

Ewa Ganowicz
University of Opole

The Socio-political Forms of Representing the Ethnic-national Borderland Communities in Upper Silesia

ABSTRACT:

The problem area of borderland belongs to the most significant research categories in political science. The phenomenon fascinates succeeding generations of scholars from many different branches of science. It also makes a subject of wide-ranging discussions not merely within political science, which is only one of the disciplines of science taking part in the interdisciplinary scientific discourse that includes also geography, sociology, economy, culture anthropology or history. The present article attempts to present a voice in this large-scale discussion. The borderland is an object of reflection of political science due to the close relations with the category of border, independent of the accepted range of understanding of the term (broad or narrow). After all, not only is it contained in the very term itself as its root, constituting somehow its most fundamental part, but it is also a determinant of frames of supremacy of the state over the given territory, thus not as an institution of primarily political significance. The territory of Upper Silesia can safely be regarded as borderland. It is this region which makes the subject of this work, whose main goal is to answer the following questions: In what way do ethnic-national communities of the borderland represent their interests? In what way does making use of such political forms as participation of leaders of these communities in elections or their being in power locally influence their recognizance among the inhabitants of Upper Silesia? Looking for answers to the questions is possible solely through an analysis of the activity of the organizations which function in the region, as well as through an analysis of results of elections to local governments on all three levels of territorial self-government. For the needs of this article the attention has been focused on the following organizations representing individual national communities:

- Silesian, i.e.: Ruch Autonomii Śląska (RAŚ), Związek Górnośląski (ZG), Związek Ludności Narodowości Śląskiej (ZLNŚ);
- Polish, i.e.: Związek Wypędzonych z Kresów Wschodnich RP, Polska-Wschód;
- German, i.e.: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Niemców Województwa Śląskiego (TSNK) and organizations and election committees affiliated with TSKN.

KEY WORDS: border, borderland, ethnic-national community, elections, Upper Silesia.

THE BORDERLAND IN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The problem area of the borderland, although not all representatives of the scientific community will fully agree [cf. Czepil, Opióła 2013: 58-63], belongs to the most significant research categories in political science [cf. Kurcz 2002: 111 ff.]. The phenomenon has fascinated successive generations of researchers dealing in many different fields of science. It is the subject of a wide-ranging discussion, not only in political science, which is merely one of the disciplines taking part in the interdisciplinary scientific discourse [Lis 2008: 31]. However, the borderland is of special interest to representatives of disciplines connected with the social sciences broadly-understood, completing – in a way – the output of related disciplines such as: geography, sociology, economy, culture anthropology, history and others [Czepil, Opióła 2013: 58-63]. Studies on the borderland and increased research activity, due to the subject's rise in importance, have become so vital that a separate section of studies called "borderlands studies" has been created [Zartman I. William 2010: 91].

The specifics of the phenomenon of interdisciplinarity as well as changes connected with globalization trends, on the one hand, and endeavours towards marking one's own different individuality on the other, hamper to a large extent working out uniform theoretical subsidiaries with reference to the borderland. We can thus suppose that it will remain a subject of consideration in science for some time.

The borderland is the subject of a reflexion in political science because of its close relations with the category of the border, irrespective of the accepted range of understanding this term (broad or narrow). Not only is it contained in the very term itself as its core, making as it were its most vital constitutive element, it also is a determinant of the framework of the state's supremacy over a given territory, thus, as it were an institution of primarily political significance.

It should be stated here that the borderland is primary in relation to borders, which – as Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly put it – "were frontiers where there concentrated complicated human interactions of the economic, political and cultural character" [2007: 4]. Virtually, to a large extent, it is the borderland that determined borders (no matter how they were to be formulated), and it exists independent of changes in the course of the latter, which – in the opinion of some authors – permits us to conclude that there exist borderlands but not borders [Fras 2013: 69-70].

