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**Ethnic Identity, Tolerance, Civil Society:
Identification Options of Contemporary Inhabitants
of Upper Silesia**

1

For several years extremely heated, although engaging a relatively narrow group of the participants of public life, discussion on the perspective of country's regionalization has been going on (Gorzelał, Jałowiecki, eds., 1993; Latoszek, ed., 1993). The thematic axis of this extremely interesting and multitrend discussion is the problem of the model of the territorial system of the state and the difference in opinions concerning this problem vary from strongly decentralized autonomous-self-government model and the democratic self-government model assuming preserving the unitary structure of the state and co-operation between self-government and state structures in the negotiative solving of conflict situations and, what follows, the necessity of practicing the active regional policy of the state (Kołodziejcki, 1993: 284—285). The advocates of the first of these models stress first of all the benefits which country's regionalization may bring for the economy and state management, putting an equation mark between regionalization and self-government reform aiming at decentralization of the system of government up to creating territorial autonomy (Bądkowski, 1990; Mażewski, 1991; Kwaśniewski, 1993; Kołodziejcki, 1993: 279).

The opponents of the autonomy of regions believe that it is not satisfactorily strongly justified in the historically shaped regional structure of Poland, and its introduction would inevitably mean erosion of the model of unitary state, its weakening and collapse (Kołodziejcki, 1993: 285). They, thus, suggest, indirect, self-government solutions, which fulfilling the assumptions of the representative democracy would enable running the active regional policy co-operating with the European Community system (Kołodziejcki, 1993: 285). In my presentation I do not intend to polemize with any of these points of view. I think that they both contain many rational elements which should be the subject of the deepened, free from emotions scientific reflection, taking into account all the possible aspects of this undoubtedly difficult problem. It is worth remembering that contemporary regionalism is a phenomenon extremely heterogeneous in its sources and forms. As the experience of the Western countries show, regional movements may grow both on the ethno-cultural basis (see the country of Basques, Flanders, Corsica) as well as economic (e.g. the Italian Lombardy League). Both of them develop most often in the regions peripheral towards the metropoly (political, administrative, cultural centre) in which the consciousness of cultural (ethnic, linguistic) separateness is connected with less or more justified feeling of handicap and discrimination. Contemporary regionalism referring often to the notion of *cultural identity* which it defends puts itself on the side of political romanticism objecting the unification tendencies of the technicized and rationalized world (Kłoskowska, 1991: 19). Raising the mottos of decentralization and subjectivity of the local communities regionalism is the alternative towards excessive centralism taking in the extreme cases the form of "inner colonialism" (Lafont, 1967). In the communities characterized by the strong feeling of ethno-cultural marginality movement for regionalization usually contains decentralizing tendencies the clearer the greater the incoherence between the political and economic position of the region (Gourevitch, 1979: 306). Regionalism, built on the basis of strong *ethnic potential* (language, customs differences, separateness of historical traditions, social institutions), may relatively easily change into small nationalism, or, using Gourevitch's terminology — into peripheral nationalism (Gourevitch, 1979: 306). Peripheral nationalism is not *regionalism* in the strict sense of the word but rather *national-state creative movement aiming at separation or autonomy* (Kwaśniewski, 1993: 191).

As all other varieties of *nationalism* — also this one may take different forms depending on the power of *ethnic potential* contained in it (Gourevitch). Aggressive ethnoregionalism defending the ethnic integrity or cultural identity absolutizes cultural differences, refers to tribal mentality, assumes the primacy of the rights of community over the rights of man (Finkielkraut, 1992: 80).

2

Democratic changes taking place in Central-Eastern Europe for several years have enabled expression of opinions and articulation of the interests of regional communities and ethnic groups. It is undoubtedly a positive phenomenon and by all means much desired. Accepting, however, the natural in the democratic society revival of the feeling of affiliation to the local (regional) communities and *identity claims* of regional (ethnic) communities we cannot forget that local patriotism and affiliation to "the native land" cannot be put above *the constitutionally guaranteed civil rights*.

