catholic.

German

Despite their high quality, Polish literary works, produced in Silesia in relatively small numbers, could not compete with their German counterparts. At the outset of the 16th century, the latter featured Caspar von Schwenckfeld, whose works were addressed to a comparatively wide audience. His views were much less pervaded with politics than in the case of Opitz, and simultaneously much more pragmatic. A comprehensible native language was for him not merely an idealistic vision, but a medium of communication he strongly promoted as a vehicle for the consolidation of new religious practices⁵⁰ and gaining an authentic, conscious and profound religious experience: ‘Learn to sing German psalms [...] / so that you know what you are praying for / and how much [praying] is possible for your souls to bear / take heed of words / and use them in a comprehensible language’⁵¹.

Schwenckfeld was supported by Valentine Krautwald, formerly one of the leading Silesian humanists, who later became his closest ally in the fight for the new religiousness. It was their circle that produced the first Reformation catechism

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 148.

⁵⁰ Gabriela Waś, *Kaspar von Schwenckfeld. Myśl i działalność do 1534 roku*, Wrocław 2005 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 2660, Historia 169), p. 125.

⁵¹ Caspar Schwenckfeld, *Eyn sendbrieff vnd erynnerüg des Erent festen Casper von Schwenckfelt an die Closter Jung frawen zur Nawenburgk*, Wittenberg 1524, p. 12.

Katechismus Lignicensis (1525). Works in German were being published by a whole array of excellent theologians, scholars and reformers such as Ambrosius Moibanus, Peter Riedemann, Lucas Pollio (author of *The Heidelberg Catechism*, 1563) Zacharias Ursinus, his pupil David Pareus and many others. Not surprisingly, these were predominantly religious works – especially religious songs. Their most renowned authors, whose fame spread even beyond Silesia, were A. Moibanus, Michael Weisse and John Heermann.

A particularly important role in the language-based processes of integration is played by the views presented by Opitz, relating to his early Latin treatise *Aristarchus sive de contemptu linguae Teutonice* (1617/1618) and the more mature poetics of *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey* (1624), which became the foundation of the new chapter in the history of German poetry. The principal theoretical assumptions developed by Opitz were probably modelled after the views of his Wrocław patron, Caspar Cunradi, a Silesian poet recognized by Emperor Rudolph II in 1601. In his earlier work, filled with lofty tones, the poet creates a parallel between his compatriots and their common predecessors, ‘courageous and undefeated Germans’ – the only ones to pluck up the courage to face the powerful Rome and whose language was to be particularly important, for example, in spurring them to battle. A central issue of Opitz’s anthropolinguistic approach was his intention to establish a connection between the attributes of language – as a vehicle of the ‘nation’s spirit’ – and features of the members of the ethnic group using this language. Hence, he calls the wide group of addressees (‘all obliging Germans’) of his work ‘to cluster together in order to defend our beautiful tongue’. The patriotic, nationalist tone of the work surfaces in expressions such as ‘German homeland’ and ‘our mother – Germany’⁵². In this respect, it would seem that the poet’s intention is to spur the integration – on a greater (albeit hazy) scale – of a German, not merely Silesian, nation.

It is worth mentioning here the ennoblement of the German language partly due to the efforts of Jakob Böhme. As ‘nature endowed every aspect of life [...] with its own language’⁵³, the issue of linguistic analysis was promoted to the leading position (‘Es ist das Feuer in der Natur der Sprache’)⁵⁴. The attempt to reconstruct ‘the language of Adam’, where the act of creation and words merged into one by

⁵² Cf: Martin Opitz, *Aristarchus sive de contemptu linguae Teutonice*, [in:] *idem: Aristarchus sive de contemptu linguae Teutonice und Buch von der deutschen Poeterey*, ed. Georg Witkowski, Leipzig 1888, pp. 117-118.

⁵³ Jacob Böhme, *De Signatura Rerum*, [in:] *idem, Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 6, ed. Will-Erich Peuckert, Stuttgart 1957, p. 7.

⁵⁴ *Idem, Clavis*, [in:] *idem, Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 9, ed. Will-Erich Peuckert, Stuttgart 1956, p. 118.

divine *fiat*, was to raise humans to a higher level of consciousness – a result of the belief in the analogy between ‘the divine revelation and linguistic articulation’⁵⁵. Using German in this context had nothing to do with the national spirit. Nonetheless, it is easy to notice that perceiving German as the phenomenon of a direct divine derivation was – despite J. Böhm’s intentions – grossly exploited by generations of linguistic purists, patriots, and linguistic nationalists. The greatest blow for the mystic himself was the dispersion of languages, which – in line with the principles of linguistic and social equality – were rather expected to lead to social integration⁵⁶.

The establishment of linguistic norms vs. the issue of dialects

The centralization tendencies of the turn of the 17th century were also visible in the sphere of national languages. While – due to its isolation from Poland – Silesian-Polish was becoming increasingly archaic, thereby ossifying Polish literary language of the close of the 16th century on a supra-dialectic level, the German part of Silesia was establishing linguistic norms of the German language. This process took place in at least three spheres. The first one involves German literature, which was already of a high quality in the 16th century, especially in the case of its rich and varied poetry and broadly-understood religious writing. Local writers showed a general tendency to strip their language of any dialectical influences and focused on enriching it with supra-regional forms. As a result, the output of Silesian scholars, writers and poets (e.g. J. Heermann, M. Opitz, Z. Ursinus, J. Böhme, Peter Riedemann) gained international recognition. The second sphere involved Silesians’ strong and direct engagement in the introduction of supra-regional linguistic norms. Remarkable contributions in this area were made by F. Franck (Frangk), the first German orthographer whose work *Deutscher Sprach Art und Eigenschaft: Orthographia, gerecht buchstäbig Teutsch zuschreiben* (1531) was a pioneering systematic examination on the rules of German spelling. The third sphere was a large-scale, multi-level propaganda and lobbyist activity for the sake of German language which was focused on: a) evoking a change of the contemporary elites’ attitude towards the German language, b) creating nationwide linguistic norms, and c) increasing the presence of German in culture and scholarly discourse. For the region, this was not only a strong stimulating and integrating force, but also an inductor of modernization and pro-national (i.e. supra-regional) development. At this point we are dealing with yet another stage of integration of Silesia, when the region as *Kulturlandschaft*

⁵⁵ S. Martus, *Sprachtheorien*, p. 146.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 147.

clearly aspires to find its place in the family of the German-speaking communities together with the community of scholars of the entire Germany ‘in hope that the introduction of linguistic norms would allow for the overcoming of religious and socio-political tensions and build national unity’⁵⁷.

As far as the average inhabitants – the majority of Silesian community – are concerned, they were only to some extent affected by these changes. Between the 16th and 17th centuries, oral communication in German-speaking territories was dominated by dialects which were also quickly catching on in Silesia. This was caused most importantly by the local residents becoming increasingly tied to their place of habitation, the halt of the colonization process, the merge of ethnic and national groups, as well as the progressive isolation of Upper Silesia from Poland. Dialects, which – unlike written language – serve as a tool of direct communication, are usually a strong integrating factor. In this respect, what was specific about Silesia was that the region lacked a single common Polish or German dialect. Instead, the Polish-German social amalgam developed a group of dialects⁵⁸ whose common function was to merge Slavic and German communities⁵⁹.

When summing up the discussion on the role of languages in Silesia in the long 16th century, it would be necessary to point to the multi-lingual character of the region and the clear-cut divisions between its Polish- and German-speaking territories. These divisions disintegrated the region, spurred the formation of stereotypical misconceptions and strengthened mutual aversion. Common institutions, the political influence of the common monarch, intra- and supra-regional economic relations, religious factors and the educational system (which in the 16th century already offered more or less formal Polish and German language classes)⁶⁰, etc., had two principal effects, i.e. they 1) stimulated the formation of double national affiliation in the context of Silesian culture, which expressed itself in the development of bilingualism, and 2) induced the process of the adoption of German cultural patterns. Both of these aspects proved to work as a strong cementing force. During the rule of the Habsburg dynasty, language-related issues assumed political importance and became entangled in the processes of state modernization⁶¹. The formulation of supra-regional linguistic norms – just as the concentration of power or legal unification – needs to be perceived as an expression of centralist tendencies. A language

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 144.

⁵⁸ Cf: K. Weinhold, *Über deutsche Dialektforschung*, p. 19.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁰ H. Glück, *Deutsch*, p. 372.

⁶¹ Cf: Pierre Bourdieu, *Was heißt sprechen? Zur Ökonomie des sprachlichen Tausches*, translated by Hella Beister, Wien 2005, p. 41.

of a modern state becomes an instrument of power, and plays a crucial role as a tool of top-down controlled social communication. Facilitating power, it also works as a mechanism of enslavement and segregation. Efforts towards the eradication of cultural pluralism⁶² through homogenization performed by means of common acculturation to the German spirit facilitated nation-forming processes in Silesia. This type of integration relates to a wider German-speaking national and cultural community and its principal purpose was first and foremost to streamline the throughput of the channels of power. Linguistic norms were principally directed to the representatives of power elites, the Church, culture and science, and involved a slow drift towards the idea of German statehood – however we understand it – which stood in contradiction to the openness of humanistic patriotism and contrasted with hermetic- and isolation-prone national patriotism (M. Opitz). The actual effectiveness of M. Opitz's activity needs to be approached from a wider temporal perspective. Only in the 17th century did the German language match Latin in terms of the number of literary works published; and it would outstrip its competitor only at the outset of the 18th century. All of the most prominent languages of Silesia consolidated the intensive development of local patriotism as the principal factor of regional integration of its citizens. Independently of the ethnic group (C. Schwenckfeld – 'land Schlesien', J. Roter – 'vnser Vaterlad Schlesien', S. Frenzel – 'Silesia Patria') all Silesian writers and intellectuals treated Silesia as their homeland, and felt that they were part of a community derived from a common root. Silesia in the 16th and the 17th centuries was a cultural melting pot, whose great dynamics of mixing and interrelation of various traditions, as well as the development and partial reversibility of processes, prevent us from drawing any final conclusions. They led to the crystallization of the Silesian community, not only as a collective subject residing in a certain territory, but, most of all, as an ethnic group with a unique culture, a separate *habitus* and features constituting a separate anthropological profile, as it was alleged from as early as the 16th century (i.e. by J. Cureus, P. Vulturinus, B. Stein among others).

Situation in Silesia seems to be rather paradoxical. For one thing, even in the 17th century, German language was not yet considered to be any kind of ethnic criterion⁶³, for another, also the 'principle of territorial assignment to nationality expressed in *ius soli* was never decisive in the ethnically mixed territories'⁶⁴. When

⁶² Cf. E. Gellner, *Narody*, p. 143.

⁶³ Michael Maurer, *Geschichte und gesellschaftliche Strukturen des 17. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Die Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Albert Meier, München 1999 (=Hanser Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur, vol. 2), p. 22.

⁶⁴ A. Kłosowska, *Kultury*, p. 140.

we extend this juxtaposition by political fragmentation of the region, mutual hostility of various ethnic groups and religious divisions, what we obtain is a substantial group of factors which disintegrated the region in the 16th and 17th century. Eventually, however, they did not take precedence. Integration was taking place through language and culture. The essence of this integration came to be the contamination of a far broader spectrum of Slavonic and Germanic ethnic groups than it could follow from the conventional reduction to the Polish-German antagonism. Silesians perceived lasting or development within the common sphere of isolating, monolingual areas as a threat. In this sense bilingualism, which constituted a platform for agreement for various ethnic groups and was therefore integrating, received an unequivocally positive evaluation. A real, similarly integrating, though morally problematic alternative was the building of monoculture in the entire territory of Silesia, which owing to the system of power relations could – despite the 15th and 16th century regression – manifest itself exclusively in the tendency towards the progressing transformation of Silesia into a German-speaking region. This does not violate the fundamental fact that Silesia was a joint project which was implemented on site⁶⁵, and not brought from outside by any of the nations. National affiliations together with the ultimately German-speaking culture of Silesia, whose intensive emergence took place from the 16th century and whose period of great flourish fell to the 17th century, speeded up the erosion of Polish culture in Lower Silesia, which was isolated from its homeland. There is nothing awkward about the focus on these newly introduced patterns, in the end ‘the human need to be part of an identifiable, long-lived community, which does not only last a single generation; and the need to be recognized and respected, and to feel pride and dignity, seems to be an integral part of our social nature’⁶⁶.

⁶⁵ Cf. Aleksander Gieysztor, *Kultura śląska między IX a XIII wiekiem*, Katowice 1960, p. 25.

⁶⁶ Jerzy Jedlicki *Nacjonalizm, patriotyzm i inicjacja kulturowa*, ‘Znak’, 3 (1997), No. 502, p. 60.

The role of ethnic and linguistic issues in the integration and disintegration of modern-age Silesia (the sub-period between 1618/48 and 1740)

Abstract:

The matter of changes in the ethno-linguistic relations in Silesia evokes a significantly more emotional response from later scholars than those from said period. Contemporary sources approached the issue in a roundabout way or simply marginalised it. Simultaneously, the Silesians considered themselves to be ethnically, possibly also linguistically, distinct from the denizens of neighbouring regions. Nonetheless certain categories relating to the territorial outreach of ethno-linguistic groups held true for Silesia. In this context one can distinguish a division formed at the dawn of Renaissance, dividing Silesia into the left and right shore of the Odra river. This article concerns the Silesian border regions as well. Other aspects are considered as well, ethno-linguistic aspects capable of negating or furthering divisions in Silesia, aspects such as literary works, teaching and usage of language, (German, Polish, Latin) the presence of Polish printed works, as well as Jewish presence. Deliberations on the subject led to the conclusion that the effect of ethno-linguistic relations on the cohesiveness of Silesian society in the late Habsburg era was rather harmless.

Keywords:

ethnicity, language, dialects, borderland, integration, disintegration

In the early modern age, Silesia – famous for its remarkably complex structure and history – was a place where questions on ethnicity and language closely and naturally intermingled with those of identity and regional affiliation. This phenomenon was so deeply rooted in the works of contemporary authors that in some cases both sides of this relationship need to be carefully separated from each other¹.

To begin with, it would be worth turning one's attention to the relationship between the attempts to capture the real ethnic and linguistic image of Silesia of the modern age and the contemporary interpretations of this image, reflected, for example, in historiographical works of the time. Two crucial questions are as follows: 1. What was really happening? 2. How was the situation presented? In this respect,

¹ For a wider context see Fridrich Lichtstern (Lucae), *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone Oder Eigentliche warhafft Beschreibung Ober- und Nieder-Schlesiens*, Franckfurt am Mayn 1685, p. 782, and also p. 314; Nicolaus Henel von Hennenfeld, *Silesiographia renovata, necessariis scholiis, observationibus et indice aucta*, Wratislaviae-Lipsiae 1704, ed. Michael Joseph Fibiger, Cap. VI, pp. 676-804.

it would be difficult to give an explicit answer, and the consequences of this dilemma will be examined in the following lines. Of course, archival materials provide extensive information on the language they were produced in. However, as has been often pointed out in literature of the subject, this criterion is rather unreliable, for it mainly points to the level of linguistic skills presented by individual scribes. Moreover, recently, when comparing various contemporary Slavic languages, and even more so when comparing dialects and sub-dialects (especially from the borderland area), researchers have produced quite opposite findings and conclusions, may it be only for the reason of their distinct nationalities. For example, there were many controversies between Czech and Polish historians over the ethno-linguistic image of early modern Silesia, in particular the Duchy of Cieszyn and Opole-Racibórz². Perhaps nowadays historic records are simply not a sufficient basis to enable researchers to trace the differences between the two languages. Another consideration here would be that, for example, in the 16th and 17th centuries, related varieties of the Silesian-Polish sub-dialect and a group of Ostrava sub-dialects co-existed in the same space of time and were closely interrelated³. Besides, primarily in the case of some earlier linguistic studies, major attention was devoted to onomastics, and especially to personal names. Also, the character of the language being studied could be determined by the ethnic origin or the level of literary proficiency displayed by writers who would either distort the names or even replace them with equivalents in their native language. This possibility is all the more convincing when we consider how little importance was attributed at that time to the form and spelling of personal names, including in printed texts, where, for instance, the names of famous figures would appear several times on the same page, yet each time a different version would be used⁴.

² See i.e.: Andělín Grobelný, *Jazyková hranice a školství na Těšínsku v 18. a v 1. polovině 19. století*, [in:] *K otázkám dějin Slezska. Diskuse a materiály z konference*, ed. *idem*, Ostrava 1956, p. 130; and other texts from this collection. For the characteristics of the Duchy of Cieszyn see the recent publication of: Jaroslav Lipowski, *O třech nářečních slovnících Těšínského Slezska*, [in:] *Śląska Republika Uczonych = Schlesische Gelehrtenrepublik = Slezská vědecká obec*, vol. 5, eds Marek Hałub, Anna Mańko-Matysiak, Dresden-Wrocław 2012, p. 359.

³ Arnošt Lamprecht, *Jazyková situace na širším Ostravsku*, [in:] *Dějiny českého jazyka ve Slezsku a na Ostravsku*, eds Alois Knop, Arnošt Lamprecht, Ladislav Pallas, Ostrava 1967, p. 52.

⁴ See also an apt and informative recent approach to the issue in: Matthias Weber, *Schlesische Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Jahr 1945*, [in:] *Schlesien und die Schlesier*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, new edition, München 2000, p. 285, where, in reference to the second half of the 17th century, the author mentions the printer Johann Christoph Jakob of Brzeg, who in Polish publications was referred to as Jan Krzysztof Jakub of Brzeg (*‘dem Drucker Johann Christoph Jakob in Brieg [...], der sich in den polnischen Drucken Jan Krzys[z]tof Jakub w Brzegu nennt’*); the title page of one of the local publications proves that Polish versions of names appeared in the works of written literature alongside German ones, depending on the actual need (*‘zeigt nicht nur den unproblematischen Umgang mit Personen- und Ortsnamen, die je nach Bedarf in der deutschen oder in der polnischen*

Regarding the connection between the true image of linguistic-ethnic relations within Silesia in the modern period and their portrayal in contemporary writing, what obviously comes to mind is that this question elicited much greater excitement among scholars of later generations, especially during the period of budding modern national consciousness and in the era of nationalism and related antagonisms, that is in Europe in the 19th and the 20th century. For the authors of the early modern age this issue was of a rather marginal importance; this was especially conspicuous in the case of questions of cultural or regional identity, hence it was easier for them – in line with contemporary norms – to copy their predecessors. This complicates the answer all the more so that from the 1570s throughout the following centuries, Silesian historiography benefitted greatly from the contributions of Joachim Cureus – a German historian who identified himself with the concept of the German version of Silesian identity. What deserves mentioning at this point is the fact that in the 17th century and at the outset of the 18th century, Silesian historiography – naturally, its German variety – by means of its authors and titles (i.e. those cited in the latter part of this paper) could have had an integrating influence on the region. This was so regardless of the dubious reliability of the communicated information – even though the reason behind this might have been the so-called ‘mark of contemporary erudition’ or the fact of the authors’ drawing extensively from the output of their predecessors.

The answer to the question of to what extent issues of ethnicity and language may be considered forces that integrated and disintegrated Silesia in the years 1618/48–1740, is all the more complex as at the time, this subject was approached quite differently than it is now. Every now and then a question may emerge, as signalled above, of to what extent this issue was meaningful for contemporary Silesians, or – alternatively – for writers of foreign origin who described it in their works, and to what extent it was important for disputing researchers, writers and ideologues (who also operated within the limits of one country only but in different spaces of time)⁵; to what extent ethno-linguistic diversity was in fact a disintegrating force on a national or local level. In this context, it would be reasonable to

Variante gedruckt wurden, sondern weist durch das schlesisch-polnische Wort «Fárazz» (Pfarrer, poln. proboszcz) auch auf die Besonderheiten des wasserpolnischen Dialektes in Schlesien hin.’). This, most likely did not affect the integrity of Silesia in a negative way (the question of the so-called ‘waterish Polish dialect’ will be addressed later).

⁵ For more information on the subject of this paper (i.e. in relation to the Duchy of Cieszyn) see the following Czech publication: Jiří Stibor, *Těšínská šlechta v proměnách staletí*, [in:] *Šlechtic v Horním Slezsku. Vztah regionu a center na příkladu osudů a kariér šlechty Horního Slezska (15.-20. Století) / Szlachcic na Górnym Śląsku. Relacje między regionem i centrum w losach i karierach szlachty na Górnym Śląsku (XV-XX wiek)*, eds Jiří Brňovják, Waclaw Gojniczek, Aleš Zářický, Katowice–Ostrava 2011, pp. 83-84; see also p. 88.

consider at least the fact that all inhabitants of the contemporary states viewed themselves as compatriots – subject to one supreme ruler and one socio-administrative system – regardless of their ethnic origin or language.

What may also seem quite significant is the fact that by the end of the Habsburg rule, over the entire territory of Silesia, both Czech and Polish were given equal priority in courts, alongside German⁶. To give another example, following the Counter-Reformation, a German and a Polish cleric operated simultaneously in a Catholic parish church situated close to the Polish border in Namysłów⁷. What is more, in 1707, an individual representing the states owned by the Duchy of Cieszyn sought permission to launch an Evangelical printing house that was to print books in Polish – the language used by the local community; the project was turned down by the authorities⁸, but not for ethno-linguistic reasons. Likewise, a widely-publicized (in literature of the subject) ethnic conflict between Polish and German members of the Cistercian nunnery in Trzebnica proved to be spurred by external factors either of a purely institutional-religious or political-administrative nature, or by Habsburg-Polish political relations⁹. The above examples indicate that the issues we are examining in this paper were much less absorbing for the people of the time than one might expect. Instead, their utmost attention seemed to be focused principally on matters that were rather unconnected with ethno-linguistic issues, such as politics and religion.

In view of the foregoing comments, it should be stated that German-speaking Silesians and the Slavic-speaking Silesians considered themselves compatriots. Perhaps, it was more likely for contemporary Silesians to draw a sharper contrast between the terms ‘German-speaking’ and Slavic-speaking’ than between the terms ‘German’ and ‘Slavic’. If this was indeed the case, then this distinction would clearly relate to the sphere of language, not ethnicity. What is remarkable in this context is that at the time it was neither considered important to address this issue nor to

⁶ Marie Gawrecká, *Od podziału Śląska do Wiosny Ludów (1740–1848)*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka i kultura europejskiego regionu*, eds Joachim Bahlke, Dan Gawrecki, Ryszard Kaczmarek, Gliwice 2011, p. 182.

⁷ Mateusz Goliński, *Od czasów najdawniejszych do 1740 roku*, [in:] *Namysłów. Z dziejów miasta i okolic*, eds *idem*, Elżbieta Kościk, Jan Kęsik, Namysłów 2006, pp. 141, 163.

⁸ Renata Czyż, *Władza świecka i duchowna wobec książki protestanckiej w księstwie cieszyńskim*, [in:] *Religia i polityka. Kwestie wyznaniowe i konflikty polityczne w Europie w XVIII wieku*. W 300. rocznicę konwencji w Altranstädt, eds Lucyna Harc, Gabriela Waś, Wrocław 2009, p. 222.