In the literature on the subject the borderland is connected, first of all, with state borders, where it is formulated from the geographical perspective as a territory. It is very often also treated as a social reality occurring as a result of regular contacts of at least two culturally different communities

(the integrative approach), where the border is that between different ethnic, national, language, religious, and cultural groups (so it is inter-human relations that matter here – a social aspect), or – and this is the dominant approach – both perspectives are formulated jointly, making the borderland a social reality in which differing communities inhabit either side of the state border [Czepil, Opiola 2013: 58-61].

Hence, borderlands used to be the subject of research chiefly in the context of conflicts, separation, divisions and barriers, as places distanced from the “centre” (not only territorially), outskirts, a margin, periphery. However, changes going on in the functions of borders that are no longer barriers separating societies, but places of intensive social relations, allow treating borderlands as places of cultural exchange, or germs of peace, unification, and cooperation. Thus, the transformations through the de-peripherization of the borderland have raised its significance.

The literature of the subject offers a good number of definitions of the borderland, which are useful for considerations in political science [Katana 2013: 93]. Many of them, as a matter of fact – the decisive majority – as a vital factor shaping the borderland, point to the identity, consciousness, social remembrance of inhabitants of the borderland, which appears to be a place where political, historical, socio-cultural, religious and ethnic borders meet, composing the “cultural equipment of the inhabitants” [Sadowski 2008: 17]. They are “places and processes of identity and politics, playing a significant role in shaping the relations between the identity, territory and sovereignty” [Wilson, Donnan 2012: 35] a structure that is not only geographical, but one of authority, revealing “an arbitrary construction of territory and cultural identity” [Ball 2005].

Collective identities of the borderland [Bokszański 1989] (also regional ones, being a variation of social and cultural identity on the basis of mutual – or almost in the majority of actors – systems of values of norms, customs, traditions, languages, economics in the given territory) decide in advance its political dimension. As it has already been observed, it is not only a place, but social processes, the “area of differences, otherness and dissimilarity distanced from the centre (...) in which there occurs a determined type of inter-human relations” [Simonides 1994], where intercultural contacts become institutionalised [Sadowski 2008: 17]

A vital question with reference to the borderland is raised by Andrzej Sadowski. This author points to the existence of administrative-political borderlands (borders within a state) and social ones [Sadowski 2008: 18]. The borderland, according to Sadowski, is a territory inhabited on a stable basis by representatives of two or more social communities identified as culturally different or autonomous in some part, treated as separate entities in social consciousness. It has a given social and cultural structure, with

a certain degree of institutionalisation (the so-called social area of the borderland – the basis of the borderland). There exist, on the territory as a static element (as mentioned earlier), strong dynamic influences that shape the socio-cultural content, striving for dominance, participation in authority, marking links with the economic, political, historical, and other spheres (the so-called “borderland identity”). It is not until the social area of the borderland goes with the borderland identity in a longer perspective that the social borderland is formed, understood as a given order of intercultural relations [Sadowski 2008: 19].

Undoubtedly, the borderland is a creation functioning within a determined political reality and itself has its share in the creation of this reality [Katana 2013: 94], since – as I.W. Zartman observes – “it is there where the state meets the society” [2010: 6]. There exist intensive spatial and temporal relations between local communities or states, groups articulate their interests, negotiate subordination relations, and thus – authority can be impugned. In the discussion about the borderland, it is worth noting its relations with reference to the centre, which is inhabited by somehow external communities (most often nations). These groups would, as a rule, endeavour to dominate the whole of the territory and clash with groups from the areas of borderlands, who strive for lesser or greater autonomy [Romanowicz 2006: 1].

It can therefore be ascertained that the area of the borderland covers the social space and the political, economic, socio-cultural structures existing there, as well as intercultural contacts, and it is the category of borderland understood in this way that can serve as a starting point for conducting studies on nations and ethnic (cultural) groups, (inter)cultural contacts, ethnic relations, on society differentiated in many ways, as well as on the influence of these variables on political and economic relations, and – at last – on the formation of the identity structures of the inhabitants [Sadowski 2008: 20].