All the forms of group identity claims, independently of whether they concern big national groups or regional communities contain in themselves the *exclusivist*, particularist elements which require counterbalance in the form of universalist rules of the democratic state of law. Obviously in the democratic society every cultural community, ethnic or national, especially if it remains in the minority towards the rest of the citizens should have the right to cultivate one's separateness and demand equal treatment. However, promoting the rights of the ethnic-cultural communities cannot take place at the cost of civil rights and they can be only guaranteed by the universalist constitutional rules. Everywhere where the group aims and identity claims have no support in the constitutional rules guaranteeing all the citizens equality towards law there is always a potential threat towards democratic order through particularism and exclusivism of "tribal thinking".

In the recently translated into Polish small book *Citizenship and National Identity* (Warszawa, 1993) by Jürgen Habermas we find, among others, the following statement: "Democratic right for self-determination contains obviously also the right for one's own culture (political) [brackets by K.W.] being a point of reference for civil rights. This right *does not cover* [underlining by K.W.], however, the right for self-confirmation of cultural privilege of *one's own* [ethnico-cultural, K.W.] form of life" (Habermas, 1993: 35). And although the above arguments of Habermas refer to the immigration policy of the Western European countries stressing the differences between *the political commonwealth* based on the universal constitutional rules and specific ethnico-cultural *form of life* preserves its importance also in relation to the post-totalitarian societies in which still poor democratic institutions undergo, on the one hand, the pressure of tensions and frustrations connected with progress of market reforms, and on the other hand — freed from the ideological corset and army tutelage — aggressive forms of group identity claims. Populism and nationalism are undoubtedly the greatest threats facing the new democracies of Central-Eastern Europe, they are joined by the aggressive ethno-regionalism which joins the feeling of regional separateness with political

postulates putting the rights to cultivate one's own identity above civil rights (Finkielkraut, 1992: 80). Coming back to the Polish reality — apart from Upper Silesia, we do not have so far in Poland examples of politicizing regionalism. Here, due to historical reasons regional consciousness and the feeling of cultural separateness were and still are decisively more lively than in other regions of Poland (Ossowski, 1967; Kopeć, 1986; Robotycki, 1990). Occurring for several years in Upper Silesia regional movements formulate not only the postulates of *revitalization of Silesian culture* but also — in reference to the interwar period — they build their political programme on the basis of *habitual regional tie* treated as a substitute of *ideological national consciousness* (Ossowski, 1967: 251). Developed by some groups *regional ideology* (Wódz [J.], Wódz [K.], 1991, 1992) contains in itself strong communal accents based on the erroneous and not having confirmation in the ethnosociological data belief that “Upper Silesian culture” is still, despite the passing of time and irreversible in consequences demographic-social processes of the post-war years, integral, coherent whole, exceptional in many respects (“traditional regional values — family, work, religion”) and attractive for all inhabitants of Upper Silesia, no matter who they are and where they come from (Declaration of Upper Silesian Union, 1990, wider see Gerlich, 1992). Stressing the cultural separateness of Upper Silesia, magnifying the objectively existing cultural differences between the natives and the newcomers with simultaneous belief of the supremacy of Upper Silesian culture over the culture of the newcomers (Gerlich, 1992) brings the contemporary Upper Silesian regionalism closer to the above described after P. A. Gourevitch — “small (peripheral) nationalism”. In the programmes of some regional groups appear unfriendly even hostile accents towards everything which is “not Silesian”, one's own traditions, customs, dialect — obtain a universal status, and a “stranger”, i.e. a newcomer embodies the whole evil of this world (compare *Information Bulletin*, No. 1 of the Movement of Silesian Autonomy, 1990). It is in this way that aiming at respecting cultural separateness of the native population and cultivating one's own identity change into the discriminatory attempts towards the newcomers who feel threatened in their *civil rights* (Wódz [J.], Wódz [K.], 1994). What's more, the more identity claims of the groups of natives are articulated as *political projects* put forward by various regional movements (regionalization of autonomy or separation) the greater the resonance among the newcomers of the mottos, declared by the nationalistic-populist groups on the threats of the territorial integrity of the state and erosion of the Polish national consciousness in Upper Silesia (Nawrocki, 1993: 137—180; Błasiak, 1993). The situation is additionally complicated by the fact that as a result of known in the post-war history population movements in Upper Silesia lives today large, much bigger than before the Second World War percentage of the newcomers. For the majority this region has become of necessity or by choice