⁹ Kazimierz Bobowski, *Rola konwentu cysterek trzebnickich w utrzymaniu polskości na Śląsku w dobie reformacji i kontrreformacji (próba nowego spojrzenia)*, [in:] *Studia i materiały z dziejów Śląska*, vol. 20, eds Krystyn Matwijowski, Irena Sroka, Katowice 1992, pp. 37-38, 41-42, 46-47. For the contemporary religious policies of the House of Habsburgs (apart from the nunnery of Trzebnica) see also: Andreas Kossert, *Ostatni okres rządów Habsburgów (1707-1740)*, [in:] *Historia Górnego Śląska*, p. 167.

discuss it. At the same time, what clearly characterized Silesians was a strong sense of independence – in terms of ethnicity and possibly language – from the inhabitants of all the neighbouring states¹⁰.

Nonetheless, during the period in question, the issue of the territorial range of particular ethno-linguistic groups of Silesia was to a certain degree reflected in local historiography. A work which certainly deserves mention here is one that presents a famous division of Silesia into two sections located at the left and right banks of the Odra river, formulated at the beginning of the Renaissance by the Italian humanist Enea Silvio Piccolomini¹¹. Nonetheless, the traditional distinction (from the mid-18th century) between Lower and Upper Silesia does not seem to have had originated in the period of our interest. What is more, the distinction between the Silesian mountainous area of the Sudetes (almost entirely Germanized, as opposed to the Sudeten Foreland which were Germanized only to a certain degree, at least in some areas) and Silesian lowlands (whose ethno-linguistic picture by the end of the period was much more varied)¹² seemed to remain unnoticed. On the other hand, the 19th-20th-century expressions *Wasserpöhlen* and *wasserpöhlisch* (literally: ‘waterish Poles’ and ‘waterish Polish language’) – now considered rather offensive – used in reference to the inhabitants of Upper Silesia whose language was a mixture of Slavic/Polish and German, were at the time not in the least bit controversial. Indeed, by the outset of the 17th century, Silesians who used literary Polish language in their writing were consciously saturating it with elements of their dialects. Yet, the local variety of Polish was clearly archaic and fossilized, as a consequence of which it was increasingly moving away from what was at the time understood as Polish¹³. A leading representative of this group of Silesian writers who mostly operated in the borderland areas, a vicar, Adam Gdaciuz of Kluczbork (Gdaczusz, ca. 1610–1688; there are different versions of the date of his birth), was bold enough to refer to the critics of his dialect as ‘*Wässerpolowie nádęci*’ (*nadęci* means ‘huffy’ in English) and this epithet clearly suggests that these antagonistic

¹⁰ For linguistic aspects see the following historic publications: F. Lucae, *Schlesiens*, p. 18.

¹¹ See i.e. the following recent publication: Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Dolny Śląsk w latach 1327-1526*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*, ed. Wojciech Wrzesiński, Wrocław 2006, p. 126.

¹² For the region of Zielona Góra see the following recent publication: Zbigniew Bujkiewicz, *Rozwój Zielonej Góry od 1740 roku do początków XIX wieku*, [in:] *Historia Zielonej Góry*, vol. 1: *Dzieje miasta do końca XVIII wieku*, ed. Wojciech Strzyżewski, Zielona Góra 2011, p. 303.

¹³ Kevin Hannan, *Naród i język śląski w perspektywie etnolingwistycznej*, [in:] *Górny Śląsk wyobrażony: wokół mitów, symboli i bohaterów dyskursów narodowych. Imaginiertes Oberschlesien: Mythen, Symbole und Helden in den nationalen Diskursen*, eds Juliane Haubold-Stolle, Bernard Linnek, Opole-Marburg 2005, p. 149.

relations extended beyond the ethnic or linguistic sphere¹⁴. As a matter of fact – as it has been noted by one researcher of the modern period – at the outset of the 17th century, the term *Wasserpöhlen* was probably used not in reference to the inhabitants of Upper Silesia, but Polish-speaking inhabitants of central Silesia – who resided at the banks of the Odra river – as well as local rafters¹⁵. In 1685, a native Silesian, Frederick Lucae (Frederick Lichtstern) used the commonly-known term *Wasser-Polen* to describe – in a purely informative sense without making any judgement – the sub-group (at least) of Polish-speaking inhabitants not only of the Upper Silesian duchies of Cieszyn, Racibórz, Opole and the Free State of Pszczyna, but also the Lower Silesian duchies of Brzeg, Wrocław, Oleśnica and Free States of Syców, Milicz and Żmigród¹⁶. This approach was maintained until the close of the discussed period. Nonetheless, the role of linguistic intermingling neither seems to be antagonistic nor disintegrating for relations between the inhabitants of ethnically and linguistically varied regions of Silesia and its remaining inhabitants. Moreover, the aforementioned chronicler F. Lucae claimed that most Silesians in fact did not speak German well, especially in some areas of central and Lower Silesia, as well as in the mountains; and that it took a lot of effort to understand them¹⁷. And what were Lichtstern's subsequent – crucial for the discussed subject – views on Upper Silesia? Well, contrary to opinions expressed by his contemporaries from Wrocław, the best German in the entirety of Silesia was spoken in Krnov and Głubczyce¹⁸. The task of tracing linguistic differences between southern areas of Upper Silesia (like Głubczyce, Krnov) of the mid-18th century and its northern stretches (Lubliniec, Olesno) is not in the least an easy one.

¹⁴ See: Ladislav Pallas, *Jazyková otázka a podmínky vytváření národního vědomí ve Slezsku*, Ostrava 1970, pp. 9 (quotation), 10, 103 (footnote no. 7). Cf. also i.e.: Jan Zaremba, *Polscy pisarze na Śląsku po wojnie trzydziestoletniej*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1969, pp. 122, 168.

¹⁵ Peter Chmiel, *Die sprachlichen Verhältnisse in Oberschlesien in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, [in:] *Kulturraum Schlesien. Ein europäisches Phänomen. Interdisziplinäre Konferenz, Wrocław/Breslau, 18.–20. Oktober 1999*, eds Walter Engel, Norbert Honsza, Wrocław 2001, pp. 180-181, original quotation in German: 'hat der Ursprung des aus dem 17. Jahrhundert stammenden Begriffs «Plebs wasser Polana» kaum etwas mit Oberschlesien zu tun. Viel mehr galt er als Bezeichnung für die polnischsprechende Bevölkerung in Mittelschlesien (entlang der Oder um Brieg und Ohlau) und die Oderflößer'.

¹⁶ F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, pp. 825-826.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 828, original quotation in German: 'Belangende die Teutsche Sprache / so wird dieselbe von den meisten Schlesiern nicht eben zum reinesten ausgesprochen. Vornemlich führet das gemeine Volck im Breslauischen / Schweidnitzschen / Jaurischen / Glogauischen / Lignitzschen / wie auch im Riesen-Gebürge einen verdrüßlichen corrupten accent, also daß ein fremder und reiner [!] Teutscher gnugsam zu thun hat / wenn er die redenden Leute recht verstehen wil / und gar genau attendiren muß'; it was very similar in the case of towns (pp. 828-829).

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 829, original quotation in German: 'Unter allen Schlesiern aber reden die Jägerndorffer und Leobschützer den nettesten accent, und die Teutsche Sprache am reinesten / unangesehen theils Breslauer jenen den Vorzug zu nehmen vermeynen'.

At the time, no attention whatsoever was devoted to the linguistic and ethnic specificity of the Silesian-Lusatian borderland. Although the former existence of historical Sorbian tribes in this territory was a well-documented fact, the question of their language being preserved in the territory of this western stretch of modern Silesia owing to their potential descendants is virtually absent from contemporary records. The same may be said about the ethno-linguistic boundary between Silesia and Bohemia, which was clearly marked out by the Sudetes. Silesian historiography of the time was also oblivious to the County of Kłodzko, which neighboured the historical region of Silesia. In terms of landform, the Silesian-Moravian borderland was to a large extent similar to its Silesian-Bohemian counterpart, but neither the absence of the Sudetes in its south-eastern stretches and specific conditions created by the presence of the Moravian Gate, nor the complex outline of its borders, managed to bring ethno-linguistic questions to wider attention. As for the second half of the 17th century and the outset of the 18th century, it was the strip of land south of Racibórz – formerly a historic border between the Dioceses of Wrocław and Olomuc and, in the 17th-18th centuries, between the Duchy of Opole-Racibórz and Opava-Krnov – that was classified by the contemporary literature of the subject as the transition zone between the Polish- and Czech-speaking areas¹⁹. Yet nothing is known about the zone's potentially disintegrating influence on the ethno-linguistic structure of this south-eastern part of Silesia – especially in the context of its being situated in the immediate neighbourhood of territories dominated by Silesian-Polish and Ostrava dialects and the efforts of the clergy to reach their faithful despite the challenges posed by linguistic diversity. Curiously enough, considerable interest in the issue of language was aroused by the southern, Beskidian part of the Duchy of Cieszyn.

It is worth mentioning that although Silesians of the early modern age were generally aware of the fact that their region was formerly home to ancient Slavic tribes, no particular emphasis was put by them on exploring the unique qualities of their legacy, nor did they distinguish between the descendants of medieval German settlers who arrived in Silesia from various lands of the Reich in the remote past. With regard to present interpretations of past approaches to the questions of language and ethnicity, what may be added is that contemporary neighbours of Silesia called *die Böhmen* or *die Mähren* were not Slavic Czechs or Slavic Moravians, but residents of Bohemia and Moravia; a similar meaning was attributed to the collective personal

¹⁹ Milan Šmerda, *Protireformace a národnostní situace v Horním Slezsku*, [in:] *K otázkám*, p. 105; Alois Knop, Ladislav Pallas, *Dějiny jazyka českého ve Slezsku*, [in:] *Dějiny*, p. 24; Adolf Turek, *Poněmčování Opavska v 16. a 17. století. IV. Mezi Opavicí a Pštinou*, 'Slezský sborník', 48 (1950), No. 8, p. 197-198.

name *die Lausitzer*²⁰. This also shows that what was of crucial importance during the period in question was the so-called ‘country of residence’, and what was generally ignored and considered relatively insignificant was the ethnic and linguistic make-up of its population. The mass influx to Silesia of Polish refugees during the Swedish invasion, in line with ‘the shift in the proportion of ethnic minorities in favour of the Silesian Poles’ (spurred by an almost simultaneous mass emigration triggered by the Thirty Years’ War) are not regarded as particularly destructive for the cohesion of contemporary Silesia²¹. Therefore, Silesians of that time may be said to have formed a united ethno-linguistic group whose different shades emerge only upon closer examination. What was often adhered to by contemporary scribes was the previously-mentioned concept of left- and right-bank Silesia.

Following the year 1740, in line with the aforementioned concept, Silesia was still perceived as being composed of the so-called ‘German side’ (*die deutsche Seite*), referred to as the area ‘on this side of the Odra river’ (*diesseits der Oder*), and the so-called ‘Polish side’ (*die polnische Seite*), referred to as the area ‘on the other side of the Odra river’ (*jenseits der Oder*). It is worth noting here that the right-bank section is classified as the Polish one (see above). As we can see, no room in this division is left for the Czech language²². In fact, the contemporary German literature on Silesia seldom bothered to distinguish between Polish, Czech, Moravian and Sorbian components of the Slavic population²³. Consequently, representatives of these four groups were recognized as Slavs according to a bipolar Slavic-German division. This division may be considered evidence of the firm conviction of contemporary writers – both those highly and less focused on the subject of Silesia – that this was in fact the region’s true ethno-linguistic countenance. Such a conviction would then justify their (and their readers’) lack of interest in the aforementioned Silesian-Lusatian borderland and, perhaps especially, in the Moravian Gate borderland – both of which may be said to lie relatively within their reach. Furthermore, the existence in the Silesian writers’ consciousness of the concept of the so-called ‘Polish side’ shows that they perceived Slavonic and Polish elements as of one whole – associated principally with their eastern neighbours. At the same time, right-bank Silesia, much smaller territorially than its left-bank counterpart and situated at the border with Poland, was described as ‘the other side of

²⁰ This follows i.e. from: F. Lucae, *Schlesiens, passim*.

²¹ A. Herzig, K. Ruchniewicz, M. Ruchniewicz, *Śląsk*, p. 87 (quotation); see also (the lack of evidence for this fact): F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, pp. 826-827. Cf. also: W. Czaplinski, *Wpływ*, pp. 154-155; J. Bahleke, *Die Geschichte*, p. 59.

²² See especially: F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, p. 828.

²³ The Polish, Bohemian and Moravian versions were highlighted especially by: N. Henel von Henenfeld, *Silesiographia renovata*, Cap. VI, p. 803.

the Odra river'. This attitude shows that it was obviously the left-bank, German-speaking part of Silesia, that was considered the actual stem of the Silesian state, whereas its right-bank territories, referred to as eastern borderlands or a frontier territorial strip, were attributed nothing but a peripheral role. No wonder that territories located outside this strip were principally regarded as home to the Polish (or Slavic) community; at the same time they were also regarded – although to a lesser extent and contrary to the general attitude of Silesians towards the Czechs and Moravians – home to the inhabitants of Greater and Lesser Poland (but unlike these territories Bohemia and Moravia were part of the same kingdom together with Silesia).

Naturally, this ethno-linguistic division of Silesia based on the natural course of the river Odra was highly simplistic. Nonetheless, it is highly probable that contemporary Silesians considered it as corresponding – at least roughly – to reality. Yet, curiously enough, even writers themselves admitted at the same time that the left-bank Odra was here and there inhabited by a close-knit Polish-speaking community; at the same time in some, especially rural parts of the right-bank territory, could one witness Polish more or less distinctly blending with German. Perhaps this did not really match some of the local writers' expectations of their homeland, but, nonetheless, in their works we find no evidence whatsoever that they might have considered the situation to have any disintegrating influence on the region; what they only highlighted was the fact of its ethnic and linguistic diversity.

The aforementioned concept of the region's division in two Odra-adjacent parts was addressed by a native Silesian, Jacob Schickfus, in his work of 1625 where he writes that the Polish language was used in the territories between Oława and Kąty Wrocławskie. What Schickfus also highlighted was that the local population was unwilling to abandon the usage of the Polish language²⁴. Curiously enough, no other reference whatsoever to any contemporary or former ethno-linguistic relations within Silesia was found in this voluminous work. Over half a century later this issue was again briefly revisited by another native Silesian chronicler, F. Lucae, who stated that Polish was spoken in the area near the Polish border and in some central parts of the region²⁵. Much closer attention was devoted to the subject in a somewhat later, very extensive work published in the early 18th century by the Wrocław Prior, Michael Joseph Fibiger, who based his study on a famous, though

²⁴ Jacob Schickfus, *New Vermehrte Schlesische Chronica unnd Landes Beschreibung*, Jehna [1625], Das vierde Buch, p. 10, original quotation in German: 'das Bawren Volck sich der Polnischen Sprachen so starck beflisset /daß man es davon nicht bringen oder abwenden kan / wie sehr auch man demselben Völcklein darumb zuredet'.

²⁵ F. Lucae, *Schlesiens*, p. 2198, original quotation in German: 'hin und her mitten im Lande / wie im Ohlausehen viel Polnische Familien wohnen / welche bey ihrer Mutter-Sprache bleiben'.

unremarkable (in terms of volume), *Silesiographia*, produced in 1613 by Nicolaus Henel. Many passages of Fibiger's work were devoted to presenting the superiority of 'Germanness' over 'Polishness' ('Slavonicness'), although his main focus was on cultural, not strictly ethno-linguistic, aspects²⁶. Fibiger also adhered to the above-mentioned division of the region into two – German and Polish – sections, in the context of which he mentioned the villages between Oława and Kąty Wrocławskie²⁷.

As was mentioned above, the south-eastern section of Silesia – the mountainous part of the Duchy of Cieszyn – was also classified as unique in terms of its ethnic (and linguistic) composition. This was mostly due to the presence of Vlach migrants who migrated there from remote parts of the Carpathian Mountains. From the second quarter of the 17th century, the southern part of the Duchy of Cieszyn saw a rapid emergence of new personal and geographical names of an alien central- and east-Carpathian origin²⁸. In spite of the fact that the original local population still dominated over that of the newcomers in terms of number, by the mid-17th century both groups were becoming increasingly socio-culturally, territorially and functionally intermingled. This does not mean, however, that their ethno-linguistic structure was uniform. Over time, the southern part of the Duchy of Cieszyn started to be designated as Wallachia (*Valašsko*). By the first half of the 18th century the Wallachian population had lost all its distinctive features and merged entirely with the rest of the region's inhabitants. The term 'Vlach' has come to refer to the entire local population, yet the original Vlach population retained its particular character by maintaining its specific legal and administrative institutions²⁹. At the time even the local highland shepherds – many of whom were simply outlaws – were not considered a disintegrating force from an ethno-linguistic perspective³⁰.

Ethnic changes may also be observed in the case of other ethnic groups. As a result of conscious political strategies introduced by the Habsburgs, starting from the Thirty Years' War the circles of Silesian nobility, 'mostly its aristocratic section, became much more cosmopolitan'; a new sort of noble family from 'Austria, Italy,

²⁶ N. Henel von Hennenfeld, *Silesiographia renovata*, see i.e.: Cap. VI, pp. 720-721. footnote a.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, Cap. II, pp. 162-163.

²⁸ Josef Macůrek, *Dějiny Slezska od poloviny 14. století do poloviny 18. století (1350-1764) v polských thesích*, [in:] *K otázkám*, pp. 26, 28; *idem*, *Valaši v západních Karpatech v 15.-18. století. K dějinám osídlení a hospodářsko-společenského vývoje jižního Těšínska, jihozápadního Polska, severozápadního Slovenska a východní Moravy*, Ostrava 1959, pp. 196-199.

²⁹ *Idem*, *Valaši*, pp. 12-15, 200-206, 279-280, 292, 302, 329-333.

³⁰ The so-called *hajduks* who originated from the mountainous areas of the Duchy of Cieszyn were described in the fourth quarter of the 17th century by: F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, pp. 271-272; *idem*, *Schlesiens*, pp. 659-660.

France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg' emerged³¹. At the outset of the 18th century, Wrocław was home to merchants and craftsmen of several countries³². However, this did not seem to pose any distinctive threat to the cohesion of the contemporary Silesia either.

Both the rapid development of Silesian Baroque German literature and its significant position in the literary output of the German-speaking part of Europe are well-known facts. It was Martin Opitz (1597–1639) of Bolesławiec who lay the foundations of modern German literature produced in language untouched by macaronic terms and regionalisms. In one of his works dated to 1617 he wrote 'that artistic poetry can be created also in German'³³. Yet, humanist Latin literature was not entirely absent from Silesia before the start of Prussian rule. As the popularity of Opitz's concept gradually gained in strength over time – both across the entire Holy Roman Empire³⁴ and in Silesia – one obvious consequence was that the so-called 'cultured' Silesians felt a growing affinity with the German language. At the same time, they emphasized the fact that Opitz, as well as the most devoted promoters of his literary concepts, descended from nowhere else but their homeland³⁵. Here again we may ask ourselves a vexing question on the reason why these achievements were made right here, in the eastern, German-speaking borderland by its native inhabitants. Independently of the answer, this circumstance must be considered the pivotal force that integrated Silesia as a state which was both capable of such achievements and culturally affiliated with the Holy Roman Empire. A clear and eloquent comment on the issue was expressed in a broader spiritual-artistic context by a scholar who opined that 'the essence of Silesian nature' ('*der Wesensgehalt des Schlesiens*') is, among other things, its Baroque character; and this character was founded on the basis of the local late humanism movement which spurred the total independence of the native literature and determined its uniqueness and close relationship with the natural landscape³⁶. The gradual erasure of such native

³¹ Jarosław Kuczer, *Miasto cesarskie. Zielona Góra za czasów panowania dynastii Habsburgów (1526–1740)*, [in:] *Historia Zielonej*, p. 151.

³² W. Korta, *Historia*, p. 373.

³³ Marta Burbianka, *Z dziejów drukarstwa śląskiego w XVII wieku. Baumannowie i ich spadkobiercy*, prepared by Helena Szwejewska, Wrocław 1977, p. 95.

³⁴ For more information on the initial reception of M. Opitz's 1624 publication in the native German-speaking states see also: H. Heckel, *Geschichte*, p. 198.

³⁵ See contemporary approaches in the following works: F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, pp. 767-768; *idem*, *Schlesiens*, p. 2199; N. Henel von Hennenfeld, *Silesiographia renovata*, Cap. VI, pp. 802-803, also Cap. VII, p. 55.

³⁶ Arno Lubos, *Geschichte der Literatur Schlesiens*, vol. 1, München 1960, p. 401, original quotation in German: '*hat zum ersten Mal die Stammeseigenart in der Literatur, die Vereinigung von Landschaft und Schrifttum, das Selbständigwerden des schlesischen Schrifttums, zum Ausdruck gebracht*'.

poetry from the literary map of Germany, which came as a result of the redefinition of aesthetic norms at the outset of the 18th century³⁷, did not revoke this fact.

Twentieth-century Polish literature on the subject accentuated the fact that it was Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584), the precursor of modern Polish literature, who had a crucial impact on contemporary Silesian literary contributions. What is remarkable is that local 17th-century Polish literature still closely resembled its 16th-century equivalent, most notably in terms of meaningful innovations introduced by Kochanowski³⁸. However, it is difficult to find this undoubtedly important phenomenon meaningful in the context of the main subject of this paper; as a matter of fact, this literature was produced exclusively by scholars (and artists) who were members of – to name the title of a famous contemporary Wrocław literary series – the Silesian Republic of Scholars (*Schlesische Gelehrtenrepublik*), who may be here described as a group of aesthetes with no particular influence on the general public whatsoever. Moreover, Polish literature of the subject also mentions the crucial impact of Kochanowski's output on the achievements of Wenzel Scherffer von Scherffenstein – a poet and translator of Kochanowski's epigrams and songs – who originated from Głubczyce and whose second profession was that of an organist in the castle church in Brzeg (1603-1674)³⁹. According to German researchers, Scherffer von Scherffenstein was a particularly devoted lover of Polish culture⁴⁰. This opinion is repeated by a Polish connoisseur of the subject, who wrote that Scherffenstein's work is evidence of the harmonious co-existence of the German and Polish ethnic groups in Silesia⁴¹. By analogy, it seems apt at this point to make a comment on the unique impact of the Slavic (Polish) character on literary contributions of the 17th-century German-speaking Silesian mystics, in particular, John

³⁷ Tomasz Jabłecki, *Śląski przyczynek do rozkwitu stylu wykwińskiego w poezji niemieckiej przełomu wieków XVII i XVIII*, [in:] *Z Gorzanowa w świat szeroki... Studia i materiały ofiarowane Profesorowi Arno Herzigowi w 70-lecie Urodzin*, eds Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Marek Zybura, Wrocław 2007, p. 161, footnote 1.

³⁸ Here: U. Gumuła, *Literatura*, pp. 15-18, 48-49, 84, 127, 130. Cf: also the following recent publication: Beata Stuchlik-Surowiak, *Sylwetka Samuela Ludwika Zasadiusa na tle środowiska religijno-kulturalnego XVIII-wiecznego Cieszyna*, [in:] *Śląska Republika*, vol. 4, Wrocław 2010, p. 206.

³⁹ See i.e.: Wincenty Ogrodziński, *Dzieje piśmiennictwa śląskiego*, prepared for printing by Ludwik Brożek, Zdzisław Hierowski, Katowice 1965, p. 79.

⁴⁰ Arno Lubos, *Deutsche und Slawen. Beispiele aus Schlesien und anderen Ostgebieten*, Wien 1974, p. 63, original quotation in German: 'ist [...] unter den deutschsprachigen Barockdichtern der offenkundigste Freund des polnischen Volkstums gewesen'.