“the private motherland” to which as citizens of the same country they have the same rights as autochthonous population even if for one reason or another they do not identify themselves with the Silesian character in its cultural or ideological scope. It is impossible to imagine further development of this area facing the greatest in its history civilization challenges without these groups of population who do not want or cannot agree with thinking in the tribal categories excluding other than purely communal planes of understanding and dialogue. Identification with *the small motherland*, local community, town, region is rightly considered as necessary (although not sufficient) condition of citizens’ participation in the local social and political life. However, in the case of the regions of cultural borderland, and to such Upper Silesia surely belongs, it is not indifferent what will the place of this identification be. The present political disputes of the advocates and opponents of regionalization in Upper Silesia refer to whether this identification plane will be particular in its nature cultural-ethnic community or a democratic regional community built on the basis of the constitutional rules of civil rights and equalities. As the European examples prove only the latter is a good basis for building efficient, widely socially supported programmes of regional development (wider Wódz [J.], Wódz [K.], 1994). Whether this simple if not banal truth will reach the leaders and activists of regional groups aspiring to represent the political interests of the natives will be shown by the coming local elections.¹ They will also be a test of the agreement of the suggested by these groups visions of regional identity with the opinions and feelings of *ordinary citizens*, not engaging themselves daily in the public political debates about regionalism.

3

I would like to refer finally to the results of the sociological research which the Department of Research of Contemporary Culture has been running for several years within the framework of international research project on “Democratization in Central-East Europe and Its Impact on Inter-Ethnic Relations” co-ordinated by the European Center of Ethnic, Regional and Sociological Studies (ECERS) of the University of Maribor (Slovenia). The research undertaken *nota bene* before anybody could anticipate that the collapse of former Yugoslavia will lead to the tragedy of Bosnia and Herzegovina aimed at comparing the influence of political changes in Central-East Europe on the situation and mutual relationships between

¹ This text has been prepared before the local elections 1994.

national minorities and ethnic groups living in the old countries of the bloc. The initial project prepared in 1991 by Prof. S. Devetak from Maribor anticipated, among others, carrying out sociological sounding in the areas inhabited by various ethnic groups in order to define *the ethnic potential* of these communities on the basis of empirical data (Gourevitch, 1979) and what follows, the probable sources of social mobilization of particular ethnic-cultural groups and resulting from them consequences for building the civil society. Not having enough space here for wider discussion of the research assumptions of the project I will limit myself to several explanations necessary to understand the empirical data presented below. The methodological assumptions of field work have been elaborated in collaboration by Prof. Sergej Flere from the ECERS in Maribor.

The starting point of the carried out analyses was quite obvious assumption that ethnocentrism and the attitudes of intolerance towards “strangers” connected with it are the phenomenon typical for the periods of economic crises (Hannan, 1979). One, can thus, assume that the observed in the majority of countries of the former Eastern Bloc phenomenon of *ethnic mobilization* is the understandable form of defence against the consequences of shock being for the societies of these countries the deep economico-systemic reforms having taken place for several years.

During turning points when the old institutional order collapses — ethnic identification (often connected with specific religion) becomes the only source of social support enabling to overcome the unbearable feeling of uncertainty and chaos (Dahrendorf, 1991: 128). Whether the growth of ethnic consciousness will be accompanied by isolationism, hostility towards other nations or ethnic groups depends on many factors — first of all, on the outcome of the current relationships between ethnic groups living in a given territory. The more elements of conflict than co-operation there are in it, the stronger and more fixed the mutual rancours and resentments are, the greater the feeling of humiliation connected with real or supposed discrimination of one’s own culture, tradition, language by a dominating group (groups) — the greater the probability that identity claims will be of the *offensive* character connected with the demands to make amends for wrongs even through raising the culture of ones ethnic group from “the lowlands” and making it a pattern binding all those living in a given territory (Wódz [K.], 1993: 9). The source of ethnic conflicts may also be growing together with progress in the market reforms differences in the economic and social position of particular ethnic groups — more likely in these areas where the social stratification overlaps without exception with ethnic divisions. The groups dissatisfied with their economic and social status will aim at changing it through obtaining greater access to authority and, thus, possibility of deciding about their own fate becoming independent of the state structure or total autonomy

(Tournon, 1989: 331—348). In Upper Silesia, especially in its industrial part in the whole post-war period one could point to the examples of overlapping ethnic-cultural divisions (of the regional origin) with social divisions (covering the differences in the level of education, professional structure, economic position, access to power) (wider see Błasiak, 1990). Understanding otherwise demands of levelling the chances of the members occupying so far worse positions on the scale of social stratification of ethnic groups have strong mobilization power, however, due to its particularist, anti-individualist character they remain in conflict with the universalist rules of the civil society and free market rules (Flere, 1991: 185, 187).

Finally, the last may be the most important psychological element being as if the resultant of all the remaining ones — the syndrome of authoritarianism comprehensively described by T. Adorno and his co-workers in the research on the social sources of Nazism (Adorno et al., 1950). Not going at this point into details of the very concept discussed and analyzed many times in the subject literature (see, for example, Koralewicz, 1987), let's remind that it refers to certain type of mentality the characteristic feature of which is combining the uncritical obedience towards authority, conventionalism and moral rigour, strong aggression directed against those who break out of social control, fatalism and stiffness of thinking, fascination of power and authority, tendency towards projection (i.e. working for the sources of evil in the outside world) and lack of auto reflection (Adorno et al., 1950). From the research of Adorno himself and his continuators it results, among others, that *authoritarianism* often goes together with *ethnocentrism* and both these attitudes increase especially in the periods of chaos and economic depression the results of which touch especially lower middle classes. There is no doubt that the present economic difficulties experienced by the post-totalitarian societies are in many respects comparable with the economic crisis of the 1930s — uncertainty of tomorrow and chaos favour magical thinking susceptible to demagogy and populism.

Taking all these conditions into account, it was considered purposeful to measure the intensity of ethnocentrism and authoritarianism among the selected in terms of ethnic affiliation groups of the inhabitants of Upper Silesia (more precisely — its Katowice part) in connection with the evaluation of systemic changes in Poland after 1989.

The measurement was carried out with the help of the Likert type scale containing 24 statements referring to the three groups of problems mentioned above.² Each of the statements was assigned 5 variants of answers

² The questionnaire included standard statements from F- and E scales and several statements added by the former Yugoslav researchers D. Pantic from University of Belgrad and N. Tos, University of Lubljana, after S. Flere, "Democratisation in Central-Eastern Europe and its Impact on Inter-Ethnic Relations". Paper presented at 2-nd European Conference for Sociology, Budapest, 1995, p. 6.

— from total approval (5 points) to negation (1 point) (see questionnaire, pp. 131—132). To 24 statements taking into account the three above mentioned examined measurements (“acceptance of civil society”, “ethnocentrism”, “authoritarianism”) a list has been added presenting different types of social communities asking the examined to put them in order according to their importance for the examined themselves (see questionnaire, pp. 131—132). The research covered totally 340 persons in two stages. Stage I — carried out in autumn of 1992, 240 persons participated in it selected in a quota-lot way according to the criterion of ethnic auto-identification. For greater clarity of analyses, we considered in the research only three possibilities — Poles (120 persons), Germans (60 persons) and persons defining themselves only through affiliation to the regional group (Silesians — 60 persons), although we were aware that in reality the divisions of regional community are far more complicated and it was practically impossible to obtain any reliable data concerning the proportion of those three categories

Table 1
Sociodemographic Structure of the Examined

Sociodemographic variables	I stage of research (1992)			II stage of research (1994)		
	N = 240			N = 100		
Sex						
Men		116 (48.3%)		43 (43%)		
Women		124 (51.7%)		57 (57%)		
Age						
18—20		18 (7.5%)		12 (12%)		
21—30		47 (19.6%)		32 (32%)		
31—40		66 (27.5%)		25 (25%)		
41—50		51 (21.2%)		11 (11%)		
51—60		23 (9.6%)		9 (9%)		
61—70		24 (10%)		8 (8%)		
71		11 (4.6%)		3 (3%)		
Education						
Incomplete primary						
	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	—
Primary	57 (23.7%)	30 (25%)	12 (20%)	15 (25%)	15 (15%)	3 (6%)
Vocational	69 (28.7%)	34 (28.3%)	14 (23.3%)	21 (35%)	28 (28%)	11 (22.2%)
Secondary	83 (34.6%)	44 (36.7%)	21 (35%)	18 (30%)	45 (45%)	30 (60%)
Higher	29 (12.1%)	11 (9.2%)	15 (21.7%)	5 (8.3%)	12 (12%)	6 (12%)