⁴¹ Mirosława Czarnačka, *Dialogische Regionalität. Kulturelle und kommunikative deutsch-polnische Wechselbeziehungen im Schlesien des 17. Jhs.*, [in:] *Kulturraum*, p. 63, original quotation in German: 'Seine Gedichte sind [...] literarische Zeugnisse des friedlichen Zusammenlebens von deutschem und polnischem Volk in Schlesien'. For more information on Scherffenstein see i.e.: Jan Piprek, *Wacław Scherffer von Scherffenstein, poeta śląski i polonofil XVII wieku*, Opole 1961, especially pp. 10-12, 121-122, 149-150, 159, 165-170, 206-236.

Scheffler (1624-1677)⁴² – better known by the pseudonym of Angelus Silesius – the son of a Cracow burgher who migrated to Wrocław. Curiously enough, this question has been seriously contested in the recent years⁴³. It is nonetheless worth mentioning yet another issue described as ‘an extremely interesting but a rather neglected contribution to the shaping of 17th-century Polish-German relations’: when – following his conversion to Catholicism – J. Scheffler became a keen religious polemicist, his ‘Protestant opponents [...] more often than not referred in their publications to his [Scheffler’s] Polish roots with the intention of weakening his position’. In consequence, Scheffler was ‘heavily irritated with these repeated insults [...]’⁴⁴. Perhaps his critics were giving expression to the contemporary stereotypical concept of Catholic Poles? Another researcher expressed the following view: ‘his opponents wanted to cast a shadow on his morals and they suspected him of engaging in relationships with „Polish wenches”’ – young ladies who came to Wrocław as seasonal workers and whom he provided with spiritual and medical care⁴⁵. In this context, this latter approach may not necessarily be connected with the issue of ethnicity.

The testimony of John Christian Günther (1695-1723), a Baroque poet from sub-Sudetes Strzegom, may be interpreted in yet another way. During his adolescence, when he was probably not very familiar with Slavic speech, he wrote later in a letter to his beloved of Kluczbork that the melody of her Polish language (the sound of which he normally could not stand) pleased him much more than the sound of Romance languages (*‘Dein Polnisch, das mir sonst so rauh und widrig klingt, / Beschämt durch Deinen Mund den Wohl-Laut Welscher Zungen’*)⁴⁶. This rather negative first impression (see above) is hardly evidence of German-Polish Silesian linguistic antagonisms, all the more so in that it corresponds to the way of thinking and style of expression that was typical of Günther the poet.

The development of local literature may be to some extent connected with the emphasis of Silesian educational institutions on teaching Latin and German. In the

⁴² W. Ogrodziński, *Dzieje*, p. 80.

⁴³ See: Tomasz Sapota, *Angelus Silesius – wpływ potrójnej tradycji na myśl śląskiego mistyka*, ‘Palas Silesia’, 2 (1998), No. 1, pp. 35-37; Cezary Lipiński, *Poeta poetów. Studia nad polską duchowością religijną na przykładzie recepcji Angelusa Silesiusa*, Zielona Góra 2011, pp. 89-99. Cf: also following earlier publication: *Silesiaca. Wybór z dzieł pisarzy śląsko-niemieckich XVII wieku w tekstach oryginalnych i polskich przekładach*, eds Marian Szyrocki, Zdzisław Żygulski, Warszawa 1957, p. 42.

⁴⁴ C. Lipiński, *Poeta*, p. 97.

⁴⁵ Marianna Borysiak, *W kręgu Johanna Schefflera w latach 1649-1654*, [in:] *Dawna kultura literacka na Śląsku. Zbiór studiów*, eds eadem, Adam Galos, Wrocław 1994, p. 45.

⁴⁶ Quotation from: Eberhard Hilscher, *Der schlesische Europäer John Christian Günther*, [in:] *Kulturraum*, p. 92.

aforementioned work by Opitz (1617) we read that ‘Greek and Latin, following the period of their great prosperity, have gradually degenerated and become extinct – which was a vicious attack against the sanctified mission of education’⁴⁷. Yet, this did not deter both Protestant and Catholic gymnasiums from delivering humanist programmes in Latin⁴⁸.

It was in Silesia, i.e., in the Protestant six-grade gymnasium of Brzeg – one of the leading schools launched following the Thirty Years’ War – that a major emphasis was put on the teaching of Ciceronian Latin; its students, starting from the second year of their education, were banned from using their native language – only foreigners were allowed to speak German in order to improve their linguistic skills⁴⁹. In the third quarter of the 17th century, the teaching programme of another major school in Silesia – an Evangelical ducal-municipal (later only municipal) gymnasium in Legnica, included – along with German – also Latin and Greek⁵⁰. A uniform programme of all 17th-century Jesuit colleges (i.e. in the Bishopric town of Nysa) focused on classical literature and a thorough teaching of Latin; students also learned Greek and Hebrew there, yet scarce attention was devoted to contemporary languages⁵¹. According to the educational policies introduced in the year 1643, until the 18th century both urban and Protestant Wrocław gymnasiums focused mostly on teaching Latin, Greek and Hebrew. A considerable emphasis was also placed on teaching students to speak and write – both letters and poetry – in Latin and German⁵². Yet, by the mid-17th century it was considered inconvenient to focus on teaching Latin; at the outset of the following century the townspeople complained that ‘their children were not being taught the language well enough’⁵³. Contrary to traditional views on education there soon emerged a trend to shift the focus towards issues of a more practical value – namely the contemporary native language and other living languages that were particularly useful at everyday business and social occasions. In 1706, the Oleśnica gymnasium introduced a modernized version of the teaching programme: during the two initial years of education

⁴⁷ M. Burbianka, *Z dziejów*, pp. 94-95.

⁴⁸ Norbert Conrads, *Ephraim Ignaz Naso von Löwenfels – der verhinderte schlesische Herodot*, [in:] *idem, Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, p. 221.

⁴⁹ *Historia Śląska*, vol.1, part 3: *Od końca XVI w. do r. 1763*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1963, p. 564.

⁵⁰ Lucyna Harc, *Oświata w Legnicy w XVIII wieku*, [in:] *Tradycje nauki legnickiej. Konferencja naukowa z okazji 480. rocznicy założenia uniwersytetu w Legnicy, 12 października 2006 r.*, ed. Stanisław Dąbrowski, Legnica 2007, p. 130.

⁵¹ Bogumiła Burda, *Szkolnictwo średnie na Dolnym Śląsku w okresie wczesnonowożytnym (1526-1740)*, Zielona Góra 2007, pp. 55-56.

⁵² M. Burbianka, *Z dziejów*, pp. 56-57.

⁵³ *Historia Śląska*, p. 565.

students had to focus mostly on mastering practical German, and towards the end on perfecting their Latin and German oratory skills⁵⁴. Only two years later, the pioneering Oleśnica gymnasium was joined by the so-called Academy of Knights of Legnica, where, alongside German – almost an exclusive medium of school communication – students also participated in mandatory lessons of French (the language associated with circles of high society, i.e. diplomacy) and Italian, and optional lessons of Latin and Greek⁵⁵. Yet, in spite of this fact, ‘schools of Latin’ were much more highly valued than ‘schools of German’, which is proved by the example of Świdnica (1707–1708);⁵⁶ following the thirty-year period of turmoil, French teaching was re-launched in the local Evangelical grammar school⁵⁷. At the close of the discussed period and at the threshold of the Enlightenment, Silesian education showed symptoms that seemed likely to support the growing attachment of the educated youth to the dominant German language, at the expense of their ties with ‘cosmopolitan’ Latin. However, whenever necessary, Slavic languages were also taught, just like in the Jesuit gymnasium in Opole (which operated from 1668), whose students, besides Latin and German, also spoke Polish⁵⁸. At the outset of the 18th century, the local collegiate school educated its students almost exclusively in Polish – the only exception was the choral singing lessons taught in German; at the same time, the first independent German school in the Upper Silesian town of Opole was approved for operation as late as in 1714⁵⁹.

What was crucial from the perspective of the functioning of the ‘Silesian-Polish’ language was the development of inter-linguistic relationships between Silesia and its eastern neighbour. Intense commercial contact between Silesian burghers (especially Wrocław merchants) and Rzeczpospolita led to the foundation – thanks to their efforts – in 1666 of the Wrocław municipal ‘Polish’ school, which operated continuously until the very end of the discussed period and where future merchant had the opportunity to master, among others, the Polish language

⁵⁴ Lucyna Harc, *Olsnographia Johannaes Sinapiusa*, [in:] *Johannes Sinapius, Olsnographia oder Eigentliche Beschreibung des Oelßnischen Fürstenthums in Nieder-Schlesien*. Vol. 1-2: Leipzig und Franckfurt, 1706-1707, ed. Lucyna Harc, Wrocław 2012. Digital version: e-Biblioteka Historyczna, vol. 4, p. 16; German version: *eadem, Die Olsnographie von Johannes Sinapius*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 62-63.

⁵⁵ *Eadem, Oświata*, p. 139; Norbert Conrads, *Gründung und Bedeutung der Ritterakademie Liegnitz in habsburgischer Zeit (1708-1740)*, [in:] *idem, Schlesien in der Frühmoderne*, p. 280.

⁵⁶ See: Małgorzata Morawiec, *Z badań nad historią gospodarki i kultury miasta Świdnicy na przełomie XVII i XVIII w.*, [in:] *Dawna kultura*, pp. 95-96.

⁵⁷ B. Burda, *Szkolnictwo*, p. 76; more extensive information on the usage of particular languages in contemporary schools see *ibidem*, p. 52-77.

⁵⁸ Zdzisław Lec, *Szkolnictwo jezuickie na Górnym Śląsku do kasaty*, [in:] *Kultura edukacyjna na Górnym Śląsku*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2002, p. 124.

⁵⁹ Rudolf Nieszewicz, *Szkola kolegiacka w Opolu do sekularyzacji*, [in:] *Kultura*, p. 58.

– which was particularly useful in their later business career⁶⁰. Polish was also taught in the school of Byczyna, whose peak of popularity came in the second and third quarters of the 17th century⁶¹. Young German-speaking Silesians who were willing to master Polish sought their chance to do so from as far as the eastern borderlands. They mostly studied in the nearby towns of Kluczbork and Wołczyn, but sometimes also on the other side of the border – in Poland⁶². People with the right connections used all their powers to establish their children at the courts of the nobility in Rzeczpospolita. The group of young men who were sent beyond the eastern border to perfect their level of Polish included the last member of the Piast dynasty; George William, Duke of Legnica and Brzeg, – who died in 1675 at the age of 15 – studied Polish at the request of his father, Christian, who himself spoke this language very well⁶³. Although this local Piast line had been Germanized long before, its representatives had no reason to shun the speech of their ancestors; their attitude was naturally met without the slightest opposition from their subjects in the duchies – which were soon to be orphaned by their masters – and from the residents of remaining parts of Silesia. As we can see, for some Silesians Polish – alongside Latin – had assumed the status of the first foreign language⁶⁴. Nonetheless, this almost certainly did not negatively affect their bonds with their native land of Silesia.

The existence of a considerable group of German-speaking Silesians who were willing to master Polish spurred the production of relevant literary publications. In 17th- and early-18th-century Silesia, several textbooks for learning Polish with a special focus on German-speaking students were issued, among other things, upon the request of the Wrocław city council⁶⁵.

By the mid-17th century the demand of Polish-speaking Silesians for printed works of Protestant literature was satisfied mainly by neighbouring Poland. Later on, these publications were produced mainly locally, mostly in the borderlands – but enjoying the full freedom of the Evangelical confession – feudal Duchies of Brzeg

⁶⁰ M. Czarnecka, *Dialogische Regionalität*, p. 58. See the following contemporary publication: F. Lucae, *Schlesiens*, p. 2198, who stated that other commercially useful languages (apart from Polish), such as French and Italian were taught in Wrocław by professionals.

⁶¹ F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, p. 827; *idem*, *Schlesiens*, p. 581, 1426. Cf. also i.e.: Beata Stuchlik-Surowiak, *Twórczość Jerzego Bocka na tle kluczborsko-byczyńskiego środowiska kulturalnego z XVII wieku*, [in:] *Śląska Republika*, vol. 3, Wrocław 2008, pp. 295-296.

⁶² Mirosława Czarnecka, *Deutsch-polnische Kommunikation im plurinationalen Kulturkontext des Barock*, [in:] *Kulturgeschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 1, p. 362.

⁶³ *Eadem*, *Dialogische Regionalität*, p. 58.

⁶⁴ See: Kalina Mróz-Jabłocka, *Znajomość języka polskiego jako egzystencjalna konieczność wrocławskiego środowiska kupieckiego w XVII wieku*, [in:] *Z Gorzanowa*, especially pp. 151, 159.

⁶⁵ W. Ogrodziński, *Dzieje*, p. 73.

(for a certain period) and Oleśnica with printing houses located in their capital cities; Wrocław also stood out against other towns in terms of the production of literary works in Polish⁶⁶. The issue of ethnicity was not of slightest importance in this case – constant demand translated into constant supply; from a religious – no less significant – point of view, this activity also contributed to the strengthening of Lutheranism, whose position across Silesia was at the time generally in serious question. This clearly shows that in the case of the borderland region of Kluczbork-Byczyna in the of Duchy of Brzeg it was the bilingual Protestantism that cemented the German and Polish communities in the face of the Counter-Reformation (*‘Deutsche und Polen vereint und gerade in Anbetracht der Gegenreformation ein starkes Bewußtsein der Zusammengehörigkeit geschaffen hatte. Die Geschichte des Protestantismus der Stadt und des Herzogtums Brieg [...] gibt geradezu exemplarische Auskunft über die von der Konfession hergestellten Verflechtungen zwischen den Völkern’*), including, for instance, through contact with German- and Slavic-speaking Evangelicals of Cieszyn⁶⁷.

Germanization – which casually emerged in Silesia along with the top-down re-Catholicization following the Thirty Years’ War, and met no particular resistance of the local community – had a rather neutral influence on the region’s cohesion⁶⁸. The only conspicuous consequence of the increased exposition of Slavic-speaking Silesians to the German language is that it led to an even closer integration within the German-speaking communities which were at that point already dominant in many parts of Silesia. However, around the mid-17th century, Duke Silvius Nimrod, a Protestant ruler of the Lutheranzed Duchy of Oleśnica, which was home to a relatively high proportion of Polish-speakers, decided that the clergy need to be obliged to master both Polish and German;⁶⁹ half a century later John Sinapius of Oleśnica mentioned in one of his descriptions of the duchy ‘that the Polish language holds a permanent place [...] in the liturgy of many Evangelical churches’⁷⁰. It is nonetheless worth mentioning that at the turn of the 18th century Latin was gradually being replaced in ecclesiastical documents by German⁷¹, which may also be regarded as favourable for the process of further integration of already-heavily-Germanized Silesia.

⁶⁶ *Historia Śląska*, p. 577.

⁶⁷ A. Lubos, *Deutsche*, p. 63.

⁶⁸ For the position of the Czech language in contemporary duchies and towns of Upper Silesia see i.e.: Adolf Turek, *Poněmčování Opavska v 16. a 17. století. III. Na území bývalého knížetství Krnovského*, ‘Slezský sborník’, 47 (1949), No. 1, p. 42, No. 2, pp. 128-129, No. 4, p. 323.

⁶⁹ M. Borysiak, *W kręgu*, p. 42.

⁷⁰ L. Harc, *Olsnographia*, p. 45; German version: *eadem*, *Die Olsnographie*, p. 90.

⁷¹ K. Hannan, *Naród*, p. 149.

The takeover in 1623 of the state of Bytom (later the Free State of Bytom) by the Austrian noble family of Henckel von Donnersmarck resulted in a series of protests from the local Polish-speaking residents regarding the choice of Bytom's new official language, for this role since the 16th century had been fulfilled by as many as three languages: Czech, German and Polish⁷². The following was written a few decades ago about the region of Opole (whose characteristics became much more diversified in consequence of the Thirty Years' War) by a Polish historian:⁷³ 'Native Germans kept isolating themselves from the Polish community as they did before'⁷⁴. Apart from the question of whether the community he mentioned was purely Polish or composed of Poles and Czechs, it is worth considering whether, if this isolation really had taken place, it might have been linguistically- (and not ethnically-) motivated. In 1696, the German-speaking minority of Opole amounted to less than a third of the town's entire population, and that of Racibórz (in the third quarter of the 17th century) – to a fourth. Ethno-linguistically-motivated disputes between members of local Catholic communities swept each of the principal towns of the duchy: at the turn of the 18th century this occurred in Opole and in the second half of the 17th century – also due to significant inequalities in material status – in Racibórz⁷⁵.

The Silesian Jewish community of this period operated under specific socio-economic conditions. Besides their typical activity involving frequent contact with royal courts, they also earned their living through inn-keeping and door-to-door selling, thereby posing a threat to the material superiority of the bourgeoisie as well as impairing the functioning of the entire feudal economy. Therefore, the scope of their activity was mostly limited to the right-bank Upper Silesia, due to its lower level of urbanization and specific character of trade and agriculture⁷⁶. By the 17th century a large officially-registered Jewish religious community had already settled in the Lower Silesian town of Głogów and the Upper Silesian town of Biała, near Prudnik.⁷⁷ Curiously enough, when it comes to the second of these localities, Jews

⁷² *Acta miejskie Tarnowskich Gór od końca XVI wieku do roku 1740*, ed. Alina Kowalska, Katowice 1993, pp. 10-12.

⁷³ Cf. for Opole: Maria Nawrot, *Język polski w zabytkach cechowych miasta Opola*, Wrocław 1965 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 36, Historia 9), pp. 162-168.

⁷⁴ W. Dziewulski, *Dzieje*, p. 53.

⁷⁵ M. Šmerda, *Protireformace*, pp. 103-104; Władysław Dziewulski, *Kościół katolicki a polskość na Śląsku od czasów najdawniejszych do Wiosny Ludów*, 'Kwartalnik Opolski', 4 (1966), p. 95.

⁷⁶ Leszek Ziątkowski, *Między niemożliwym a koniecznym. Reformy państwa pruskiego w końcu XVIII i na początku XIX wieku a proces równouprawnienia Żydów ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem sytuacji na Śląsku*, Wrocław 2007, pp. 112-119; *idem*, *Żydzi na Śląsku – pomiędzy tradycjami polskimi i niemieckimi*, [in:] *Rzeczpospolita między okcydentalizmem a orientalizacją*. Vol. 1: *Przestrzeń kontaktów*, eds Filip Wolański, Robert Kołodziej, Toruń 2009, p. 396.

⁷⁷ Leszek Ziątkowski, *Żydzi w Lubinie przed 1945 r.*, [in:] *Z Gorzanowa*, pp. 234-235; *idem*, *Żydzi na Śląsku*, p. 395. For the repeated protests of the Głogów burghers against the Jewish residents see

constituted a considerable proportion of its total population. By the second half of the 17th century the group of Jewish-community-friendly towns was unofficially extended by Wrocław. It may be said that the presence of Jews in the greater part of the territory of Silesia had a rather neutral impact on the issue of the ethnic cohesion of the local population.

It seems reasonable to note that in connection to the principal focus of this paper, literature on the subject (especially Polish) has highlighted the co-existence of several varieties of the Polish language wherever possible; at the same time, it may be said that the chances of confrontations between them were particularly slim. It has been pointed out by one modern researcher that, although the ethnic relationship between Silesians and Czechs was not particularly strong, there possibly existed a certain degree of linguistic-communicational proximity between these two groups in the Upper Silesian part; outside the eastern and south-eastern borderlands the influence of Polish language was much less noticeable on the level of the entire country, which was rather dominated by the politically and culturally consolidated sphere of German⁷⁸. In the final analysis, when it comes to Upper Silesia, it is worth pointing out that throughout the centuries this borderland area was home to a number of co-existing and interrelated languages, which included the archaic Polish dialect as well as the German, Czech and Moravian languages⁷⁹. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that the above discussion provides a rather insignificant number of arguments that would support the thesis that the disintegrating role of the ethno-linguistic sphere in modern Silesia was clearly standing out against that of its neighbours (curiously enough the County of Kłodzko – located towards the south of the region, and currently included in the territory of Silesia – seems to be completely left untouched in this matter⁸⁰). The fundamental division of Silesia according to the flow of the river Odra into right- and left-bank territories was not an issue in this respect. Indeed, there were incidental cases of antagonism between the local Polish- and German-speaking communities (just in

the recent publication by: Jarosław Kuczer, *Podstawy prawnej egzystencji społeczności żydowskiej księstwa głogowskiego w okresie rządów habsburskich (1526-1740)*, [in:] *Religijność na polskich pograniczach w XVI–XVIII wieku*, ed. Dariusz Dolański, Zielona Góra 2005, pp. 104-111.

⁷⁸ See: Jarosław Malicki, *Slezské jazykové spektrum a kategorie okraje z středu ve vývoji komunikace společnosti zemi Koruny české ve 14. až 18. století*, [in:] *Śląska Republika*, vol. 2, Wrocław 2006, p. 23.

⁷⁹ P. Chmiel, *Die sprachlichen Verhältnisse*, p. 186, original quotation in German: 'Das mehrsprachige Land galt Jahrhunderte lang als ein klassisches Beispiel für eine Grenzregion, in der mehrere Sprachen nebeneinander existierten: ein altpolnischer Dialekt, Deutsch, Tschechisch und Mährisch. Sie beeinflussten zwar einander, wie das bei sprachlichen Kontakten auf einem verhältnismäßig kleinen Raum üblich ist, ohne sich jedoch gegenseitig zu bekämpfen'.

⁸⁰ See: Jacek Dębicki, *Wybrane zagadnienia z nowożytnej Ziemi Kłodzkiej (1459-1742)*, currently in printing.

the territory of Upper Silesia, they occurred in the state of Bytom and in the Odra-adjacent towns of Opole and Racibórz). Perhaps in this context, although in a slightly different sense, we could refer to the aforementioned example of the renowned poet Angelus Silesius. Yet, even more evidence for the so-called ‘minor harmfulness’ of the ethno-linguistic diversity emerges from the inquiries of many researchers who focused on the subject earlier in history⁸¹. It would seem that ethno-linguistically-motivated conflicts were really a rare occurrence in the period in question⁸². In the modern period, these issues were approached quite differently to how they are, sometimes, today. A question that still remains unanswered is whether the neglecting of ‘national’ languages by the church liturgy and religious spirituality, and their particular enforcement in the Lutheran Church, really had an impact on the (mutual) cohesion of the German- and Slavic-speaking Silesian population. Generally speaking, even if the sound of the Polish language was unpleasant to the ear of the contemporary German-speaking Silesians, they, nonetheless, purposefully learned it and used it – even if only for the purpose of official communication (trading and preaching). In turn, the process of migration of young Silesians to Poland in order to perfect their foreign language skills did not disrupt the German culture, which – at the end of the discussed period – was constantly developing and gaining in strength.

It seems that the period of the Habsburg reign over the territory of Silesia was also more or less free of ethno-linguistic issues that would disrupt its uniform character. Except for offering Silesians the possibility to master the Polish language, which was particularly useful in professional relations, neighbouring Poland probably did not present any other risks to the ethno-linguistic cohesion of Silesia;⁸³ nor did the local business activity of the representatives of the Polish nobility⁸⁴. For the inhabitants of various parts of Silesia, the German-Slavic duality was a perfectly natural state of things⁸⁵ (even in spite of incidental animosities) they were unwittingly becoming aware of as they grew older. Perhaps even this duality was so

⁸¹ As regards the north-western Silesian borderland, see a recent critical opinion of this approach expressed by: Dariusz Dolański, Małgorzata Konopnicka-Szatarska, *Rola religii w przenikaniu się kultur na Środkowym Nadodrzu w okresie od XVI do XVIII wieku*, [in:] *Religijność*, p. 95.

⁸² Cf. Paweł Musioł, *Piśmiennictwo polskie na Śląsku do początków XIX wieku*, Opole 1970, p. 83.

⁸³ This cohesion was left unharmed by a circumstance (connected with the towns of Greater Poland situated at the Silesian border) presented by: F. Lucae, *Schlesische Fürsten-Krone*, p. 827.

⁸⁴ For a general description of (Upper) Silesian-Polish relations see recent publication by: Marek Cetwiński, *Die Beziehungen des schlesischen Adels zu Polen*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. Vol. 1: *Herrschaft*, pp. 299-304.

⁸⁵ For more information on the Duchy of Oleśnica at the turn of the 18th century see the relevant quotation from *Olsnographia* by J. Sinapius in: M. Czarnecka, *Deutsch-polnische Kommunikation*, p. 362.

deeply rooted that some of its aspects were left undiscovered by them throughout their entire lives. When it comes to the possible innate dual ethno-linguistic character of the Silesian capital city of Wrocław, this issue is not confirmed by the contemporary literary sources. Naturally, the dominant German-speaking section of the Silesian community could have remained under the considerable influence of fellow German-speakers of other lands that neighboured with Silesia; however, this potential relationship is very hard to trace.

What is especially distinctive is the handicap of the Upper Silesian section of the region, which was obviously not a pro-integrating factor. In terms of the quality of education, leading institutions were located in Lower Silesia (Wrocław, Brzeg, Legnica, Nysa; also, in terms of the quality of Polish language teaching, Byczyna and possibly the neighbouring Kluczbork). The Germanization of Slavic Silesians was rather more frequent than the Slavization of its German counterparts, which was a rather obvious result of the numerical superiority of the German ethnic group, the related strength of the German language and pro-German (to a certain degree) education. In turn, the assimilation of the members of the Upper Silesian Slavic community to the German-speaking culture during their educational or for career visits to Lower Silesia (where this culture was dominant) may be classified as a pro-integrating factor. We may not, however, exclude the possibility that not only the partially ethno-linguistically-mixed eastern ends of Lower Silesia but, most importantly, the much of the territory of Upper Silesia could have been simply regarded by the (vast) majority of German-speaking Lower Silesians as rather unattractive.

Lower Silesia was also home to many writers of both German and Polish ethno-linguistic backgrounds. The latter ones resided mainly in Wrocław and (in the second half of the 17th century) near Kluczbork in the Duchy of Brzeg. In Upper Silesia writers mostly settled in Cieszyn (in the second and third decades of the 18th century), where they migrated from the area of Byczyna and Kluczbork⁸⁶. At the time, this state of things was not subjected to any criticism. The output produced by the local community of the German-speaking Baroque and post-Baroque fiction writers was a particularly integrating force. Curiously enough, the German-speaking writers of Silesia seemed to ignore the issue of the co-existing local dialects.

In view of the above findings, it may be stated that the impact of the ethno-linguistic relations of modern Silesia did not generally disrupt the cohesion of its community.

⁸⁶ See i.e.: J. Zaremba, *Polscy pisarze*, pp. 10-24, 171.

Determinants and catalysts of Silesian regional identity (1526–1740)

Abstract:

The perception of Silesia as something distinct and the formation of emotional bonds with the region, which were based on chronicles from the Middle Ages was further enhanced by humanist thought. Since the end of the 15th century and the beginnings of the 16th due to poetry, historiographical works, geographical description and the first maps, the vision of a region with specified borders, the population of which felt bonded due to shared history, pride of fertile lands and magnificent cities, especially the Capital City of Wrocław the awareness of Silesia as a homeland, simply of being Silesian grew among the population. Boys from different social groups, taught in the local schools were instructed and moulded all through the Habsburg era. Since the Thirty Years' War, as a result of the policy of undermining the importance of pan-Silesian institutions, with the demise of the Silesian Piast dynasty and other dynasties laying claim on their duchies, the local awareness grew. Even then most authors of historical and cartographical works were aware of the broader context. The identity of being Silesian and the historical continuity of the region since the 10th century, and in the context of the search for ancient origins of the people populating the land even since the biblical times, constituted a factor beneficial to the formation of a cohesive identity, a unifying factor binding coexisting, especially since the 17th century, various local identities.

Keywords:

Silesia, poetry, geographical description, maps, historiography, regional identity, local identity, Piast dynasty, patriotism, school

In contemporary research, while providing the definition of the region and determining the elements that constitute its endurance and consistency, a significant role is attributed to social factors, including the identification of the inhabitants of the region with the geographical space. In this perspective, their sense of belonging to a certain territory and community with one another are determined by perception of their own cultural distinctiveness which comprises many aspects, e.g. the elements of everyday life, the conviction about the existence of specific symbolic elements, the sense of sharing historical events which to a greater or lesser extent influence the present¹. In this respect, at the beginning of the modern era Silesia as a

¹ It is worth mentioning Michael Keating's definition of the region adopted as one of the two basic definitions (next to the definition by Anssi Paasi) for the project *Cuius Regio*: Michael Keating, *Introduction*, [in:] *Regions and Regionalism in Europe*, ed. Michael Keating, Cheltenham 2004

region had already existed in the consciousness of the inhabitants of the Odra region, especially among the intellectual elite. The regional identity of the Silesians of that time undoubtedly derived much from the heritage of the previous centuries. In the Middle Ages the essential keystones of regional Silesian identity were local historiography, annals and chronicles, which helped build and maintain common tradition based on the commonly used terminology in relation to the inhabited territory, on shared experiences, recognizable symbols and common heroes².

Historical consciousness remained an essential element and an excellent point of reference also for the inhabitants of Silesia after 1526. However, given the strong internal breakdown of the region, and functioning of feudal and hereditary royal duchies, free states, royal and feudal cities next to each other – were these factors not destructive and disruptive? Which relationship was stronger for the residents of Silesia at that time: the relationship with Silesia as a geo – political entity, or the relation with the ‘little homeland’ limited to the duchy or the city? Finally, is it possible to speak about permanent identification of Silesians with their region throughout the whole Habsburgs’ era? To answer these questions, one shall look at the contemporary cultural context of Silesia, and investigate closer the legacy of early modern historiography, which is – like it was in the Middle Ages – one of the key forms of self-definition and expression of the sense of belonging to a greater whole. One also needs to take into account new phenomena that were brought by humanism, especially the development of the awareness and knowledge of geography and reflecting it at the maps devised since the 16th century, as well as the presence of Silesian motifs in literary works. Those elements interacted with one another so strongly that it seems best to analyse all of them together while posing questions about the factors which promoted regional cohesion of Silesia and/or about the factors which were destructive for the sense of community shared by the inhabitants of the region.

(=The International Library of Comparative Public Policy, vol. 16), p. xi. Compare also: Anssi Paasi, *The resurgence of the ‘Region’ and ‘Regional Identity’: theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics in Europe*, ‘Review of International Studies’, 1 (2009), No. 35 (Special Issue: *Globalising the Regional, Regionalising the Global*) doi: 10.1017/S0260210509008456, Published online by Cambridge University Press, 23rd of March 2009, pp. 132-134 (electronic journal content was also published in a form of a book: *Globalising the Regional, Regionalising the Global*, ed. Rick Fawn, Cambridge 2009), Przemysław Wiszewski, *Region-integrating or region-disintegrating? The social groups of medieval Silesia examined in the context of their political activity (from the last decades of the 12th century to the 15th century)*, [in:] *The Long Formation*, pp. 130-131.

² Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Regional identity in Silesia (until 1526)*, [in:] *The Long Formation*, pp. 215-235. (see especially pp. 215-216 and an attempt to define basic elements constituting Silesian regional identity for the period before 1526).

The political events of 1526 contributed to the consolidation of the distinctive character of Silesia as a borderland region, peripheral in relation to the centre of power, which it had been since the early Piast period³. At the Habsburgs' rule, its significant distance from Vienna and Prague coincided with relatively weak administrative relationship with other lands of the Bohemian Crown. Each of the lands subject to the King cared for their own particular interests. Silesia held its own institutions and offices whose functioning extended over the whole country, which during the period up to the Thirty Years' War reinforced the belief that it was possible to have a share in the decisions on matters concerning the region⁴. These factors combined with the neighbourhood of the increasingly dissimilar Polish lands on the one hand created favourable conditions for the sense of identity to consolidate, while on the other hand were a prerequisite facilitating penetration of new developments and ideas from various directions. Crossing in Silesia, those ideas created a highly favourable ground for the adoption of competing cultural and ideological attitudes and their creative transformation which started at the turn of the 15th and 16th century and lasted until the end of the period discussed in this article⁵.

A special role in the process of forming identity and self-awareness falls to humanistic trends, which were present in Silesia in various disciplines of science and art at the turn of the 15th and 16th century. A conducive factor for the mobility of Silesians and subsequent transfer of new interests and trends was at this time the lack of schools that would educate local youths at a sufficiently high level, and especially the absence of a school that would provide higher education. As Silesians left to study, they later adapted research conducted at foreign universities for domestic needs. It made them pose questions that were arising in consideration of other lands in relation to Silesia. It was in the course of studying that many young Silesians enjoyed – in the spirit of the time – the delight in Italian humanism and ancient literature⁶.

³ On this issue see eg Teresa Bogacz, *Wiedza geograficzna o Śląsku w dobie odrodzenia*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1990, pp. 6, 45; Marcin Pauk, Ewa Wólkiewicz, *Struktury administracyjne Śląska jako czynnik spójności prawnoustrojowej (XII–XV w.)*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 67 (2012), No. 4, p. 53.

⁴ For more information on this subject see the article by Gabriela Waś published in this issue: *Institutions and administrative bodies, and their role in the processes of integration and disintegration in Silesia*.

⁵ Józef Gierowski, *Kultura umysłowa i artystyczna*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, vol.1, part 3: *Od końca XVI w. do r. 1763*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1963, pp. 540–541.

⁶ Literature concerning this matter is very extensive. For the basic approaches see Henryk Barycz, *Ślązacy na Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim od XV–XVIII w.*, Katowice 1935, pp. 16–20; Ewa Maleczyńska, *Kultura umysłowa*, [in:] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2: *Od połowy XIV do trzeciej ćwierci XVI w.*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1961, pp. 418–420, 429–441; N. Conrads, *Schlesiens frühe Neuzeit*, pp. 202–204, 306–309; Marian Dyba, *Drogi Ślązaków do*

During his studies at the Kraków Academy, where since the close of the 15th century the scientific circles had been increasingly interested in the use of the works of ancient geographers, Laurentius Corvinus (Lorenz Raabe, Wawrzyniec Korwin) in his own *Cosmography* inspired by the work of Claudius Ptolemy and published around 1496 included poetic descriptions of his hometown, Środa Śląska (*Pindari-cum anapesticum in natale solum quod Novum Forum perhibetur*), and the whole of Silesia (*Silesiae descriptio compendiosa*). His work quickly gained recognition and was widely read, also in Silesia⁷. It was known to Pancratius Vulturinus (actually Geier or Geyer) from Jelenia Góra, the author of another poem dedicated to the Silesian land. He wrote it just a few years later, in 1506, during a two-year stay at the university in Padua, although it had not been published in print until 1521. The work entitled *Slesia, Bresla etc.*, known as *Panegyricus Slesiacus*, proves – like a poem by Corvinus – not only the author’s knowledge of history and geography, but also of the customs and specific character of Silesia. The author celebrates its natural resources, including gold, warm healing springs, fertility of the soil, and the values of local beer⁸. Both poetic descriptions, created during a prolonged stay away from Silesia, are attributed emotional character, expressing a longing for the homeland. However, they were also a manifestation of regional awareness of their

wiedzy (XII w. –1968), Katowice 1997; Lucyna Harc, *Dolnoślązacy w szkole, bibliotece, teatrze... czasów nowożytnych*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia*, pp. 310-311.

⁷ Laurentius Corvinus, *Cosmographia dans manuductionem in tabulas Claudii Ptholomei*, ed. Heinrich Bebel, Basileae 1496. For more information on this issue see Franciszek Bujak, *Studia geograficzno-historyczne*, Kraków 1925, pp. 32-33; Bolesław Olszewicz, *Najdawniejsze opisy geograficzne Śląska*, Katowice 1936, pp. 26-27; T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, pp. 38–39; *eadem*, *Humanistyczne opisy Środy Śląskiej*, [in:] *Studia z dziejów Środy Śląskiej, regionu i prawa średzkiego*, ed. Ryszard Gładkiewicz, Wrocław 1990 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 980, Historia 70), pp. 130-132; Halina Sadowska, *Wawrzyniec Korwin (ca 1465–1527). Humanista ze Środy Śląskiej*, [in:] *Studia z dziejów Środy Śląskiej*, p. 121; Dariusz Rott, *Wawrzyniec Korwin, wczesnorenansowy humanista śląski*, Katowice 1997, pp. 9-11; Lucyna Harc, *Od biogramu do biografii (na przykładzie Wawrzyńca Korwina)*, [in:] *Hominem quaerere. Człowiek w źródle historycznym*, eds Stanisław Rosik i Przemysław Wiszewski, Wrocław 2008 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 3080, Historia 177), pp. 196-197.

⁸ Pancratius Vulturinus, *Slesia, Bresla etc. Totius Slesie primo in generali, deinde vrbs Uratis-laiensis, Suidnicensis, Stregoniensis, caeterarumque vrbiū et opidorum in circuito adiacentium pulcherrima et singularis descriptio (Panegyricus Slesiacus)*, Wratislaviae 1521. Cf Paul Drechsler, *Pancratiū Vulturini Panegyricus Silesiacus. Die älteste Landeskunde Schlesiens, besprochen und nach dem ersten Durch neu herausgegeben*, ‘Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens’, 35 (1901), pp. 35-67; Teresa Bogacz, *Renesansowy panegirysta z Jeleniej Góry Pankracy Vulturinus*, ‘Rocznik Jeleniogórski’, 15 (1977), pp. 125-137; *eadem*, *Wiedza*, pp. 77-80; Hans-Bernd Harder, *Die Landesbeschreibung in der Literatur des schlesischen Frühhumanismus*, [in:] *Landesbeschreibungen Mitteleuropas vom 15. bis 17. Jahrhundert. Vorträge der 2. internationalen Tagung des ‘Slawenkomitees’ im Herder-Institut Marburg a. d. Lahn 10.–13. November 1980*, ed. Hans-Bernd Harder, Köln-Wien 1983 (=Schriften des Komitees der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Förderung der Slawischen Studien, vol. 5), p. 41.

authors, a pride in their country of origin and a desire to prove to themselves and others that it was in no way inferior to other parts of Europe glorified in poetry.

This poetic formula, containing a number of comparisons with the ancient world, was nothing unique. At the same time, Bernard Caricinius (actually Feyge) from Wrocław, while studying in Kraków, wrote an handbook on epistolography, in which one of the letters described Silesia, its capital and the Odra river⁹. Some time later, in the mid-16th century, a poet and historian Francis Faber (actually Franz Köckritz) created the poem *Sabothus sive Silesia*, glorifying both the country – especially the rivers, mountains and cities (mainly Wrocław, Nysa and Świdnica), its history derived since the ancient times, as well as the enlightened people in the region, both the ones who had lived there in the past and those contemporary to the writer¹⁰. At the end of the century, in a rector's speech he gave at the University of Helmstedt Solomon Frenzel from Wrocław described Silesia as his earthly homeland stretching from the foothills of the Carpathians and the Sudetes to Frankfurt (Oder), abounding in fertile soil and natural resources, a country whose people in the countryside and in great cities were cheerful and cultured, loved their country and were proud of it, and whose local schools overshadowed all other¹¹.

What followed poetry were the works ordering information about Silesia, which were classified as geographical and historical descriptions typical for Renaissance. The forerunner in this field was Bartholomew Stein (Barthel Stein, Bartholomäus Stein, Bartolomaeus Stenus). In his *Descriptio totius Silesie et civitatis Regie Vratislaviensis* written in 1513 and inspired by Tacitus' *Germania* and by

⁹ *Epistolae exemplares communiore Magistri Bernhardini Feyge alias Caricini de Wratislavia. In studio communi Cracoviensi coscripta*, Liptzig 1500 (digital version: <http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/132-2-theol-6/start.htm>; accessed on 15th May, 2013). On this issue see also Gustav Bauch, *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte des schlesischen Humanismus, part 5*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 37 (1903), s. 126; T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, p. 76; Jan Pirożyński, *Der internationale Rang der Krakauer Universität in der Renaissancezeit*, [in:] *Polen und Österreich im 16. Jahrhundert*, eds Walter Leitsch, Stanisław Tarkowski, Wien-Köln-Weimar 1997 (=Wiener Archiv für Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas, vol. 17), p. 94.

¹⁰ Franciscus Faber, *Sabothus sive Silesia*, Basilea 1592. See A. Lubos, *Der Späthumanismus*, pp. 114-117; Westyna Gładkiewicz, *Kronikarz wrocławski – Franciszek Faber. Szkic informacyjny*, Wrocław 1970 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 126, Historia 19), p. 115; T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, pp. 88-89; Manfred P. Fleischer, *Der schlesische Späthumanismus. Einführung* [in:] *Quellenbuch zur Geschichte der Evangelischen Kirche in Schlesien*, eds Gustav Adolf Benrath, Ulrich Hutter-Wollandt, Dietrich Meyer, München-Oldenburg 1992 (=Schriften des Bundesinstituts für ostdeutsche Kultur und Geschichte, vol. 1), pp. 82-85 (here part of the poem devoted to the people connected with the beginning of reformation in Silesia).

¹¹ Bernhard Kytzler, *Laudes Silesiae I. Salomon Frenzels 'Rede von der dreifachen Heimat' aus dem Jahre 1594*, 'Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau', 25 (1984), pp. 45-56; M.P. Fleischer, *Der schlesische Späthumanismus*, pp. 85-88. For broader information on literary works extolling Silesia see Józef Budzyński, *'Laudes Silesiae' XVI-XVII wieku jako wyraz afirmacji wartości humanistycznych*, [in:] *Studia Classica et Neolatina III*, ed. Zofia Głombiowska, Gdańsk 1998, pp. 228-239.

Pomponius Mela's description of the world, as well as by the works of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini and Conrad Celtis, Stein substantially expanded and systematized the knowledge about the country and its capital. He tried at the same time to show their beauty and wealth, emphasize political and cultural importance, and – as he himself pointed out – disseminate information about Silesia and its inhabitants, not well known even among educated people¹². The work of Stein rewritten in many copies had been disseminated, read and used long before it was finally released in print. The new comprehensive approach combining elements of geography and history was developed only a century later by *Silesiographia* and *Breslographia* created by Nicholas Henel (Nicolaus Henelius). It is noteworthy that, like Stein, the author of the works published in Frankfurt in 1613 decided to prepare two separate descriptions – one of the region and another of its capital¹³. In both descriptions he used previously known information, but he deepened it and described in a modern and accessible way, writing in good Latin, and thus he popularized the knowledge of Silesia and its geography¹⁴.

The twofold nature of Stein's and Henel's approaches is characteristic for the whole 16th century. From the literary and historiographical perspective it is clear to observe manifestations of regional awareness, which refers to the whole Silesia, in addition to the parallel pride in Wrocław as *metropolia prima* – to quote Vulturinus – and the conviction about its leading role and rank in the region. No other Silesian city or duchy in the 16th century could boast so many diverse works devoted to it. This image was complemented with the first cartographic representations of the geographical space of the whole country and its capital.

Thus, since the mid-16th century, the works on the history of Silesia were created, starting with *Silesia magna* by John Hess – lost yet known due to the fact that it was recalled by later authors¹⁵. Inspiring influence on the development of historiography had

¹² B. Stenum, *Descriptio, passim; Bartłomieja Steina renesansowe opisanie Wroclawia*, ed. Rościszlaw Żerelik, translated by Marek Krajewski (from Latin) and Reiner Sachs (from German), Wrocław 1995. See E. Maleczyńska, *Kultura*, p. 449; Ewald Walter, *Zu Barthel Steins Descriptio Vratislavie (Beschreibung Breslaus)*, 'Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau', 30 (1989), pp. 63-76; T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, pp. 80-86; Detlef Haberland, *Die 'Silesiographia' und 'Breslo-Graphia' von Nicolaus Henel von Hennenfeld*, [in:] *Nicolaus Henel von Hennenfeld Silesiographia. Breslo-Graphia. Frankfurt am Main 1613*, ed. Detlef Haberland, Wrocław 2011 (=digital version: e-Biblioteka Historyczna, vol. 3), pp. 32-34.

¹³ Nicolaus Henel, *Silesiographia*, Francofurti 1613; *eadem, Breslographia*, Francofurti 1613. Cf H.-B. Harder, *Die Landesbeschreibung*, p. 41; Manfred P. Fleischer, *Silesiographia. Die Geburt einer Landesgeschichtsschreibung*, [in:] *idem, Späthumanismus in Schlesien*, München 1984, pp. 49-91; D. Haberland, *Die 'Silesiographia'*, p. 33.

¹⁴ Julian Janczak, *Mikołaj Henelius jako geograf Śląska*, 'Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka', 13 (1958), No. 3, p. 221; T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, pp. 124-125.

¹⁵ H.-B. Harder, *Die Landesbeschreibung*, pp. 41-42; Lucyna Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose (1730–1798). Studium historiograficzno-źródłoznawcze*, Wrocław 2002 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis)

the printing of a map of Silesia in 1561, drawn by Martin Helwig from Nysa. This was not the first cartographic representation of the region, as a self-contained map of Silesia along with a description had already been included by Sebastian Münster in the *Cosmographia* published in 1544. However, only the work by Helwig, reprinted several times and in a modified form published in printed atlases, shaped the idea and knowledge of the geographical location and boundaries of the region, especially among its educated residents¹⁶. It also affected Joachim Cureus, the author of *Gentis Silesiae Annales*, what he did not fail to mention¹⁷. The first history of Silesia published in print ten years after the publication of Helwig's map played an important role in building regional geographic and historical awareness among the inhabitants of the Odra region. The portrayal of the past rendered there proved the Cureus' conviction about the specifics of the history of Silesia as a separate region. With great erudition and broad knowledge of the works of ancient writers, which he had the opportunity to read and explore closer while studying in Italy, he argued that the earliest inhabitants of Silesia were Germanic tribes, displaced in time by the Slavs. An important moment and a crucial turning point for Cureus was year 1163, which he declared as the beginning of the process of separation of the province from Poland on the way to getting its own subjectivity and autonomy¹⁸. What is significant, however, is also the fact that after the presentation of the history of Silesia, the author devoted a separate section to describe Wrocław and the Duchy of Głogów where he came from. In many excerpts it is possible to notice his dual identity: the regional one, associated with being a Silesian, and the local one, resulting from the pride of living and working in Głogów, which was in his opinion the second most important city in Silesia, Wrocław being the most significant¹⁹. Cureus' work was translated into German and continued in the work by Henry Rätel. Cureus' work was also treated as a starting point by Jakob Schickfus in *New vermehrete schlesische Chronica* published in 1625²⁰.

viensis, No 2389, Historia 157), p. 24; D. Haberland, *Die 'Silesiographia'*, p. 36.