in the whole community (see Gerlich, 1992). Poles and Silesians have been drawn by lot from the representative sample of inhabitants of Katowice, Tychy, Ruda Śląska, Rybnik, Racibórz. The group of people defining themselves as Germans has been drawn by lot from the files of the society of German minority "Working community — reconciliation and future" registered in Katowice (by agreement of the head of this organization Mr Dietmar Brehmer). In the research in 1994, 100 respondents took part — 50 Poles and 50 Germans selected by quota. In the group of Poles the students from the University of Silesia dominated. (These researches were not of the representative character, detailed data concerning the structure of sex, age and education of both samples of the examined see Table 1.)

We will skip here the technical details of research stating only that the measurement procedure applied by us was of the multi-stage character, first we counted the sum of points obtained by the respondents in each of the analyzed variables, then, having carried out the necessary mathematical operations we divided the total number of points possible to be obtained by each of the respondents into seven intervals in the decreasing system (from the greatest concentration of the specific attitude to the smallest). Then it has been determined what percentage of the respondents from particular groups is included in these intervals. The final results of these operations for the group examined in 1992 are shown in Tables 2 to 4, for the group from 1994, 5 to 7 respectively. What results from them? First of all, as far as the research from 1992 is concerned, one can observe that Silesians are generally decidedly more than the remaining two groups favourable towards the democratic changes: political pluralism and market reforms. Poles are in the second place in this respect. The group of Silesians distinguishes

Table 2

I group of Questions: Civil Society Orientation

Total [N = 240]	Poles [N = 120]	Germans [N = 60]	Silesians [N = 60]
1—0.4% (lack of acceptance)	1—0.8%	1—0.0%	1—0.0%
2—5.8%	2—5.8%	2—5.0%	2—6.7%
3—13.8%	3—12.5%	3—18.3%	3—11.7%
4—30.8%	4—30.0%	4—35.0%	4—28.3%
5—32.5%	5—36.7%	5—28.3%	5—28.3%
6—14.6%	6—10.8%	6—13.3%	6—23.3%
7—2.1% (full acceptance)	7—3.3%	7—0.0%	7—1.7%

Table 3

II Group of Questions: Ethnocentrism

Total [N = 240]	Poles [N = 120]	Germans [N = 60]	Silesians [N = 60]
1—0.0% (maximum ethnocentrism)	1—0.0%	1—0.0%	1—0.0%
2—16.7%	2—15.0%	2—20.0%	2—16.7%
3—35.0%	3—44.2%	3—26.7%	3—25.0%
4—36.3%	4—33.3%	4—38.3%	4—40.0%
5—7.5%	5—3.3%	5—11.7%	5—11.7%
6—3.8%	6—3.3%	6—3.3%	6—5.0%
7—0.8% (lack of ethnocentrism)	7—0.8%	7—0.0%	7—1.7%

Table 4

III Group of Questions: Authoritarianism

Total [N = 240]	Poles [N = 120]	Germans [N = 60]	Silesians [N = 60]
1—2.1% (maximum authoritarianism)	1—3.3%	1—1.7%	1—0.0%
2—14.6%	2—19.2%	2—10.0%	2—10.0%
3—24.6%	3—25.8%	3—23.3%	3—23.3%
4—32.1%	4—30.8%	4—28.3%	4—38.3%
5—17.9%	5—14.2%	5—25.0%	5—18.3%
6—5.8%	6—4.2%	6—6.7%	6—8.3%
7—2.9% (lack of authoritarianism)	7—2.5%	7—5.0%	7—1.7%

itself positively in terms of lower concentration of ethnocentrism and authoritarianism, especially in comparison with Poles whose large percentage is situated highly on both scales. In the research in 1994 in which only Germans and Poles participated — the differences between these groups become much more clearer. The opponents of market and democracy come mainly from the first ones, they also stronger than Poles identify themselves with their ethnic group and show authoritarian tendencies.