¹⁶ Julian Janczak, *Zarys dziejów kartografii śląskiej do końca XVIII wieku*, Opole 1976, p. 28, footnote 67 and p. 41; T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, pp. 59-61; Roman Wytyczak, *Śląsk w dawnej kartografii*, Wrocław 1998, pp. 21-24; Bogusław Czechowicz, *Visus Silesiae. Treści i funkcje ideowe kartografii śląskiej XVI-XVIII wieku*, Wrocław 2008, pp. 10-11.

¹⁷ Joachim Cureus, *Gentis Silesiae Annales*, Witebergae 1571, p. 260. Cf T. Bogacz, *Wiedza*, p. 68.

¹⁸ Marta Kasprowska-Jarczyk, *Wokół 'Gentis Silesiae Annales' Joachima Cureusa. Z dziejów szesnastowiecznej historiografii śląskiej*, Katowice 2011, p. 114.

¹⁹ Petr Kozák, *'Dem Vaterland ist man Dankbarkeit schuldig!'* Joachim Cureus (1532–1573) und der 'Sinn' der schlesischen Geschichte, [in:] *Geschichte, Erinnerung, Selbstidentifikation. Die schriftliche Kultur in den Ländern der Böhmisches Krone im 14.–18. Jahrhundert*, eds Lenka Bobková, Jan Zdichynec, Praha 2011, pp. 420-421, 430.

²⁰ Heinrich Raetel, *New Cronica des Hertzogthumbs Ober und Nieder Schlesien [...] durch D. Joachimum Cureum*, Eißleben 1601; J. Schickfus, *New Vermehrete Schlesische Chronica, passim*. For

Parallel to the works devoted to the whole region were created the works about its capital. In the mid-16th century, the aforementioned F. Faber wrote a history of Wrocław, richly documented in sources, describing the period from the second half of the 10th century up to 1526. It was first written in Latin as *Origines Wratislaviensis*, and then in German which covered the period up to 1547²¹. In the second half of the 16th century about twelve works on the history of Wrocław were created. However – like the chronicles of Faber – they remained in the form of manuscripts. No sooner than in 1612 a work by Nicholas Pol was published in Leipzig, showing the main, according to the author, events of the history of Wrocław described against the background of the history of Silesia²². In 1562, that is only a year after the creation of Helwig's map of Silesia, the capital city was finally mapped in the famous *Contrafactur der Stadt Breslau* by Bartholomew Weihner, and by the end of the 16th century more scenic plans of Wrocław had been created²³. This century was also abundant in the poems devoted to the capital of Silesia. During the Renaissance other Silesian cities were also described in poems and chronicles as well as presented at the plans, but none of them could boast such diverse and widely known perspectives as Wrocław.

In the 16th century what followed the Reformation and a connected process of creating a new type of schools – gymnasiums was a characteristic feedback in the process of building and deepening the regional identity. High quality evangelical education was intended mainly for the youths from Silesia and for Silesia. In the humanistic parish schools and gymnasiums, education was not restricted only for the sons of nobles and patricians, but also – thanks to numerous donations and foundations – was accessible for talented boys from poor families. The development of modern Protestant schooling stimulated, after a period of stagnation, the restructuring and reform of Catholic education.

more information see L. Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose*, pp. 26-29; P. Kozák, 'Dem Vaterland', pp. 417-419.

²¹ L. Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose*, pp. 24-25.

²² Nicolaus Pol, *Hemerologion Silesiacum Wratislaviense. Tagebuch Allerley fürnemer, namhafftiger, gedenckwürdiger Historien, so fürnemlich in Breßlaw der Hauptstadt, auch sonst etlichen andern Orten im Fürstenthumb Schlesien, sich begeben [...]*, Leipzig 1612. Cf. Rościsław Żerelik, *Wstęp*, [in:] *Nieznany rocznik świdnicki z pierwszej połowy XVI wieku*, ed. Rościsław Żerelik, Wrocław–Warszawa 1990, p. 12; Susanne Rau, *Stadthistoriographie und Erinnerungskultur in Hamburg, Köln und Breslau*, [in:] *Deutsche Landesgeschichtsschreibung im Zeichen des Humanismus*, eds Franz Brendle, Dieter Mertens, Anton Schindling, Stuttgart 2001 (=Contubernium. Tübinger Beiträge zur Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte, vol. 56), p. 235; L. Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose*, pp. 25, 28; D. Haberland, *Die 'Silesiographia'*, p. 52.

²³ Krystyna Szykuła, Halina Okólska, Waclaw Sobociński, Roman Wytyczak, *Wrocław na planach XVI-XX wieku*, Wrocław 1999, pp. 11-13; B. Czechowicz, *Visus*, pp. 49-56, 58-63.

The foundation and one of the primary purposes of the schools teaching in the spirit of the humanities, both Protestant and Catholic ones, was to educate future noble citizens and the devoted faithful of the church. The recommendations of this type, formulated among others by Philip Melancton, were very quickly and widely transmitted to Silesia, which was reflected in the speeches presented by the school rectors on various occasions and published in accompanying occasional prints. High level of education, therefore, stimulated positively the formation of civic attitudes. Not only did it contribute to the growth of self-consciousness, but also bound educated Silesians with their own cities and duchies. In fact, by funding scholarships for education in local schools and then for studying at universities, the cities and duchies required from the graduates to return and work for the community or the duchy. After graduating from gymnasiums, therefore, a large part of local youth was leaving to study abroad, and after graduation they returned home. Only a small percentage of them remained abroad, making careers mainly in German-speaking countries. Through education, gaining knowledge and expanding horizons, regional consciousness among the intellectual elite definitely strengthened. What served building ties with the region was staging of school performances on historical matters, aimed at building the civic humanism, but also the use of works and artworks in teaching that presented and described Silesia. Educational aims were the goal of M. Helwig, a teacher in the gymnasium of St. Mary Magdalen in Wrocław, when he created a map of Silesia. Also J. Cureus, a graduate of the gymnasium in Złotoryja headed by Valentin Trozendorf (actually Valentin Friedland) and a student of Philip Melancton during studies in Wittenberg, who initially wanted to be a teacher himself, highlighted that the readers of his work should always keep in mind the matters of their homeland, just as he had. The author had no doubt that for him and his readers the described *patria* was Silesia, even though he pointed to its political relationship with Bohemia and the House of Habsburg. Therefore, educational activities of Silesian schools were undoubtedly one of the key factors in building Silesian civic humanism and the love for the native land known as *Amor Patriae* as well as developing a sense of community with other inhabitants of the country, and at the same time building curiosity and a desire to know its natural values, location, borders and history²⁴.

²⁴ Józef Budzyński, *Paideia humanistyczna, czyli wychowanie do kultury. Studium z dziejów klasycznej edukacji w gimnazjach XVI-XVIII wieku (na przykładzie Śląska)*, Częstochowa 2003, pp. 275-288, 307-314; Christine Absmeier, *Das schlesische Schulwesen im Jahrhundert der Reformation. Ständische Bildungsreformen im Geiste Philipp Melanctons*, Stuttgart 2011 (=Contubernium. Tübinger Beiträge zur Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte, vol. 74), pp. 129-140, 247-256; P. Kozák, 'Dem Vaterland', pp. 419; M. Kasprowska-Jarczyk, *Wokół 'Gentis Silesiae Annales'*, pp. 118-119.

What can be observed since the Thirty Years' War is gradual evolution in literary, historiographical, geographical and cartographic activity. Various works concerning the entire region were still created. A general map of Silesia drawn by Jonah Scultetus from Szprotawa, can serve as one of many examples²⁵. Among the studies referring to the Renaissance geographical and historical approaches, yet already in the spirit typical of the 17th-century historical antiquarianism characterized by recounting large amounts of highly detailed information, an important role was played by *Schlesiens curiose Denkwürdigkeiten* by Frederick Lucae (Friedrich Lichtstern)²⁶. Although dedicated to the whole region, in its historic part it was already divided into separate chapters, in which the author described the history of Upper Silesian and Lower Silesian duchies. It seems that this reflects the perception of progressive differentiation of the region, which in the works of the writers creating before mid-17th century (even in Henel's *Silesiographia*) was more often perceived as a whole. Synthetic character in the approach to the history of Silesia was that of *Discursus politicus seu famularis prodromus novorum chronicorum ducatus Silesiae* by Ephraim Ignatius Naso²⁷. This group can also include the works of Martin Hanke on the earliest periods in the history of the region published at the beginning of the 18th century, and the search of the origins of the name 'Silesia' and the ethnogenesis of its earliest inhabitants in the light of all sources and literature known at that time²⁸.

Belles-lettres, especially poetry, played a role in cultural and regional integration of Silesia from the Thirty Years' War to the end of the period under discussion. After the era of humanism, when Latin poems praising the beauty and advantages of Silesia were composed, the era of the Baroque and the prosperity of an excellent Silesian school of German poetry saw the creation of works praising the heroes associated with Silesia in the past. Presenting to the readers clear examples of how perfect the life of their Silesian ancestors and the founding fathers of the regional community was, those works contributed to the development of emotional and cultural affiliation of the Silesians with the region. The most representative example is the often used thread of Piast as the founder of the oldest dynasty ruling until 1675

²⁵ J. Janczak, *Zarys*, pp. 57-59; R. Wytyczak, *Śląsk*, p. 28; B. Czechowicz, *Visus*, pp. 79-82.

²⁶ F. Lucae, *Schlesiens, passim*.

²⁷ Ephraim Ignatius Naso, *Discursus politicus seu famularis prodromus novorum chronicorum ducatus Silesiae*, Wratislaviae 1665.

²⁸ Martin Hanke, *De Silesiorum nominibus antiquitates*, Lipsiae 1702; *idem*, *De Silesiorum majoribus antiquitates. Ab orbe condito ad annum Christi 550. Additi sunt tres indices*, Lipsiae 1702; *idem*, *De Silesiorum rebus ab anno Christi 550 ad 1170 exercitationes*, Lipsiae 1705. Cf L. L. Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose*, p. 38.

in the Duchy of Legnica–Brzeg–Wołów²⁹. Common were also references to the legends and traditions connected with even earlier times: a good example would be the epic *Silesia ante Piastum* which was written by Frederick Wilhelm von Sommersberg, a researcher of the past of his native land and one of the first publishers of Silesian sources³⁰. Reaching for the mythical and ancient topics and interweaving them with biblical and historical themes was indeed characteristic of Baroque literature, including also the literature created in Silesia.

At the same time, what can be observed is intensification of the phenomena associated with building the sense of locality, through the creation of works concerning different duchies and cities in Silesia. The creation of the scenic plan of Wrocław was successively followed at the end of the 16th and in the 17th century by the scenic plans of Nysa, Świebodzin, Świdnica and Opava³¹. Next to the map of the entire Silesia, the aforementioned J. Scultetus drew the maps of the duchies of Głogów, Wołów, Wrocław, Legnica, Grodków, the County of Kłodzko and the general map of Lower Silesia. In the second half of the 17th century Frederick Kühn (Kühnovius) developed the maps of the duchies of Świdnica, Jawor and Legnica and the landed estates of Chojnik and Gryf belonging to the House of Schaffgotsch, and John Christian Berger drew the map of the barony of Żmigród. The maps drawn and published in the early 18th century include the map of the Duchy of Oleśnica by Leonard David Hermann and Daniel Sinapius, the map of the Cieszyn Silesia by Jonah Nigrinus, and the map of the Duchy of Pszczyzna by Andrew Hindenberg³². What was created alongside them were the works on the history of Legnica written in the form of an annals by George Thebesius³³, on the Duchy of Świdnica–Jawor by the aforementioned E. I. Naso³⁴, or on Oleśnica and the Duchy of Oleśnica prepared by John Sinapius³⁵. It is, however, worth emphasising that the starting point for most writers dealing with the history of various duchies and cities was almost always the history of Silesia as a whole. What is more, the titles of the majority of

²⁹ Ewa Pietrzak, *Andreas Gryphius a Piastowie śląscy*, [in:] *Dawna kultura literacka na Śląsku. Zbiór studiów*, eds Marianna Borysiak, Adama Galos, Wrocław 1994, pp. 53-58.

³⁰ Friedrich Wilhelm Sommersberg, *Silesia ante Piastum. Carmen epicum, elaboratum antea, jam recognitum et auctum*, Vratislaviae 1720.

³¹ Ryszard Len, *Twórcy najstarszego planu Świdnicy*, 'Rocznik Świdnicki', (1992), pp. 44-53; B. Czechowicz, *Visus*, pp. 64-75, 103-104.

³² J. Janczak, *Zarys*, pp. 59-70; R. Wytyczak, *Śląsk*, pp. 28-30; Beata Medyńska-Gulij, *Mapy księstw śląskich świdnickiego, jaworskiego i legnickiego z II połowy XVII wieku Fryderyka Kähnoviusa*, Wrocław 2002; B. Czechowicz, *Visus*, pp. 82-95, 109-122.

³³ Georg Thebesius, *Liegnitzische Jahr-Bücher*, ed. Gottfried Balthasar Scharffen, vol. 1-3, Jauer 1733.

³⁴ Ephraim Ignatius Naso, *Phoenix redivivus ducatum Svidnicensis et Javoriensis*, Breslau 1667.

³⁵ Johann Sinapius, *Olsnographia oder Eigentliche Beschreibung des Oelfnischen Fürstenthums in Nieder-Schlesien*, vol. 1-2, Leipzig–Frankfurt 1706-1707.

published maps included a record about them being representations of the Silesian duchy. Therefore, the awareness of the wider context and the perception of the duchies and cities as a part of Silesia as the whole survived throughout the whole period of the Habsburgs' rule.

Among the outstanding artists coming from Silesia throughout the whole period under discussion there were, however, those who excluded their homeland from their own interests. An example might be Caspar Velius Ursinus, regarded as one of the greatest poets of the Silesian humanism and also a historiographer, coming from Świdnica. Honoured by the Emperor as a *poeta laureatus*, in his works he praised mainly the Habsburgs and the military victories of the European rulers.

What is also worth mentioning briefly is scientific activity undertaken in Silesia, which – like the aforementioned literary, historical and cartographic works – most often concerned local issues. Examples include research in the field of natural science, geology and geography undertaken by Caspar Schwenkfeld at the beginning of the 17th century. The pride in the achievements of local researchers and authors seem to be expressed in the registers of Silesian scholars developed successively by M. Henel as *Silesia togata*, the register by John Henry Cunrad under the same title and their extension in manuscripts by M. Hanke³⁶. Certainly, though, scientific interests of local authors went beyond the matters of Silesia. For this reason it might not be stated unequivocally that in cultural terms they were a solely integrating factor for the region.

In the 16th-century works dealing with Silesian issues, created by local authors, their country of origin is depicted as a beloved homeland. It is not worse than other countries located to the south, west and east. In the view of humanistic poets and historians it also had its ancient roots and the praiseworthy past. The main reason for reaching for the pen indicated by J. Cureus was his love for his homeland understood as 'our Silesia' or 'our homeland', and the need to show respect similar to the one held for a mother and a father³⁷. Already at the beginning of *Silesiographia* M. Henel called Silesia 'the best, sweetest homeland'³⁸. The description explaining the creation of M. Helwig's map also contained the term 'our beloved homeland – Silesia'³⁹.

³⁶ Johann Heinrich Cunrad, *Silesia togata*, ed. Caspar Teophil Schindlerus, Liegnitz 1706. See L. Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose*, pp. 31, 36, 38-39.

³⁷ J. Cureus, *Gentis*, p. 1 ('*Patriam amore est virtus*'), p. 5 ('*patria nostra*'), p. 260 ('*nostra Silesia*'); Ch. Absmeier, *Das schlesische Schulwesen*, pp. 247-250; P. Kozák, '*Dem Vaterland*', p. 430; M. Kasprowska-Jarczyk, *Wokół 'Gentis Silesiae Annales'*, pp. 106-107.

³⁸ N. Henel, *Silesiographia*, p. 1: '*Silesiam optimam dulcissimamque patriam...*'.

³⁹ Reading from the first edition of the map after B. Czechowicz, *Visus*, p. 20 ('*vnser liebes Vaterlandt Schlesie[n]*').

Perceptions of Silesia as a kind of a whole and building emotional bonds with the region was formed in the 16th century through poetry, historiographical works, geographical descriptions and first maps. Instilled and passed in the local gymnasia to the young boys from all walks of life – from the nobility and the wealthy burghers to the children from poor families who were gaining education owing to the system of foundations and grants, it survived the whole period of the Habsburgs' rule. Under the influence of the monarchs, who since the late 1620s and 1630s aimed their policy at weakening the role and meaning of all-Silesian institutions, as well as in connection with the end of the line of the Silesian Piasts and the passage of Silesian duchies into the possession of non-Silesian dynasties, the sense of locality was getting stronger. Even then, however, historical and cartographic works in most cases presented wider regional context. The sense of Silesian identity and of some historical continuity in the region since at least the 10th century, and in connection with the search for the ancient origins of its residents even since biblical times, was a conducive factor for building a cohesive identity, which held together other identities functioning next to it and growing stronger since the 17th century.

The integrating and disintegrating role of Silesian art between 1526 and 1740

Abstract:

The issue of Silesian art is a methodological matter, one which the scholars are studying for nearly a century. Results of research reinforce the belief that Silesian art – especially at the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century, as well as in the Baroque – formed distinct qualities determining its unconventional worth, allowing it to be included with the artistic achievements of the continent. An attempt to answer which factors shaped the identity of the early modern Silesian art leads to two groups of factors, specifically cohesive and disruptive. Among the cohesive factors are historical events, the Catholic-Lutheran conflict, which, in Silesia lasted all through the Early Modern Period. Also of importance was the tradition of the Middle Ages and the availability of materials used by local artists (e.g. glass, sandstone). Among these works of particular importance are the workshops creating for the Cistercian monasteries (in Lubiąż, Krzeszów, Henryków, and Trzebnica). This resulted in the creation of a distinct mystic trend. It was associated with the development of Silesian iconographical tradition, e.g. in the local portrayal of saints and religious imagery. Among the factors disruptive to the artistic identity of Silesia is being a part of common artistic tradition (the western civilisation) and ideological (Christianity). This led to universal content of both lay and religious artworks. Silesia's location at the hub of many transportation routes as well as on the border between two large states made it an area, which “absorbed” external influence. Silesian art became a universal „product” due to its dependence on external sources, rules imposed by a specific monastic order as well as rules of the authorities.

Keywords:

Silesia, Renaissance, Baroque, art, art and craft

Introduction

The originality and identity of Silesian art are methodological issues to which particular attention was devoted in the 1930s and the 1940s. This research was influenced by the truly racist premises of the developing tribal research method (*Stammesforschung*), particularly opinions concerning the predispositions of certain ethnic groups to have creative abilities. Such studies – here we can refer to the highly controversial scientific achievements in this field presented, for example, by

Dagobert Frey¹, August Griesebach², Gustav Barthel³, Hermann Aubin⁴, Wilhelm Pinder⁵, Günther Oliass⁶, Edmund Glaeser⁷ or Hans Wegener⁸ – led to the conclusion that Silesian art has an individual and native character. The first quality supposedly makes itself particularly clear – according to such researchers – in two periods of its development: at the turn of the 15th century and in the Early Baroque period, that is mainly around the year 1700. The nationalistic idea of naming only the German colonizers of the region as being responsible for creating the culture and the so-called ‘Silesian style’ is the basic paradigm of this method of research. This view was concluded by expressing the belief that by the period of the Counter-Reformation, and especially in the High Baroque period, art in Silesia lost its individual character. What determined, according to German researchers, its identity or specificity was the deterministically-understood unity of the form with the ‘spirit’ of the nation or the tribe. That is: the problem of identity or the so-called strangeness, or relations and artistic relationships, are research topics that, in the case of Silesian art, seem to be rather historically ‘charged’.

After 1945, and following the period of understandable reaction to this type of research paradigm, as exemplified by some of the publications of Marian Morelowski⁹, the 1960s was the time for mature, objectified and ground-breaking presentation and evaluation of the identity of Silesian art¹⁰. The results of research con-

¹ Dagobert Frey *Schlesiens künstlerisches Antlitz*, [in:] *Die Hohe Straße. Schlesische Jahrbücher für deutsche Art und Kunst im Ostraum*, vol. 1, ed. Gustav Barthel, Breslau 1938, pp. 12-45; *idem*, *Schlesische Barock*, [in:] *Deutscher Osten und Slawischer Westen*, Tübingen 1955 (=Studien zur Geschichte und Politik, vol. 4), pp. 43-46.

² August Griesebach, *Zur Baugeschichte*, [in:] *Die Kunst in Schlesien*, eds *idem*, Günther Grundmann, Franz Landsberger, Manfred Laubert, Karl Masner, Hans Seger, Erich Wiese, Berlin 1927, pp. 55-56; *idem*, *Die Kunst der deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*, Wien 1946, pp. 309-329.

³ Gustav Barthel, *Die schlesische bildende Kunst als Gestalt und Form der Kulturgröße des schlesischem Raumes*, [in:] *Schlesien in der Zeitwende. Ein Weckruf*, ed. *idem*, Breslau 1941, pp. 53-69.

⁴ Hermann Aubin, *Schlesien als Ausfallstor deutscher Kultur nach dem Osten im Mittelalter*, Breslau–Deutsch Lissa 1937 (=Schlesienbändchen, vol. 7), pp. 5-8.

⁵ Wilhelm Pinder, *Deutsche Barockplastik*, Königstein–Leipzig 1940, pp. 11-13.

⁶ Günther Oliass, *Das Nachleben der Gotik in der schlesischen Barockskulptur*, ‘Schlesische Monatshefte’, 13 (1936), pp. 302-306.

⁷ Edmund Glaeser, *Bollwerk im deutschen Osten. Breslau. Bilder aus der Geschichte der Landeshauptstadt Schlesiens*, Breslau 1938, *passim*.

⁸ Hans Wegener, *Der schlesische Stil*, ‘Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau’, 4 (1959), pp. 78-93.

⁹ For more on this subject compare Piotr Oszczanowski, ‘Gdańszczanin we Wrocławiu’. Czy można mówić o ekspozycje sztuki gdańskiej we Wrocławiu na przełomie XVI i XVII wieku?, ‘Porta Aurea. Rocznik Zakładu Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego’, 6 (1997/1999), pp. 89-126; Andrzej Kozieł, *Marian Morelowski (1884-1963)*, ‘Rocznik Historii Sztuki’, 36 (2011), pp. 47-56.

¹⁰ The decisive factor for this specific breakthrough was the publishing of *Sztuka Wrocławia*, eds Tadeusz Broniewski, Mieczysław Zlat, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1967 and a series of monographs (devoted to individual cities, edited since 1959 by Tadeusz Broniewski and Mieczysław

ducted by Mieczysław Zlat, Janusz St. Kęłowski, Henryk Dziurla, Jan Wrabec and finally Konstanty Kalinowski established a scientific discussion standard that became the benchmark for all subsequent generations of Polish art historians¹¹.

Today, while trying to address the question concerning the main determinants of modern Silesian art, we can generally divide the results into two groups: factors that strengthened and bonded the artistic identity of the region (region-forming elements) and hindering and disintegrating factors, which were counter-region-forming and region-destructive.

Enumerating the abovementioned factors will form a kind of a catalogue of research issues. A detailed discussion of these issues, as well as a precise explanation of evidence or examples, goes significantly beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, in most cases, it is not possible to avoid providing descriptions of a succinct, encyclopaedia-style character. We shall regard this, however, as the price that must be paid for the desired clarity of argument.

Strengthening and bonding factors behind the artistic identity of Silesia as region-forming elements

It seems that the main factor behind the reinforcement and cohesion of the artistic identity of Silesia was the historical events that took place there in the early modern period. Perceiving such events in terms of artistic and ideological determinants, we can observe that Silesian art produced unique works like, for example, the Churches of Peace (illus. 1), seven Churches of Grace (illus. 2), as well as border and fugitive churches.¹² The political situation which arose after the Peace of Westphalia meant that the Habsburg supreme authority, naturally restrictive towards the followers of Lutheranism, significantly reduced their freedom to practice their religion (for instance, by reducing the number of the churches previously held by the Protestants). This concerned an area that was outside the rule of

Zlat and entitled *Śląsk w zabytkach sztuki*, vol. 1-29, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk 1959-1993.

¹¹ The issue of originality of Silesian art during the Baroque period was particularly interesting for Konstanty Kalinowski, *Zwischen habsburgischem und preußischem Absolutismus Der Stillwandel in der schlesischen Kunst um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Stil und Gesellschaft. Ein Problemaufriß*, ed. Friedrich Möbius, Dresden 1984, pp. 226-242; *idem*, *Kunstzentrum und Provinz. Wien und die schlesische Kunst des 18. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Akten des XXV. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte: Wien, 4-10. September 1983*, vol. 7: *Wien und der europäische Barock*, eds Hermann Fillitz, Martina Pippal, Wien-Graz 1986, pp. 103-110; *idem*, *Centrum i peryferie – Wiedeń a sztuka Śląska XVIII wieku*, 'Rocznik Historii Sztuki', 16 (1987), pp. 295-299.

¹² After 1741 they became in turn *Bethäuser* (houses of prayer). This specific type of a church building was, however, rather the result of the particular economic situation of the followers of Lutheranism than—in contrast to the buildings described above—an indication of any restrictions.

the religiously-indifferent Silesian dukes and the city of Wrocław. Such lack of freedom of worship was thus the reason why after 1648 (and to a lesser extent also after 1707, that is after the Treaty of Altranstädt) Silesian Lutherans had no option but to ‘compensate’ for having a small number of religious sites by erecting highly original church buildings with the use of second-rate building materials, at locations (outside the city walls) and of architectural shapes (no bell towers) which depreciated the importance of these temples.



Illustration 1. Świdnica (Schweidnitz), Lutheran Holy Trinity Church of Peace.



Illustration 2. Jelenia Góra (Hirschberg), Holy Cross Parish Church (former Lutheran Church of Grace).

The modern art of Silesia was created over an area which was quite diverse geographically, yet tightly integrated and thus distinguished by historical continuity. It was also created within the frames of a socio-economic system which did not undergo radical changes. What became a characteristic feature of this region, especially in the second half of the 16th and in the 17th centuries, was the fact that the majority of the Silesian population supported the teachings of Martin Luther. This gave rise to a bottom-up and almost limitless development of Protestant art in the initial 150 years of the existence of Protestantism, despite the ‘sanctions’ resulting from belonging to the Catholic Habsburg Empire¹³. The attitude of the Silesian Lutherans from the early modern period was characterized by an acknowledgement of the region’s artistic past, especially in reference to the legacy of the Middle Ages. They frequently adapted medieval churches taken over from their predecessors, and if they decided to build new churches, both their form and construction methods were not significantly different from those of the past. Their actions lacked an iconoclastic character, and they followed an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary way of transforming the decor of the temples which they had taken over and converted into places of worship for the new confession. Sometimes they changed the location of baptismal fonts, moving them closer to the altar, and they attached particular importance to the pulpit – a place to proclaim the Word of God, assigning the sepulchral art not only commemorative but also educational functions. Religious art created for this confession by no means lost its significance; at most, the

¹³ A completely new light on this aspect was shed primarily by the studies of Jan Harasimowicz; See e.g. Jan Harasimowicz, *Typy i programy śląskich ołtarzy wieku Reformacji*, ‘Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej’, 12 (1979), pp. 7-27; *idem*, *Protestanckie budownictwo kościelne wieku reformacji na Śląsku*, ‘Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki’, 28 (1983), No. 4, pp. 341-371; *idem*, *Śląski luteranizm wieku reformacji – próba charakterystyki*, ‘Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka’, 39 (1984), No. 4, pp. 493-516; *idem*, *Reformacja luterska na Śląsku. Ideologia – liturgia – sztuka*, ‘Rocznik Lubuski’, 14 (1986), pp. 9-38; *idem*, *Treści i funkcje ideowe sztuki śląskiej reformacji 1520-1650*, Wrocław 1986 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 819, Historia Sztuki 2), *passim*; *idem*, *Rola sztuki w religijnych i społecznych konfliktach wieku Reformacji na Śląsku*, ‘Rocznik Historii Sztuki’, 18 (1990), pp. 31-95; *idem*, *Der Einfluss von Glaubenskonflikten auf die schlesische Kunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, ‘Acta Poloniae Historica’, 61 (1990), pp. 117-139; *idem*, *Schlesische Epitaphien und Grabmäler der Reformationszeit – ihre Typen und architektonisch-plastische Struktur*, [in:] *Renaissance in Nord-Mitteleuropa*, vol. 1., ed. Georg Ulrich Grossmann, Berlin-München 1990 (=Schriften des Weserrenaissance-Museums Schloß Brake, vol. 4), pp. 189-224; *idem*, *Mors Janua Vitæ. Śląskie epitafia i nagrobki wieku reformacji*, Wrocław 1992 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 1098, Historia Sztuki 3), *passim*; *idem*, *Paläste der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit, Werkstätten des Heiligen Geistes Die Kirchen der evangelischen Schlesier in der habsburgischen Zeit*, [in:] *Geschichte des protestantischen Kirchenbaues Festschrift für Peter Poscharsky zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds Klaus Raschzok, Reiner Sörries, Erlangen 1994, pp. 128-144; *idem*, *Śląskie nagrobki i epitafia wieku reformacji jako ‘teksty kultury’*, ‘Biuletyn Historii Sztuki’, 46 (1994), pp. 241-259; *idem*, *Kunst als Glaubensbekenntnis. Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der Reformationszeit*, Baden-Baden 1996 (=Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte, vol. 359), *passim*.

proportions changed: fewer impressive wooden altars were created in favour of more pulpits and sepulchral monuments. Artists, still repeatedly of a craftsman status and as such subject to strict guild regulations, continued to take many orders from Silesian burghers, local city authorities or the dukes. Living and working primarily on the city premises, they were able to satisfy the growing – thanks to the increasing prevalence of educational trips and commerce – aesthetic needs of increasingly rich patricians. Due to the availability of special artistic materials or their respect for tradition, they created works of art and artisan products of an unquestionably local, Silesian character. This can be observed, for instance, in a specific type of Baroque cabinet from Wrocław, a rifle called a *cieszynka*, or, finally, the extraordinary development of the production of glassware (this is specific both for Silesia and Bohemia) and cold cast figurative goldsmithery¹⁴.

An important *novum* in the Early and High Baroque period was the emergence between 1670/1680–1710/1720 of an entirely new group of artists and artisans who co-created important centres of art on the map of Silesia. These were colonies of sculptors and painters working in the workshops of great Cistercian monasteries (in Lubiąż, Krzeszów, Henryków and Trzebnica). A consequence of their ‘isolation’ was the emergence of a very specific, mystical trend in Silesian art (its main representative was Michael Leopold Willmann) (illus. 3) or – limiting the area of analysis – the ‘Mannerist Baroque’ or, to use the phrase coined by Dagobert Frey, the ‘Silesian Baroque Mannerism’, that is ‘the expressive trend’ in Silesian sculpture. The leading representatives of this sophisticated and original style were Thomas Weissfeldt from Scandinavia (illus. 4) and the sculptors working in the workshops of the monasteries in Henryków and Żagań. A determining element for the identity of Silesian art, especially the Catholic art of that time, is the fact that it ‘stemmed’, like the poetry composed by Angelus Silesius, from the unique spiritual and religious atmosphere of Silesian monasteries and it finds its source in the earnest and folk-coloured religiousness of Silesian monastic congregations.

¹⁴ Dorota Miłkowska, *Wrocławskie szafy mistrzowskie w XVIII w. Z dziejów stolarstwa śląskiego*, master’s thesis written under the supervision of Professor Jan Wrabec, Instytut Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 1995 (typescript), *passim*; Małgorzata Korzeł-Kraśna, *Cech stolarski we Wrocławiu w XVIII wieku*, ‘Dolny Śląsk’, 10 (2002), pp. 196-215; Andrzej Koziół, *Barokowy splendor klasztorów i pałaców*, [in:] *Śląsk – perła w Koronie Czeskiej. Trzy okresy świetności w relacjach artystycznych Śląska i Czech / Slezsko – perla v České Koruně. Tři období rozkvětu uměleckých vztahů Slezska a Čech. Katalog wystawy w Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy (Akademia Rycerska, 6.5.2006–8.10.2006) i w Národní galerie v Praze (Valdštejnská jízdárna, 17.11.2006–8.4.2007)*, eds Andrzej Niedzielenko, Vit Vlnas, Praha 2006, pp. 306-308; Piotr Oszczanowski, *Złotnicy wrocławscy – elita nowożytnego miasta*, [in:] *Wrocławski Skarb z Bremy*, eds Maciej Łągiewski, Piotr Oszczanowski, Jan J. Trzynadłowski, Wrocław 2007, pp. 38-104.



Illustration 3. Michael L. Willmann, *Vision of St. Bernard*, painting from the Cistercian monastic church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lubiąż (Leubus), 1681–1682.



Illustration 4. Thomas Weissfeld, *St. Bartholomew*, sculpture from The Church of the Holy Cross in Wrocław, 1704–1705.

In general, it can be said that the development of modern Silesian art followed the blossoming of local poetry and literature, serving as the proverbial ideological ‘background’ and a huge erudite reservoir for its innovative stylistic formation. The *Silesia literata* had a significant influence on the native character of art and its identity, which may be proved by the relationships between Martin Opitz and Bartholomaeus Strobel the Younger, Daniel Casper von Lohenstein and Matthias Rauchmiller, and finally between Angelus Silesius and the aforementioned Michael Leopold Willmann.

In the modern period, a particular phenomenon can be observed in Silesia: the arrival of a large group of foreign artists to the area was in no way followed by a number of outstanding works of art brought into the area. In general, we can observe a faint role of imports, i.e. specific works of art brought to Silesia from the leading artistic centres of Europe. Nevertheless, these works remain a marginal phenomenon, although their quality should not be underestimated – for example, the sculptures of Adriaen de Vries in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Żórawina (*Flagellation of Christ* from 1604) (illus. 5) and in Wrocław Cathedral (*The Martyrdom of Saint Vincent*, dated 1615), the interiors of the cathedral chapels in

Wrocław – the Chapel of St. Elizabeth and the Electoral Chapel (Ferdinand Maximilian Brokoff – and the workshop of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Domenico Guidi).



Illustration 5. Adriaen de Vries, *Flagellation of Christ*, sculpture in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Żórawina (Rothsürben), 1604.

The aforementioned small number of innovative works brought to Silesia is also accompanied by a certain ‘aesthetic’ conservatism among local clients or arts patrons. This is especially visible in the attention given in the 17th century to the works of already-anachronistic artists or schools, such as the Cranach workshop from the first half of the 16th century¹⁵. In the name of describing religious indifference to art, it is worth emphasizing that Silesian Lutherans had for a long time endeavoured to possess the works of this artist (illus. 6 and 7). Perceiving him as a confessional creator, active at the beginning of the Reformation, and working

¹⁵ Piotr Oszczanowski, *Wrocław w państwie Habsburgów: vol: 5: Reformacja (idea – wierni – świątynia)*, [in:] *1000 lat Wrocławia. Przewodnik po wystawie*, eds Maciej Łagiewski, Halina Okólska, Piotr Oszczanowski, 2nd edition, Wrocław 2011, pp. 73-75.

closely with Martin Luther, they appreciate him especially for his participation in creating the foundations for the iconography of their confession.



Illustration 6. Workshop of Lucas Cranach the Younger, *Portrait of Dr. Martin Luther*, painting from St. Elizabeth's Church in Wrocław, 1564.

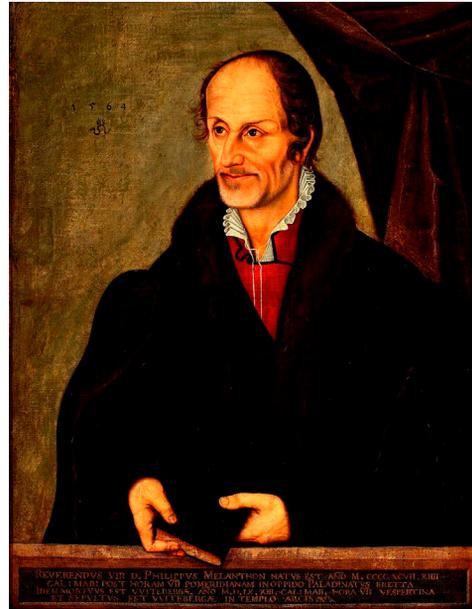


Illustration 7. Workshop of Lucas Cranach the Younger, *Portrait of Philip Melancthon*, painting from St. Elizabeth's Church in Wrocław, 1564.

It seems that only a few Silesians were willing to express an interest in the most attractive or most fashionable art of the time. Such high-grade art was understood only by the intellectual and political elites, as well as local artists. This applies, for example, to the fascination of some individuals (such as the imperial adviser Adam von Hanniwaldt or Johann Wacker von Wackenfels, associated with the court, or Jacob Walther, a painter residing for a short time in the capital of the empire) with the art of the court of Emperor Rudolf II in Prague at the turn of the 17th century (illus. 8)¹⁶. It also concerns the abundance of Silesian art collections in the second half of the 17th century and the early 18th century because, by definition

¹⁶ Also on this subject – *idem*, *Between the Avant-garde and the Tradition: A piece about artistic ties between Prague and Wrocław around year 1600*, [in:] *Rudolf II, Prague and the World. Papers from the International Conference Prague, 2–4 September, 1997*, eds Lubomir Konečný, Beket Bukovinská, Ivan Muchka, Prague 1998, pp. 134-144; *idem*, *W blasku rudolfínskéj Pragi*, [in:] *Śląsk – perła w Koronie Czeskiej*, pp. 155-169; *idem*, *Andreas von Hanniwaldt – szara eminencja dworu Rudolfa II / Andreas von Hanniwaldt – šedá eminence na dvoře Rudolfa II.*, [in:] *Slezsko – země Koruny české. Historie a kultura 1300–1740*, eds Helena Daňová, Jan Klipa, Lenka Stolárová, Praha 2008, pp. 559-570.

and due to the ambitions of their owners, these were exclusive private art collections distinguished by a high level of art. It should be noted, however, that the paintings and sculptures included in those collections – recognized as outstanding only by their owners, and in fact having little in common with the flagship examples of paintings created in Italy or the Netherlands – often turned out to be copies or even feeble counterfeits¹⁷.



Illustration 8. Workshop of Hans von Aachen, *Portrait of Emperor Rudolf II von Habsburg*, painting from Wrocław's Town Hall, 1601.

Generally speaking, it can be stated that, for the most part, the inhabitants of Silesia, especially the Lutherans, had for a long time resisted the arts, which they

¹⁷ Recently on this subject: Michał Mencfel, *Rariora naturae et artis. Gabinety osobliwości uczo-nych śląskich pierwszej połowy XVIII w.*, 'Barok. Historia – Literatura – Sztuka', 15 (2008), No. 1, pp. 89-109; *idem*, *Skarbce natury i sztuki. Prywatne gabinety osobliwości, kolekcje sztuki i naturalistów na Śląsku w wiekach XVII i XVIII*, Warszawa 2010, *passim*; *idem*, 'Hier wohnt an allen Ecken Kunst und Werth und Seltenheit'. *Graf Hans Anton Schaffgotsch (1675-1742) als Sammler*, [in:] *Das Haus Schaffgotsch. Konfession, Politik und Gedächtnis eines schlesischen Adelsgeschlechtes vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne*, eds Joachim Bahlcke, Ulrich Schmilewski, Thomas Wunsch, Würzburg 2010, pp. 291-306.

felt was associated with the patronage of the imperial court. We can observe many decades of disapproval demonstrated by the Lutheran burghers of Wrocław towards the innovative style of Rudolfiner artists or the activities of the Jesuits – their presence in the city, the construction of the University Church and the building of the University. Similarly, for many years the Lutheran City Council denied the Augustinian nuns, the Reformed Franciscans or the Hospitallers – i.e. such religious orders that benefitted from the support of the imperial power – the right to build new conventual churches within the city walls of Wrocław.

What clearly distinguishes the art of the region is the Silesian iconographic tradition (e.g. concerning some types of representations of local saints or cult images). In accordance with the principle of *pars pro toto*, two different ways in which this tradition functioned may thus be presented. They each have distinctive traits and they concern two very popular depictions of saints in Silesia of the modern era. The first one is the image of St. Hedwig (illus. 9); the second one is a valued and honoured depiction of the Passion of Christ – the *Mocking of Christ* (*Verspottung Christi*) of 1494 from the convent of Dominican Sisters in Wrocław (illus. 10).



Illustration 9. Raphael I Sadeler according to the pattern by Johann Matthias Kager, *Mystical vision of St. Hedwig of Silesia*, 1615.



Illustration 10. Anonymous Silesian painter, *Mocking of Christ* (*Verspottung Christi*), painting from the former convent of Dominican sisters in Wrocław (Breslau), 1494.

In the case of the first depiction it can be assumed that the decisive factor for the development of modern iconography of St. Hedwig was a new high altar in the chapel of St. Hedwig founded by a Cistercian nun, Małgorzata Benedykta Rajska (also known as Rayskin) in 1653, with the painting by Theodor Hammacher, preserved to this day¹⁸. This rather unusual image of the saint – presented as a portly, stocky and stout woman (and this is evidently untrue because she led a life of fasting and routinely denied herself all earthly pleasures!) – could boast quite a successful ‘career’¹⁹. It was, however, probably modelled on an earlier work of art. Such a work – due to the strength and scale of its impact – could prove to be a large, relief effigy of the saint contained in the new main altar of Wrocław Cathedral which was erected in 1590–1591, founded by Bishop Andreas Jerin and created by a Wrocław goldsmith, Paul Nitsch²⁰, or even her earlier depictions created by Lutheran engravers from Wrocław, perhaps even by Caspar Scharffenberg himself (c. 1519–1576) or by his son, Johann (about 1550–1586)²¹.

In light of the abovementioned facts, it is significant that the exceptionally beautiful representations of St. Hedwig were created in the early 17th century in the

¹⁸ Romuald Kaczmarek, *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig. Zeugnisse in der Kunst vom 13. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Das Bild der Heiligen Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. Eckhard Grunewald, Nikolaus Gussone, München 1996 (=Schriften des Bundesinstituts für ostdeutsche Kultur und Geschichte, vol. 7), pp. 137-158.

¹⁹ For example, a copper plate of a *folio* format issued by Paul Fürst (1605–1666) in Nuremberg (Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (= The State Archive in Wrocław), Akta Miasta Wrocławia (= fond: Acts of the City of Wrocław), No. E 2, part 4, p. 74r); the church bell of Co-cathedral of St. Hedwig of Silesia in Zielona Góra dated 1684 cast by Sigmund Götz of Wrocław; a plate with a relief effigy of St. Hedwig dated 1694, originally located in the floor of the chapel of St. John, now at the pillar in the northern nave in the Basilica in Trzebnica, etc.

²⁰ Jan Harasimowicz regards that ‘a manifestation of conscious restitution of the pictorial worship of patron saints [including Saint Hedwig] was the new main altar of the Wrocław Cathedral, erected in 1590-1591, founded by Bishop Andreas Jerin’; cf Jan Harasimowicz, *Funkcje katolickiego mecenatu artystycznego na Śląsku w dobie Reformacji i ‘Odnowy Trydenckiej’ Kościoła*, ‘Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka’, 41 (1986), No. 4, p. 570; *idem*, *Kult świętej Jadwigi Śląskiej w okresie reformacji i odnowy trydenckiej Kościoła*, [in:] *Księga Jadwiżańska. Międzynarodowe Sympozjum Naukowe ‘Święta Jadwiga w dziejach i kulturze Śląska’*, Wrocław-Trzebnica, 21-23 września 1993 r., eds Kazimierz Bobowski, Michał Kaczmarek, Antoni Kielbasa, Józef Swastek, Marek L. Wójcik, Wrocław 1995, pp. 403-404; *idem*, *Die heilige Hedwig von Schlesien aus evangelischer Sicht*, [in:] *Das Bild*, pp. 89-116.

²¹ A woodcut with the image of St. Hedwig was included in *Ordo Horarum et Divinrum Officiorum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Wratislaviensis* issued for 1597 and 1600 by Georg Baumann as well as in: *Das Leben und die Geschichte der Heyligen Hedwigis geborner Fürstin von Meranien, Großherzogin in Polen und Schlesien*, Breslau 1631. It shall be noted, however, that a woodblock with that image, in all probability belonged to the typographic resources of the Scharffenberg family; Piotr Oszczanowski, Jan Gromadzki, *Theatrum vitae et mortis Grafika, rysunek i malarstwo książkowe na Śląsku w latach ok. 1550-ok. 1650*, katalog wystawy, Muzeum Historyczne we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1995 (German version: Oszczanowski Piotr, Gromadzki Jan, *Theatrum vitae et mortis. Graphik, Zeichnung und Buchmalerei in Schlesien 1550-1650*. Ausstellungskatalog, Muzeum Historyczne we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1995), pp. 25-26, cat. no. 45, illustration.

Icones et miracula Sanctorum Poloniae series by Jacopo Lauro in Rome (1606) and Peter Overadt in Cologne (1606) according to Antonio Tempesta²², or by Raphael I Sadeler (1560–1628) in Munich (1615) according to the drawing model by Johann Matthias Kager (1575–1634), were, for a long time, unable to find their ‘place’ in Silesia²³. This *unio mistica* representation of St. Hedwig was of early medieval origin and was an illustration from *Legenda maior de beata Hedwigi* (*Żywot większy Świętej Jadwigi*). In this piece, Saint Hedwig is shown at prayer in front of the crucifix at the moment she experiences a mystical vision – the Crucified Christ came to life and, blessing Hedwig, turned to her and said the following words: ‘Your prayer is heard and you shall receive what you are asking for’.

The popularity - since the end of the 17th c. - this particular type of representation of Saint Hedwig in Silesia was probably decisively influenced by the fact that it was also used by Michael Leopold Willmann in his engraving project, probably drawn up by Johann Jacob von Sandrart, which was part of a series of representations of *The Saints and Blessed Cistercian Brothers and Sisters* (dated 1694-1696), which was commissioned by the abbot of the Cistercian monastery in Krzeszów, Bernhard Rosa²⁴. This scene was also repeated on one of the paintings from the *Life and Miracles of St. Hedwig* series, which comprised 20 paintings created before 1672 in the workshop of Willmann, commissioned by the abbot of the monastery in Lubiąż, Arnold Freiberger, for the chapel of St. Hedwig at the conventual church of Cistercian nuns in Trzebnica²⁵.

²² Ryszard Jan Knapieński, Aleksandra Witkowska OSU, *Polskie Niebo. Ikonografia hagiograficzna u progu XVII wieku*, Pelplin 2007, pp. 116, 174-177, 226-229, illus. 44, 64, 78.