The observations made so far become more meaningful in comparison with data on the identification of particular ethnic groups with different types of communities. The respondents were supposed to assign each of the included

Table 5

II Stage of Research: Civil Society Orientation

Total [N = 100]	Poles [N = 50]	Germans [N = 50]
1—0% (lack of acceptance)	1—0%	1—0%
2—7%	2—0%	2—14%
3—23%	3—16%	3—30%
4—48%	4—62%	4—34%
5—20%	5—18%	5—22%
6—2%	6—4%	6—0%
7—0% (full acceptance)	7—0%	7—0%

Table 6

II Group of Questions: Ethnocentrism

Total [N = 100]	Poles [N = 50]	Germans [N = 50]
1—6% (full ethnocentrism)	1—2%	1—10%
2—10%	2—4%	2—16%
3—34%	3—36%	3—32%
4—40%	4—40%	4—40%
5—9%	5—16%	5—2%
6—1%	6—2%	6—0%
7—0% (lack of ethnocentrism)	7—0%	7—0%

Table 7

III Group of Questions: Authoritarianism

Total [N = 100]	Poles [N = 50]	Germans [N = 50]
1—3% (maximum authoritarianism)	1—0%	1—6%
2—9%	2—4%	2—14%
3—17%	3—6%	3—28%
4—37%	4—40%	4—34%
5—19%	5—24%	5—14%
6—10%	6—20%	6—4%
7—5% (lack of authoritarianism)	7—6%	7—0%

in the comparison community the appropriate rank: from 1 — very important to 5 — not important at all. For each of the communities the average rank has been calculated, then they were put in order from the most important to the least important for all ethnic groups.

In Table 8 the results obtained in the research from 1992 and 1994 were presented. Most interesting are the differences between the Silesians and the remaining two groups — for them decidedly the most important categories of identification are town and region, for the Germans — region is in the first place and nation comes next, for the Poles — nation and country. As can be seen, the local orientation of the Silesians, their affiliation to “the small motherland” do not have to be connected with increased ethnocentrism and lack of acceptance for pluralism. Such a connection is more likely in the case of persons defining themselves as Germans — their feeling of regional affiliation contains strong load of ethnocentrism. In the research of 1994 we also observe among Poles strengthening of ties with place of residence but national identification occupies here also high, second place. Poles from both of the examined groups more often than the remaining ethnic groups identify themselves with the universalistically understood communities, such as world or humanity, decidedly less often — with denomination communities.

Table 8

Identification with Community

(The importance of specific communities for particular categories of respondents — in the order from the most important to the least important community)

I stage of research — 1992 [N = 240]

Total sample [N = 240]	Poles [N = 210]	Germans [60]	Silesians [60]
nation	nation	region	town, country and region
town, country	state	nation	region and town, country
state	town, country	town	nation
region	world, humanity	coreligionists	state
professional group	region	professional group	professional group
coreligionists	coreligionists	state	coreligionists
world, humanity	professional group	Europe	world, humanity
Europe	Europe	Central Europe	Europe
Central Europe	Central Europe	world, humanity	Central Europe

Table 8 continued

II stage of research — 1994 [N = 100]

Total sample [N = 100]	Poles [50]	Germans [50]
town, country	town, countries	nation
nation	nation	town, country
region	world, humanity	region
state	region	state
professional group	professional group	coreligionists
world, humanity	state	professional group
coreligionists	Europe	Central Europe
Central Europe	Central Europe	Europe and world, humanity
Europe	coreligionists	Europe and world, humanity