²³ *Wizja św. Jadwigi Śląskiej (Chrystus na krzyżu błogosławiący św. Jadwigę)* – the 55th drawing out of the 60 drawings included in the book of father Matthäus Rader, jesuit, (1561–1634) published in 1615 under the title *Bavaria Sancta*; see Matthäus Rader SJ, *Bavaria Sancta Maximiliani Sereniss[imi] Principis Imperii, Comitum Palatini Rheni, Utriusq[ue] Bav[ariae] Ducis Auspiciis coepta, descripta eidemq[ue] munucupata [...]*, Monacii 1565, p. 146 (Bb2). On this subject see Hollstein's *Dutch and Flemish Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts ca. 1450-1700*, Aegidius Sadeler to Raphael Sadeler II, text compiled by Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, ed. K.G. Boon, vol. 21, Amsterdam 1980, No. 293; *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 71, part 2: *Netherlandish Artists – Raphael Sadeler I*, ed. Isabelle de Remaix, New York 2007, No. 270 e.g. in the collection of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-7981 – see <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/search/objecten?js=1&p=2&ps=12&rpkrref=Hollstein+Dutch+293#/RP-P-OB-7981,19> (access on the 12th March, 2013).

²⁴ Andrzej Kozieł, *Angelus Silesius, Bernhard Rosa i Michael Willmann, czyli sztuka i mistyka na Śląsku w czasach baroku*, Wrocław 2006 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 2872, Historia Sztuki 23), pp. 351-354, 375-377, illus. 139, 159.

²⁵ This representation has also a graphic version. It is presented in the album containing 19 copper plate engravings framed together-ref. no.: *Willman invenit.* – with a handwritten title page: *Vita Sanctae Hedwigis 24 Kupferstiche von Johann Balzer – Prag und Johann Bartholomäus Strachowsky – Breslau um 1775*, in: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu (=The Ossolineum in Wrocław), Muzeum Książąt Lubomirskich, Gabinet Grafiki (=Museum of the Lubomirski Princes, Department of Prints), Inv. No. A.gr. 4/1 –24 (the album comes from the Cistercian monastery in Krzeszów).

In this way, the beginning of the 18th century marked the beginning of the extraordinary career of this type of representation of St. Hedwig of Silesia. This is demonstrated by numerous repetitions of that iconographic pattern in local engravings (e.g. according to Jeremias Joseph Knechtel²⁶, Philipp Anton Bartsch²⁷, engravings by Florian Bartholomaeus Comaeus Strachowsky and Johann Benjamin Strachowsky²⁸, and also anonymous works²⁹) and in the depictions contained in Silesian fresco paintings³⁰ or the Baroque³¹ and no less successful 19th-century oil paintings³²

²⁶ Engraving by Anton Birckhart in: Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (=University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rycin (Department of Prints), Inv. No. T 1086/III no. 423.

²⁷ The work of Johann Benjamin Strachowsky in: Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu (=Wrocław University Library), Oddział Starych Druków (= Old Prints Department), Inv. No. 441285.

²⁸ Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu (=Wrocław University Library), Oddział Starych Druków (= Old Prints Department), Inv. No. 922239; Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (=University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rycin (Department of Prints), Inv. No. T 1086/III no. 479 and Inv. No. T 1086/III no. 480.

²⁹ Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (=University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rycin (Department of Prints), Inv. No. T 1086/III no. 483–490 and Inv. No T 1086/III no. 422.

³⁰ For example, the polychrome paintings in the church of the Holy Name of Jesus (University Church) in Wrocław (a fresco dated 1703-1706, by Johann Michael Rottmayr) and in the chapel of the Holy Stairs in Sośnica (a fresco dated 1776, by Johann Heinrich Kynast and Johann Karl Kynast).

³¹ For example, in the following churches: Church of St. Anna in Czarnowąs – a painting from the late 17th century (side altar); Church of St. Giles and Bernardine of Siena in Głubczyce – a painting from the late 17th century (side altar); Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Gościkowo–Paradyż – a painting from the late 17th century (side altar); Church of St. Roch in Dobrzeń Wielki – a painting from the second half of the 17th century (side altar); Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Kamieniec Żąbkowicki – a missing painting dated 1708-1709 (by Johann Christoph Liška); Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Henryków – a painting from the side altar dated 1708-1712 (from the workshop of Johann Christoph Liška); Church of St. Hedwig of Silesia in Stara Kopernia – a painting from the side altar of 1720 (by Jeremias Josef Knechtel); Church of St. Florian in Stary Wiązów – a painting dated before 1721 (side altar); Church of St. Bartholomew in Uciechów – a painting from the period 1725-1727 (by Jeremias Josef Knechtel); Church of St. Wenceslas, St. Stanislaus and St. Dorothy – a painting dated about 1730 (side altar dedicated to St. Hedwig); Church of the Corpus Christi in Wrocław – a painting from about 1730 (by Johann Jacob Eybelwiesera); Church of St. Nicholas in Pełcznica (in Wrocław district) – a painting from around 1730 (side altar); Church of St. Hedwig in Świdnica Polska (Środa Śląska district) – a painting in the side altar from the 1740s (from the workshop of Jeremias Joseph Knechtel); Church of St. Hedwig of Silesia in Gryfów Śląski – a painting in the side altar from the 2nd quarter of the 18th century (by Jeremias Joseph Knechtel); Church of St. Hedwig in Złotoryja – a painting from the mid–eighteenth century (in the main altar); Church of St. Hedwig in Dobroszów – a painting from the main altar dated 1750 (by J. Michael Steiner); Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Sośnica – a painting from about 1779 (probably by Johann Heinrich Kynast); Church of St. John the Baptist in Powidzko – a painting from about 1791 (side altar). On this issue see e.g. Hermann Hoffmann, *Die Corpus Christi-Kirche in Breslau. Eine Führung*, Breslau 1936 (=Führer zu schlesischen Kirchen, vol. 25), p. 40 (until 1811 in the Capuchin Church of St. Hedwig at Karlstrasse, i.e. today's Kazimierza Wielkiego Street); *Jeremias Joseph Knechtel (1679-1750) – legnicki malarz doby baroku*, katalog wystawy, *Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy, październik 2012–kwiecień 2013*, eds Andrzej Kozieł, Emilia Kłoda, Legnica 2012, pp. 128-129, 187-189, 200-201, 205-208, catalogue no. A10, A89, A104, A110 (catalogue notes by: Emilia Kłoda).

³² For example, the paintings in the following churches: Church of the Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary in Okrzeszyn – a painting dated 1855 (the work of an anonymous artist); Church of St. Hedwig in

Interestingly, therefore, the representation of medieval origin and Silesian provenance was ‘codified’ or ‘made autonomous’ in works created outside its homeland (in Rome, Cologne and Munich), and then it returned to the place of its origin and gained immense popularity there.

This contrasted with the fate of a representation of the Passion of Christ revered in Silesia, which was originally located in the Dominican convent of St. Catherine, and then in the chapel of the Passion of Christ (*Geheimen Leidens*) in the Dominican Church of St. Wojciech in Wrocław. The original medieval painting of 1494 with the representation of the *Mocking of Christ* (*Verspottung Christi*), which no longer exists today, was highly regarded in the modern era.³³ This regard is proved by its presence in Baroque paintings,³⁴ engravings,³⁵ and, finally, goldsmith

Ząbkowice Śląskie–Sadlno, dated 1862 (the main altar holds the work by Karl Müller); Church of St. Hedwig in Kłósów in Strzelin district (a copy of the engravings from 1878 by Karl Müller in the main altar); Church of St. Anna in Góra św. Anny (side altar of 1890 by Julius M. Heinisch); Church of the Holy Name of Jesus (the University Church) in Wrocław (a painting in the side altar by Karl Wohnlich, dated 1868). On this subject see in particular: Joanna Lubos-Kozieł, *Wiarą tchnące obrazy. Studia z dziejów malarstwa religijnego na Śląsku w XIX wieku*, Wrocław 2004 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 2662, Historia Sztuki 18), pp. 119, 226, 416, illus. 24, 88, XXXI.

³³ For more highly competent information, see in particular: Dariusz Galewski, *Kościół dominikanów pod wezwaniem św. Wojciecha we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2003 (=Zabytki Wrocławia, ed. Łukasz Krzywka), p. 20; *idem*, *Kościół i klasztor dominikanów pod wezwaniem św. Wojciecha we Wrocławiu*, [in:] *Tutelarissilesiae. Błogosławiony Czesław we Wrocławiu*, collective work, Wrocław 2007, pp. 8-53; *idem*, *Artystyczne przejawy kultu średniowiecznego obrazu Naigrawanie z Chrystusa z klasztoru wrocławskich dominikanek*, [in:] *Artifex doctus. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Jerzemu Gadomskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, vol. 2, eds Jerzy Gadomski, Wojciech Batus, Wojciech Walanus, Kraków 2007, pp. 245-250.

³⁴ For example, in the following churches: Church of the Ascension in Jaźwin (Łągiewniki commune); Church of St. Dorothy, St. Wenceslas and St. Stanislas in Wrocław; Church of St. Anna in Wrocław–Widawa; Church of St. Hedwig and Bartholomew in Trzebnica (a painting in the side altar) and in the chapel of St. Anna in Kowary and in the following museums: the Museum of Sacred Art in Bardo and the Museum of Wrocław Archdiocese (two oil paintings from the first half of the 18th century, and a miniature from 1611). On this subject see for example: Hermann Hoffmann, *Die katholische Kirche in Schmiedeberg im Riesengebirge. Eine Führung*, Breslau 1936 (=Führer zu schlesischen Kirchen, vol. 27), p. 29; *idem*, *Die Kirche in Langseifersdorf und die Kirchen in Bertholdsdorf, Lauterbach und Stoschendorf. Eine Führung*, Breslau 1939 (=Führer zu schlesischen Kirchen, vol. 39), p. 14; P. Oszczanowski, J. Gromadzki, *Theatrum*, p. 106, catalogue no. 386, col. illus. 386.

³⁵ For example by Johann Christian Sander (an engraver working in Wrocław in the first half of the 18th century) in: Muzeum Narodowe we Wrocławiu (=The National Museum in Wrocław), Dział Grafiki i Rysunku Galerii Sztuki XVI–XIX wieku (=Department of Prints and Drawings of the Gallery of 16th–19th century Art), Inv. No. VII–1199 (negative no. 111-12/46); Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (=University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rycin (Department of Prints), Inv. No. T 1086/II no. 666, T 1086/II no. 668, T 1086/II no. 669 and 1086/III no. 75; of the members of the Wrocław Strachowski family in: Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (=University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rycin (Department of Prints), Inv. No. T 1086/II no. 663, T 1086/II no. 670, T 1086/II no. 671; in the collections in: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu (=The Ossolineum in Wrocław), Muzeum Książąt Lubomirskich, Gabinet Grafiki (=Museum of the Lubomirski Princes, Department of Prints) – more about the latter see Adam Więcek, *Ryciny Strachowskich w zbiorach wrocławskiego Ossolineum*, ‘Ze skarbcza kultury. Biuletyn informacyjny

works in the form of silver votive plates (*Votivtäfelschen*)³⁶. Thus, these examples make it a classic example of regional popularity.

Hindering and disintegrating factors behind the artistic identity of Silesia as a counter-region-forming element

The main factor that weakened the artistic identity of Silesia in the early modern era is the fact that it belonged both to the common artistic (broadly understood as the culture of Western civilization originating from the Mediterranean) and ideological (Christianity) tradition. This resulted in the universality of lay and religious works of art arising in this area. This is particularly evident in its iconography, common for the works of art created there, resulting from the fact that Silesia was a part of the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Holy Roman Empire which were faithful to Christianity. This becomes particularly clear when studying art from the times of the longest-reigning Habsburg rulers in the modern period: Rudolf II (1576–1611)³⁷ and Leopold I (king from 1656, emperor from 1658 to 1705) (illus.11–15)³⁸. It can be said that, chronologically, the reign of the Habsburg dynasty in this part of Europe perfectly coincides with the manifestation of modern-era art in this area – from its Early-Renaissance style (around 1526) to High Baroque (around 1741).

Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich’, 7 (1957-1958), No. 1 (10), pp. 128-129, no. 50, 52; and finally anonymous works (eg Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (=University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rycin (Department of Prints), Inv. No. T 1086/II no. 667).

³⁶ For example by Tobias Meyer, a master of the guild in Wrocław since 1790, born in Vienna in 1764 (died in 1824) from the beginning of the 19th century – see Erwin Hintze, *Breslauer Goldschmiede. Eine archivalische Studie*, Breslau 1906, p. 119.

³⁷ On the propaganda purposes of art in Silesia at the reign of Emperor Rudolf II see Piotr Oszczanowski, *Ikonografia cesarza Rudolfa II (1576-1612) w nowożytnej sztuce Śląska*, ‘Dzieła i Interpretacje’, 1 (1993), pp. 27-63.

³⁸ Decisive for this issue is the research of Konstanty Kalinowski, which is continued by next generations of researchers – compare, eg Konstanty Kalinowski, *Sala książęca opactwa cysterskiego w Lubiążu*, [in:] *Rokoko. Studia nad sztuką I. połowy XVIII w.*, Warszawa 1970, pp. 159-178; *idem*, *Gloryfikacja panującego i dynastii w sztuce Śląska XVII i XVIII wieku*, Warszawa-Poznań 1973, pp. 107-169; *idem*, *Die Glorifizierung des Herrschers und Herrscherhauses in der Kunst Schlesiens im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ‘Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte’, 28 (1975), pp. 106-122; Piotr Oszczanowski, *Śląskie castra doloris cesarza Leopolda I. Przyczynek do ikonografii władcy i gloryfikacji panującego*, [in:] *O sztuce sepulkralnej na Śląsku*, ed. Bogusław Czechowicz, Arkadiusz Dobrzyński, Wrocław 1997, pp. 105-146; *idem*, *Ikonografia cesarza Leopolda I (1658-1705) w nowożytnej sztuce śląskiej. Addenda*, ‘Cieszyńskie Studia Muzealne / Těšínský muzejní sborník’, 3 (2007), pp. 57-151; Małgorzata Wyrzykowska, *Śląsk w orbicie Wiednia. Artystyczne związki Śląska z Arcyksięstwem Austriackim w latach 1648-1741*, Wrocław 2010, *passim*.



Illustration 11. Anonymous Silesian artisan, *Coat of Arms of the Archduchy of Austria*, a piece of an embroidered antepedium, the first half of the 17th century.



Illustration 12. Wilhelm Helleweg, *Beautiful Well funded by Mayor Caspar Naas*, finial fragment, 1685, Nysa (Neisse).



Illustration 13. Probably Esajas Flaschner, *Coat of arms of the Kingdom of Bohemia*, stalls decorated with intarsia in the chapel of Nicolaus Gätke in St. Elizabeth's Church in Wrocław.



Illustration 14. Anonymous Silesian painter, *Apotheosis of the Emperor Leopold I von Habsburg*, painting from the historical Cistercian monastery in Krzeszów (Grüssau), about 1700.



Illustration 15. Johann Georg Thomschansky, *Apotheosis of the Emperor Leopold I von Habsburg*, painting from Wrocław's (Breslau's) Town Hall Council Chamber, after the 1st of May, 1705.

One consequence of Silesia's geographical location, situated at the crossroads of many routes and on the border of two large state organisms, was the fact that it became an area that naturally 'absorbed' inspirations from different artistic circles³⁹, hence, the proverbial 'openness' of Silesian clients and arts patrons to the presence of foreign artists in the area. This attitude was even more understandable

³⁹ This is confirmed by numerous publications, especially those which have been published over the last several years see *Op Niderlandse manier. Inspiracje niderlandzkie w sztuce śląskiej XV-XVIII wieku. Katalog wystawy*, ed. Mateusz Kapustka, Andrzej Kozieł, Piotr Oszczanowski, Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy, maj–lipiec 2001, Legnica 2001; *Niderlandyzm na Śląsku i w krajach ościennych*, ed. Mateusz Kapustka, Andrzej Kozieł, Piotr Oszczanowski, Wrocław 2003 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 2508, Historia Sztuki 17); *Po obu stronach Bałtyku. Wzajemne relacje między Skandynawią a Europą Środkową / On the Opposite Sides of the Baltic Sea. Relations between Scandinavian and Central European Countries*, vol. 1-2, eds Jan Harasimowicz, Piotr Oszczanowski, Marcin Wisłocki, Wrocław 2006; *Śląsk i Czechy. Wspólne drogi sztuki. Materiały konferencji naukowej dedykowane Profesorowi Janowi Wrabecowi*, eds Mateusz Kapustka, Andrzej Kozieł, Piotr Oszczanowski, Wrocław 2007 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 2953, Historia Sztuki 24); *Śląsk – perła w Koronie Czeskiej, passim; Śląsk – perła w Koronie Czeskiej. Trzy okresy świetności w relacjach artystycznych Śląska i Czech. Historia – Kultura – Sztuka*, tom esejowy towarzyszący katalogowi wystawy w Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy [Akademia Rycerska, 6.05.–8.10.2006] i w Narodni galerii v Praze [Valdštejnská jizdárna, 16.11.2006–8.04.2007], eds Mateusz Kapustka, Jan Klípa, Andrzej Kozieł, Piotr Oszczanowski, Vít Vlnas, Praha 2007; *Między Wrocławiem a Lwowem. Sztuka na Śląsku, w Małopolsce i na Rusi Koronnej w czasach nowożytnych*, eds Andrzej Betlej, Katarzyna Brzezina-Scheuerer, Piotr Oszczanowski, Wrocław 2011 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 3291, Historia Sztuki 31).

owing to the fact that the latter, facing huge competition in the leading art centres from which they were recruited, were doomed to exile and a search for new markets for their skills. Having arrived in Silesia, they shaped the character or even significantly influenced the progression of Silesian art. In the modern period, that is from the beginning of the 16th century, these comprised, at first, artists from the Swiss-Italian borderland, then Saxon artists transferring Italian patterns to Silesia, then the Dutch (reaching Silesia mostly *via* Gdańsk) and finally, during the Early Baroque period, Italians once again (especially plasterers). At the close of the 17th century and throughout the 18th century, the level of Silesian art was still determined by the accomplishments of foreign artists who had come to Silesia to perform specific contracts. Also, the standard of works was often influenced by political and religious ideas imposed by Silesian art patrons. This is especially true of the experiences of Italian, Bavarian, Czech and Viennese artists (e.g. Carlo Carlone, Cosmas Damian Asam, Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer, Felix Anton Scheffler, Petr Brandl, Johann Christoph Liška, Johann Christoph Handke, Wenzel Lorenz Reiner, Florian Bartholomaeus Comaeus Strachowsky and Johann Benjamin Strachowsky, Johann Georg Urbansky, Karl Joseph Hiernle, Anton Dorasil, and Lucas von Hildebrandt). This does not mean, however, that those ‘confession’ artists came to Silesia only to meet the expectations of Catholic patrons and perform their orders. Frequently, they successfully created works commissioned by Lutheran patricians or the Calvinist Piast dynasty. It is significant, however, that after 1740 the presence of foreign artists in Silesia, previously unlimited and resulting largely from the openness of its borders, becomes somewhat limited, and in some cases even eliminated. What followed was a compliance with the style and patterns originating from the area of the Hohenzollern country (Berlin, Potsdam, Leipzig or Królewiec). At that time what can be observed are changes in the style of Silesian art which occurred in the Austrian-Prussian period, i.e. 1740/1750.⁴⁰

One reason why Silesian modern-era art became a universal ‘product’ is the creative procedure that was often followed when constructing works, i.e. its dependence on

⁴⁰ Also worth mentioning are general studies (see e.g. Günther Grundmann, *Die Richtungsänderung in der schlesischen Kunst des 18. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Kunstgeschichtliche Studien. Dagobert Frey zum Geburtstag 23.04.1943*, ed. Hans Tiontelnot, Breslau 1943, pp.78-105; Bogusław Czechowicz, *Sztuka i władza na Śląsku od połowy XVIII wieku: sprzężenia zwrotne*, [in:] *Sztuka i władza. Materiały z konferencji zorganizowanej przez Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk w dniach 30 XI-2 XII 1998 roku w Warszawie*, eds Dariusz Konstantynów, Robert Pasieczny, Piotr Paszkiewicz, Warszawa 2001, pp. 107-132;), as well as more detailed studies, that is monographies concerning individual monuments see e.g. Romuald Nowak, ‘Sala Rajców brzeskiego Ratusza’, *Panorama Brzeska*, <http://brzeg24.pl/aktualnosci/1085-sala-rajc-brzeskiego-ratusza-czi-2/> and <http://brzeg24.pl/aktualnosci/1092-sala-rajc-brzeskiego-ratusza-cz-2/> (access on: the 14th of May and the 21st of May 2013).

fashionable foreign models, the acceptance of the rules applied within a given religious order, or making the creation of art conditional on the ruler's consent (e.g. the design made by Joseph Fritsch of the Jesuit church in Brzeg was approved in Rome on the 14th of August, 1734 (illus. 16)⁴¹ or the approval of the plans and the consent to the erection of the conventual church for the Augustinian nuns – the Church of St. Jacob on the Sand in Wrocław – by Emperor Leopold I von Habsburg on the 7th of August, 1687)⁴².

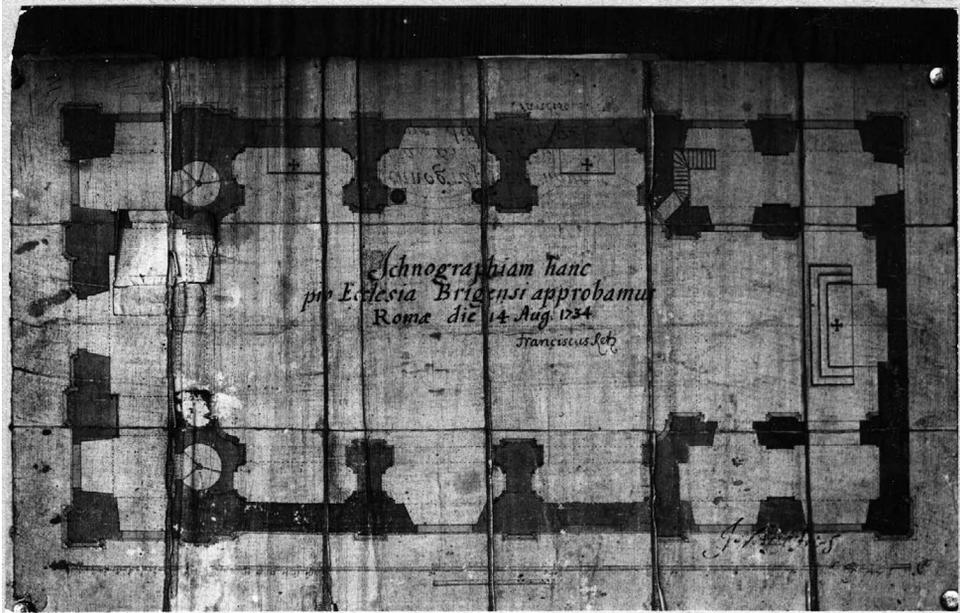


Illustration 16. Joseph Fritsch, *Floor plan of the Jesuit church in Brzeg (Brieg) approved in Rome on the 14th of August, 1734.*

Another reason why Silesian art lost its identity or specificity was the fact that, with the exception of the artistic centres clustered around the Cistercian monasteries, it is hard to list places in this area that aspired to the title and rank of an artistic centre. In the modern period, neither the patronage of the Silesian bishops nor of the local ruling dynasties (the Piast – illus. 17, Poděbrady, Württemberg and Hohenzollern families) in their cities of residence (capitals of duchies) managed to develop lasting (i.e. organized and working only under a given patronage) artistic circles. The artistic policies adopted by these patrons did not prove to be fully conscious or

⁴¹ Mieczysław Zlat, *Brzeg*, 2nd edition, revised and corrected (*Śląsk w zabytkach sztuki*, a series edited by Tadeusz Broniewski, Mieczysław Zlat), p. 146.