4

As it was already told, the pilot study of the interrelations between ethnic identifications of the group of inhabitants of Upper Silesia and their acceptance of democratic rules, ethnocentrism and authoritarianism was not of a representative character nor the results presented above could be treated as an overview of the attitudes of the whole population of inhabitants of Upper Silesia. Anyhow not overrating the importance of the interdependencies observed in both research, one can risk a statement that so far nothing shows that the aggressive ethnoregionalism will command obedience among these groups of population on behalf of which it, first of all, appears — thus, those which describe themselves as Silesians. The possible sources of ethnic conflict are connected rather with the processes of articulating the interests and ambitions of the German population, which after 1989 appeared on the local and regional scene as a very dynamic and efficient social actor and the population with univocal Polish orientation oversensitive about state integrity. The growing importance of German Minority groups and close relationship of some of their members with such revisionists German organisations as the Association of Exiled (BdV), openly supporting the idea of the reunification of Upper Silesia with Germany, caused many fears on the side of Poles living

here for a half of century. In the beginning of 1990s in Opole Silesia several actions of the German nationalistic groups like the construction of Wermacht Soldiers monuments in some villages, changes of the Polish names of the villages to the names coming from the 1930s caused the counteractions from the side of the Polish nationalists. In Katowice part of Upper Silesia, where only small group of native Silesians joined German Minority organisations — the main source of conflicts still remains the unfinished process of institutionalisation of *regional consciousness* and unsolved dilemmas between the closed ethnoregionalism, based on sharp distinction between “one’s countryman” and “foreigner” or open regionalism, based on universal, civil rights, guaranteeing the freedom of expression and representation of interests of all ethnic groups living here side by side. Not forejudging today the direction of evolution of ethnic relationship in Upper Silesia, one would have to warn all the responsible actors of the local political stage against attempts at combining the problem of ethnic-cultural identity of the inhabitants of this region with any political programmes, the answer to it may be the decided growth of nationalism both on the Polish and German side. Let’s hope that this will not happen and pragmatic reasons will win which will allow different ethnic groups to unite round constructive proposals of solutions of the dramatic civilisation challenges Upper Silesia is facing now.

Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Version used in the comparative field study realised under the programme: Democratisation in Central-Eastern Europe and its Impact on Inter-Ethnic Relations, coordinated by European Centre for Ethnic, Regional and Sociological Studies, University of Maribor. Director of the programme: Prof. Silvo Devetak. Director of the field study — Prof. Sergej Flere.

The following is a questionnaire constructed solely for scientific purposes. It is applied in a number of European countries. The results will be known only in aggregate form, meaning of individual answers will not be known. Anonymity is guaranteed. But as you represent a larger number of persons of the same characteristics, it is very important that you answer all the questions in full and earnestly, truly.

The following are certain statements which are neither true or false, but you are only to express an opinion of them.

- + + means you agree fully and without reservation
- + means you agree predominantly, possibly with a reservation

- ? means that you are unsure, ambivalent as to your stand towards the statement
- means that you predominantly disagree, possibly with a reservation
- – means that you fully and without reservation disagree

1. Full freedom of speech leads toward social disorganization.
2. The judiciary must always serve those in political power.
- 2a. A one party system provided for the unity of the people more.
3. Social progress will always be based upon private ownership.
4. Only multiparty system guarantees freedom of expression.
5. Socialism extended greater security to the average man than the present system.
6. Most people felt happier during the earlier system.
7. Democracy is good in theory, but in practice it brings about too many problems.
8. Ethnically mixed marriages are doomed to fail.
9. Every nationality must have its own state.
10. One can feel secure in an environment only when the majority of those close to him pertain to the same nationality.
11. It is possible to achieve co-operation among nationalities, but not full trust.
12. Everyone should perceive that his nationality's fate is his own fate.
13. I feel to the same extent pertaining to my nationality and to humanity.
14. The feeling of national (ethnic) pertinance is one of the most beautiful feelings.
15. It is senseless to say that all nationalities are equal, as it is evident that some are more worthy.
16. Those pertaining to my nationality should always value more our own nationality than others.
17. The most important thing children should learn is the respect for parents.
18. Without a leader every man is like a man without a head.
19. There are two basic types of people in the world, weak and strong ones.
20. One should always obey one's superiors, regardless of whether they are right.
21. What is today more important than good laws and programs, are fearless and tireless leaders.
22. One loses respect for the people with whom one becomes too close.
23. People do not know how much their lives are controlled by conspiracies of those in power.

We will now mention some belongings (pertainances) which may be important for an individual. Please assess how much the following belongings are important for you personally (very important, rather important, of average importance, of little importance, of no importance).

1. town, village
2. region
3. nationality
4. confession
5. occupation (profession)
6. state
7. Central Europe
8. Europe
9. The world, humanity

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