⁴² Ludwig Burgemeister, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Breslau*, vol. 1: *Die kirchlichen Denkmäler der Dominsel und der Sandinsel*, Breslau 1930, p. 253.

consistent. Their actions were repeatedly accidental and were dependent on their financial possibilities, economic situation and aesthetic needs. This does not mean, however, that within the patronage they avoided ambitious projects, as the remodeling or expansion of their own mansions (e.g. in Brzeg, Legnica, Oława, Oleśnica or Nysa), and their necropolises (e.g. Brzeg), demonstrates.

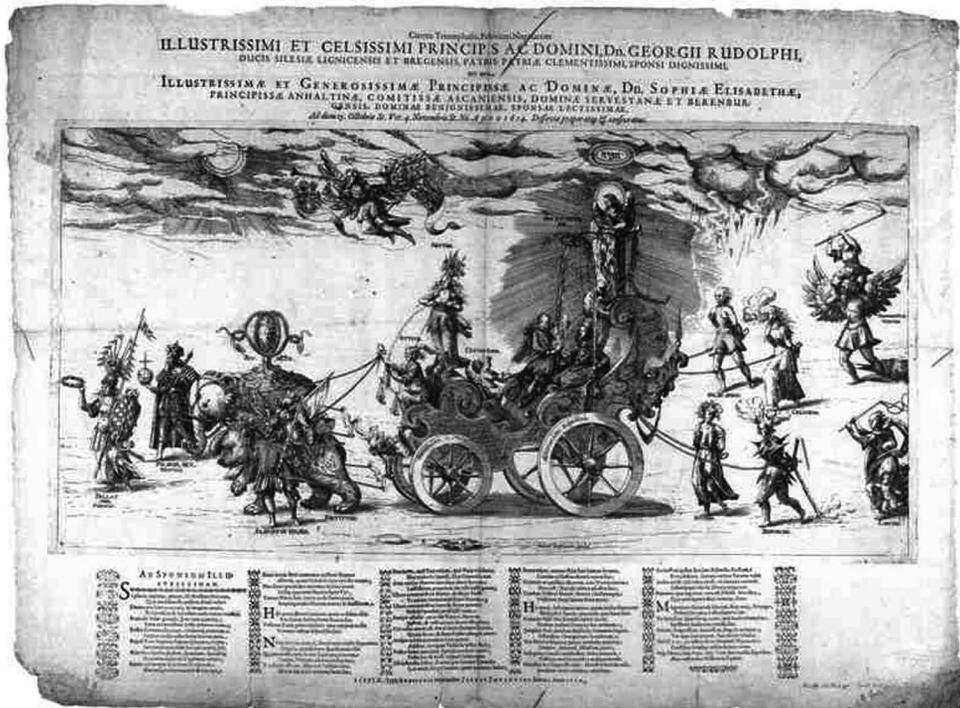


Illustration 17. Andreas Bretschneider according to the pattern by IM Monogram (Johann Muck vel Muccius?), *Apotheosis of Georg Rudolph the Duke of Legnica and Sophie Elisabeth von Anhalt, on the occasion of their wedding in Dessau on 4th of November, 1614 (Curus Triumphalis)*, ephemeral prints issued by Henning Gross and Justus Jansonius in Leipzig in 1614.

The native character of Silesian art was consistently opposed by the policy of the Habsburgs, who supported the revival of Catholicism in Silesia. This is evident, for example, by the support given by the ruling family to various Catholic religious orders, helping them to improve their possessions, putting pressure on Lutheran city authorities such as those in Wrocław, etc. These actions were accompanied by a policy which ‘enforced’ certain universal propaganda objectives onto art. This applies to the issue of propaganda power – for example, after 1526 (i.e., after the transition of Silesia under the power of the Habsburgs), after 1675 (the end of the Piast dynasty in Silesia), after 1609 (The Letter of Majesty of Emperor Rudolf II),

after 1648 (the end of the Thirty Years' War), or the 1730s (the period of the Pragmatic Sanction of Emperor Charles VI). It is also observable in the area of religious propaganda (for example, through the development of the cult of St. John of Nepomuk, St. Joseph or the Holy Trinity). Thus, we can talk about a so-called shared 'heaven' for Silesia and Bohemia, i.e. a common religious iconography⁴³.

One disintegrating factor is still the fact that in Silesia there were no training opportunities for art students in academic fashion, no art schools were created in the region. Therefore, we cannot talk about the local specifics of education which radiates or imposes certain standards of artistic solutions over the whole area of Silesia. The binding practice of art and craft in Silesia is the 'existing' one, often of a late-Gothic character, that is the existing procedures for career and social advancement of the artist, or rather still just a craftsman (it concerns the obligation to take the so-called apprenticeship trips, staying in significant, leading artistic centres, the issue of getting occupational title of the master, inheritance of the workshop, etc.).

Finally, it must be strongly emphasized that Silesian local art was subject to some characteristic patterns regarding the evolution of styles used, particularly in the field of iconography. This unquestionable merit – especially leading to the unification of painting and also, to a lesser extent, sculpture – must be applied to the graphical pattern in the process of creating a work of art. This pattern – first of Italian, then Saxon, and finally Dutch descent, and then again Italian and French – often made these works more attractive and were responsible for their belonging to a common area of art and style.

Conclusion

The above list of factors which enhanced or consolidated the artistic identity of Silesia provides – it is worth repeating – only a stimulus to more insightful research and to more intense attempts at deepening our understanding of the characteristics of the art of the region. It certainly does not exhaust the issue presented. Rather than summarizing the state of research on modern Silesian art, it serves as a specific research desideratum, in accordance with the goal established for this article.

⁴³ What was clearly demonstrated in 2007 at the exhibition: *Śląsk – perła w Koronie Czeskiej, passim*.

Conclusions from the analysis of forces that integrated Silesia as a region between 1526 and 1740

Abstract:

An analysis of the phenomena which occurred in the administrative, economic, social, ethnic and cultural spheres, as well as in respect of the self-identification and identity of inhabitants has demonstrated what a complex region Silesia was under the Habsburgs. Administratively, it was highly fragmented, it possessed an expansive network of government offices, and was economically, ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse. The beginning of the 17th century constituted a significant turning point. The eruption of the Thirty Years' War led to deep social transformations, altered the religious situation, and generated serious economic consequences. The first half of the 17th century also bore fruit in the form of new cultural and artistic phenomena. Baroque came to Silesia, stimulating the birth of a new artistic and aesthetic movement of European quality, visible in literature, architecture and the visual arts. It should also be stated that during the entire period under analysis, when compared to conditions before 1526, the region's integration and cohesion became stronger and more entrenched. From the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, Silesia's inhabitants also began feeling a stronger sense of identification with the region. This picture was not transformed by tendencies towards disintegration associated with religious conflicts, but rather by the coexistence of diverse ethnic, linguistic and social groups.

Keywords:

Silesia, regional cohesion, Thirty Years' War, self-identification

The aim of the *Cuius regio* project was to determine factors that fostered the building or elimination of social cohesion and sense of attachment of individuals and groups to the territory of their habitation. The examination of phenomena occurring in the administrative, economic, social, ethnic and cultural sphere, as well as in the sphere of self-identification and identity of inhabitants of Silesia has proven that the period of Silesian history between 1526 and 1740 was in many respects heterogeneous. By and large it was the outset of the 17th century and the outbreak of the Thirty Year's War which may be considered a landmark of each of the issues analysed in this volume. The stance of Silesians in the initial phase of war, their support for the Bohemian estates and the consequences of the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, brought a considerable change in the region's governance. The conclusion of the war and the Peace of Westphalia strengthened the position of

Habsburgs as kings of Bohemia and reinforced political boundaries of Silesia for almost a century. The Thirty Years' War brought about social and religious changes, and also – obviously – significant economic consequences. Independently of political factors and the long-term, destructive warfare, the outset of the 17th century bore fruit in the emergence of new phenomena in the sphere of culture and arts. Silesia saw the advent of Baroque, which stimulated the formation of new artistic and aesthetic trends, especially among Silesian Catholic elites. This characteristic rift of the second/third decade of the 17th century has been thoroughly examined in this volume, particularly in sections devoted to social groups as well as ethnic and linguistic issues, covered in two separate texts (one devoted to the long 16th century and another to the period from the Thirty Years' War to the outbreak of the First Silesian War). And what are the conclusions drawn from the analysis whose aim was to answer the question on social cohesion of inhabitants of Silesia in the examined period?

It is beyond doubt that Silesia possessed a complex administrative system. It originated in consequence of incorporation to the Crown of Bohemia in the 14th and 15th century of the highly fragmented region, equipped in both developed and developing regional estate and ducal institutions, and administrative offices. In 1526 there existed sixteen duchies (in the period between 1526 and 1740 their number changed), four free states and 144 cities possessing their own authorities. Such fragmented and internally complex Silesia was one of five countries of the Bohemian Crown, which were subordinate to offices and institutions whose number was in fact small, but whose power extended to the entire monarchy. The strongest bond between these five diverse countries was the person of king, who was head of royal offices and institutions. Besides, there existed institutions of national estate authority headed by the sejm, whose power extended to all lands of the Bohemian Crown. Yet, each of the countries strove to achieve its their own goals. The tensions between local Silesian interests and interests of Czech, Moravian and Lusatian estates, as well as aims and ambitions of successive kings of Bohemia throughout the entire discussed period, led to the consolidation of regionalism and the building of the sense of unique, Silesian identity.

The sense of independence of the region of Silesia was also reinforced by internal Silesian estate institutions. Their role was all the more crucial that the authority of these particular estate offices and institutions extended to almost all spheres of contemporary governance. In fact, following 1629 royal authorities took efforts to limit and marginalize their role, but at the same time preserved the regional administrative-institutional system. The most conspicuous example of

this is the replacement of the monocratic office of governor of Silesia – who formerly enjoyed extensive authority and was strongly connected with Silesian elites – with the collegial so-called Superior Office (*Oberamt*) composed of royal officers. Nonetheless, the strengthening of the top-down efforts aimed at elimination of regionalisms from the countries of the Bohemian Crown, consolidation of the status of the king and extension of scope of his authority stimulated the emergence in Silesia of anti-centralist forces, which in the end brought results opposite to those intended. On a mental level, this resulted in the growing conviction of distinctiveness of Silesia and Silesians. At the same time, actions undertaken by the kings of Bohemia from the second/third decade of the 17th century led to Silesia being formally perceived and treated as a distinct administrative region. What failed to be eliminated at the time was the internal fragmentation of Silesia. The existence of Silesian offices and institutions in separate duchies, free states and individual cities led in turn to a somewhat enfeeblement of the region's cohesion in favour to the development of connections and relationships on the local level.

From the economic perspective, Silesia was benefitting from developments of the previous period. The privileged position of the region was determined by high level of urbanisation, effective colonization and conversion of extensive territories to farming grounds. Throughout the examined period Silesia did not differ much in this respect from its neighbouring lands, especially those located within the Bohemian Crown. Similarities included even types of cultivated crops. This does not mean however that economic phenomena specific only to Silesia were entirely absent from the region. Despite this specific economic unification, the outset of the 17th century saw a growing number of phenomena which led to the region's increasing economic separation – a process which needs to be viewed as a consequence of royal policy leading to isolation of individual countries of the Bohemian Crown. In spite of this fact, Silesia – thanks to commerce (transit, export and import) – maintained strong connections with its neighbouring countries, not only under the Habsburg rule. It was the flourishing native commerce – fostering the interests of local manufacturers – that constituted an important region-integrating factor. The greatest and most powerful player in the economic sphere turned out to be the city of Wrocław, which became the principal centre of the local market, and also the most devoted guardian of commercial and export interests of its burghers.

In the period when Silesia was part of the Bohemian Crown under the Habsburg rule, the region differed not only from the very Bohemia – its southern neighbour – but also from the lands of Poland both in terms of its unique social structure and importance and status of particular social groups, perhaps only except peasantry.

A characteristic feature was the lasting presence in Silesia of a large – owing to the aforementioned internal fragmentation – community of dukes and free state lords, who played a crucial role in the political, religious and cultural sphere. In Bohemia and Moravia similar role fell to the class of lords, who nonetheless occupied a different social position within the monarchy, which led to ever-growing isolation of the group of Silesian dukes. For this reason they more and more frequently turned their attention to the West, perceiving members of ducal families of the Reich as their equal partners. Marriages, too, were often concluded outside the boundaries of the Bohemian Crown. All this in its own way strengthened the sense of distinctiveness coupled with a sense of alienation, but at the same time led to the blurring of Silesian identity – the one occupying the highest position in group's social hierarchy. A somewhat internal isolation was also characteristic of lower nobility. Holding offices and ranks outside Silesia or concluding marriages by its members outside the borders of the region were rare, and in most cases their actions were restricted to the limits of particular duchies or free states. This led to a somewhat alienation of this social group.

From the 17th century, a phenomenon which became increasingly popular was the ennoblement of bourgeoisie. It was the burghers that turned out to be the group which was most dynamic, most rapidly evolving and most willing to take up new challenges of all other social groups under the Habsburg rule. It was also the group that would absorb new social and cultural phenomena most effectively. While looking after its private economic interests they managed to preserve a strong sense of regional identity, and thanks to patronage and numerous foundations established for the benefit of their local community they in fact supported the building of Silesian identity.

Religion was the factor which fostered the consolidation of the sense of community beyond social divisions. The rapid rise and strong presence of Protestantism in Silesia reinforced the sense of distinctiveness of its inhabitants independently of their social status in the context of authority of Catholic kings and their re-Catholicisation policy introduced from the 17th century. What needs to be mentioned here is that despite the weakening of Catholic Church in the 16th century, the clergy maintained their crucial position, which was further strengthened by numerous landed estates owned by bishops of Wrocław and Silesian monasteries. From the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War policy of the House of Habsburg centred on the discrimination of Protestants by i.e. barring them from assuming offices and ranks resulted with the rise in the number of Catholics in Silesia, but, at the same time, contributed to the intensification of phenomena connected with the consolidation of

the sense of identity and regionalization of Protestant inhabitants of the region both in places where they managed to uphold their religious freedom as well as in places where they failed to do so.

When it comes to the question of ethnicity and language, Silesia under the Habsburg rule remained, just as in the previous period, a highly diverse region. Next to two dominant languages: Polish and German, it was the Czech language that played a significant role in some of its territories – especially those submontane ones and those of the Duchy of Cieszyn. Provisionally, there was a division – introduced already at the outset of Renaissance – into German-speaking left-bank Silesia and Polish-speaking right-bank Silesia. Nonetheless, it is impossible to delimit the exact range of separate languages or ethnic groups in the entire period of the Habsburg rule, even more so that the dynamics of phenomena in this sphere was ever-strengthened by the constantly evolving demographic situation. The analysis of the available source material allowed the researchers to distinguish two particularly interesting phenomena. The first one is the emergence in Silesia, together with Humanism, of a unique – independent of ethnic or linguistic affiliation – sense of connectedness to the region among the educated members of the Silesian community. The articulation of conviction of the existence of ‘the Silesian nation’ as well as the expression in literature in the 16th century and at the outset of the 17th century of ‘love for one’s homeland – Silesia’ in a universal Latin language above all divisions, led in turn to the emergence and maintenance among Silesians – up until the close of the examined period – of a clear sense of independence from the inhabitants of all its neighbouring countries. Therefore, eventually, just like in the case of the previous period, ethnical and linguistic diversity contributed neither to the disintegration nor to a marked integration of the Silesian community in the Habsburg era.

Perceiving Silesia as a certain whole and the building of the aforementioned emotional bonds with the region intensified at the outset of the modern era with the rise of Humanism. From the turn of the 15th and the 16th century it was principally thanks to literature – especially poetry, but also historiographical works, geographic descriptions, first descriptive maps of Silesia – that there emerged an image of a region with defined boundaries, inhabitants connected by common history, pride of fertile soil and magnificent cities headed by Wrocław, the region’s capital. What was then observable among the well-educated Silesians was the growth of their sense of Silesian identity. This sense, instilled in and transmitted to boys of various social backgrounds in local gymnasiums – from members of the wealthy nobility and burghers to representatives of poorer families who were granted access to education thanks to the system of foundations and scholarships – continued to last

throughout the entire Habsburg era. From the times of the Thirty Years' War, under the influence of the policy of monarchs whose aim was to weaken the role and importance of Silesian-wide institutions, and in connection with the extinction of Silesian Piasts and the transfer of duchies under the rule of non-Silesian dynasties, what nonetheless gained on strength was also the sense of localness. Even at the time, in most of the cases, a wider context was present in the minds of authors of historic and cartographic works. The sense of Silesian identity and somewhat historic continuity of the region at least from the 10th century connected with the search of ancient origins of its inhabitants dating even to the biblical period, constituted a factor that fostered the building of cohesive identity – and the frame to hold together the co-existing, and more and more frequent from the 17th century, diversified local identities.

At the turn of the 14th and 15th century and in the period of Baroque, Silesian art developed specific characteristics which determined its unquestionable value. The high artistic level of its many works made it possible to consider Silesian art as part of the panorama of greatest artistic achievements in contemporary Europe. A separate issue is the question of identity of Silesian art of the early modern period. Just as in the case of the Middle Ages, it is difficult to determine whether there developed a unique Silesian style in plastic arts, architecture or artistic handicraft. Nonetheless, what undoubtedly proves the existence of artistic phenomena typical for the region of Silesia are unique and present only in Silesia Evangelical churches of Peace and Mercy, as well of the so-called 'Escape' and 'Borderland' Churches. In Baroque, Silesia saw the emergence of significant, local artistic centres – workshops of great monasteries (in Lubiąż, Krzeszów, Henryków). They gave rise to a highly unique mystical current in Silesian art (its main representative was Michael Leopold Willmann): 'the Baroque mannerism' and 'expressionism' in Silesian sculpture. What was also characteristic for Silesia was aesthetic conservatism of Silesian community.

A region-disintegrating factor in the sphere of arts and culture was excessive inspiration with the common artistic tradition – the culture of the western civilisation with its origins in the Mediterranean Basin and the tradition of Christianity. Silesia was also lacking a centre which would assume the role of the hub of artistic patronage.

The examination of the diversified array of phenomena and processes which occurred in Silesia in the period up until 1740 proves that in comparison with the situation from prior to 1526, there took place a growth in the region's cohesion and its consolidation. Until the Thirty Years' War, the dominant role in the development

of regionalisms, and even political, administrative and religious separatism – which integrated the region – was played by Silesian dukes and estates. In turn, from the outbreak of the War, a growing importance was attributed to the actions of royal administration. Not without significance was also the growing, from the turn of the 15th and 16th century, sense of self-identification of the inhabitants of Silesia with their region. Despite certain disintegrating tendencies, especially those connected with conflicts fuelled by religion, the eventual consolidation of the Habsburg rule as a result of the Thirty Years' War contributed to a growth in the internal administrative cohesion of the region as a whole, which at the same time continued to remain highly internally fragmented.

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Polish-German Concordance of Topographic Names

Biała – Zülz
Bielsko – Bielitz
Bierutów – Bernstadt
Bolesławiec – Bunzlau
Borek Strzeliński – Großburg
Brzeg – Brieg
Byczyna – Pitschen
Bytom – Beuthen
Chojnik – Kynastburg
Cieszyn – Teschen
Częstochowa – Tschenstochau
Dzierżoniów – Reichenbach im Eulengebirge
Frydek – Friedek
Frysztat – Freistadt
Gdańsk – Danzig
Głogów – Glogau
Głubczyce – Leobschütz
Głuchołazy – Ziegenhals
Góra – Guhrau
Grodków – Grottkau
Gryf – Greiffenstein
Gryfów Śląski – Greiffenberg
Henryków – Henrichau
Jawor – Jauer
Jelenia Góra – Hirschberg
Kamienna Góra – Landeshut
Kąty Wrocławskie – Kanth
Kliczków – Klitschdorf
Kłodzko – Glatz
Kluczbork – Creutzburg
Kowary – Schmiedeberg im Riesengebirge
Kozuchów – Freystadt in Schlesien
Karniów – Jägerndorf
Krosno Odrzańskie – Crossen an der Oder

Królewiec – Königsberg
Krzeszów – Grüssau
Legnica – Liegnitz
Lipsk – Leipzig
Leśnica – Deutsch Lissa
Lubiąż – Leubus
Lubliniec – Lublinitz
Lwówek Śląski – Löwenberg in Schlesien
Międzybórz – Neumittelwalde
Milicz – Militsch
Mirsk – Friedeberg am Queis
Miśnia – Meissen
Namysłów – Namslau
Nysa – Neisse
Odra r. – Oder
Olbrachcice – Albersdorf
Oleśnica – Öls
Olesno – Rosenberg
Oława – Ohlau
Ołmuniec – Olmütz
Opawa – Oppau
Opole – Oppeln
Ostrawa - Ostrau
Otmuchów – Ottmachau
Piotrowice – Peterwitz
Poczdami – Potsdam
Poznań – Posen
Prudnik – Neustadt in Oberschlesien
Pruszków – Proskau
Pszczyna – Pless
Racibórz – Rattibor
Siedlisko-Bytom – Carolath-Beuthen
Skoczów – Skotschau
Sława – Schlawa
Strzegom – Striegau
Sułów – Sulau
Syców – Gross Wartenberg

Szprotawa – Sprottau
Ścinawa – Steinau an der Oder
Środa Śląska – Neumarkt
Świdnica – Schweidnitz
Świebodzin – Schwiebus
Tarnowskie Góry – Tarnowitz
Trzebnica – Trebnitz
Uraz – Auras
Wołczyn – Konstadt / Constadt
Wołów – Wohlau
Wrocław – Breslau
Zielona Góra – Grünberg
Ziębice – Münsterberg
Złotoryja – Goldberg
Złoty Stok – Reichenstein in Schlesien
Żagań – Sagan
Żary – Sorau
Żmigród – Trachenberg
Żurawina – Rothsürben

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This book is the second in a series dedicated to the cohesion of Silesia as a region. Published studies focus on the processes that were carried out in years 1526–1740. This study has been conducted under the auspices of the European Science Foundation as part of the programme entitled *Cuius regio: An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and the cohesion within regions*. The project involved experts in the fields of history, art history and the history of literature from Hamburg (Arno Herzig), Zielona Góra (Cezary Lipiński) and Wrocław (Jacek Dębicki, Mateusz Goliński, Lucyna Harc, Piotr Oszczanowski, Gabriela Wąs).

An analysis of the phenomena which occurred in the administrative, economic, social, ethnic and cultural spheres, as well as in respect of the self-identification and identity of inhabitants has demonstrated what a complex region Silesia was under the rule of Habsburg dynasty. Administratively, it was highly fragmented, it possessed an expansive network of government offices, and was economically, ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse. The beginning of the 17th century constituted a significant turning point. The eruption of the Thirty Years' War led to deep social transformations, altered the religious situation, and generated serious economic consequences. The first half of the 17th century also bore fruit in the form of new cultural and artistic phenomena. The conclusion derived from published studies indicates that the cohesive tendencies were prevalent – when compared to the situation before 1526 – however, disruptive tendencies existed as well, especially concerning religion-based conflicts.



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