With time, the term has undergone some semantic transformations: its understanding evolved from the strictly geographical, which describes a frontier area, typically located on the periphery of the state (where there exists a clear-cut awareness of social dissimilarity), breaking away from political and administrative borders [Szczepański 1997]. The very borderland communities themselves also do not remain passive in their striving for empowerment of borderland areas, through taking actions aimed at obtaining regional autonomy, or even political separation [Romanowicz 2006: 1].

The terminological difficulty connected with the borderland should not be surprising if one takes a look at the number and complexity of processes in the borderland. Grzegorz Balawajder differentiates five basic ones that are closely correlated with one another: trans-nationalism, a sense of separation

and difference, a zone of internal conflicts and accommodations, a zone of migration, as well as a site of international conflicts and accommodations. These very often opposing forces create the image of the borderland, making it extraordinarily complex. In connection with the functions of borders proposed by O'Dowd and Wilson (borders – barriers, borders – bridges, borders – resources, borders – symbols of identity; O'Dowd, Wilson 1996: 1-12), the following functions of the borderland can be derived: barrier, bridge, resources (economic, political, social, cultural, etc.), symbol of identity, as a significant reference point.

An important observation on the borderland was made by Chałupczak, who stated that it should be framed by political science in different contexts, including two basic ones: as the subject (in the territorial context and that of borders of a nation, state, dissimilarity, regionalisation, ethnicity and multiculturalism), and also as an object of politics (first of all, in the context of a function of the state, where public policies are of fundamental character, primarily social, economic, and ethnic; Chałupczak 2013: 66-67).

They may not be, as Janina Frasz observes, the central categories in the discourse of political science, that is ones about status, e.g., power or ruling, but they are useful and far from marginal [2013: 69-70].

UPPER SILESIA AS A BORDERLAND AREA

Upper Silesia is an area that can be discussed in terms of a borderland. Phenomena typical of one are becoming particularly significant nowadays, when it is in Upper Silesia where we can observe a real “eruption of the Silesian character”. The growing interest in Silesian identity among the inhabitants of the region testifies to the fact that history and contemporary times are still closely intertwined with each other, and the awareness of the “borderland nature” of Upper Silesia is deeply rooted in the tradition of its inhabitants. The historical borders have not been blurred even by new administrative divisions uniting the Silesian land with the non-Silesian territories. This phenomenon has occurred especially intensively in the provinces of Silesia and Opole Silesia, where – after 1989 – traces were revealed of deep historical divisions following in the wake of the First and the Second World Wars.

The area of Upper Silesia can be viewed as a borderland territory in the following three dimensions: geographical, historical, and ethnic.

Geographically this is the land lying in the Oder (the Odra River) basin and that of the upper Vistula, remaining within the zone of influence of three states: Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany (see Figure 1).



Fig 1. The area of Upper Silesia

Source: R. Zapotoczny, *Górny Śląsk, kraina pogranicza*,

<http://www.elvish.org/gwaith/slask /slask.htm> (accessed on: 28.04.2014).

For many centuries being located within the borders of two or three of the states, it often changed its status, belonging to one or the others. From the times of the early Middle Ages it has belonged to: the Great Moravian Empire, Poland, the Czech, and the Habsburg Monarchy. In consequence of the Silesian Wars, fought in the middle of the eighteenth century, a greater part of the territory of Upper Silesia found itself lying within the borders of Prussia, and from 1871 – united Germany [cf. Bahlke, Gawrecki, Kaczmarek 2011]. As part of Prussia and Germany, Upper Silesia was a peripheral area, a borderland. After the First World War this territory was divided between Poland and Germany. As a result, a short-lived unprecedented border between the two countries was established, often running through places in which no border had ever been marked out before. In this way towns or even districts of cities were divided in an artificial manner. The part of Silesia remaining within the Polish state was allotted considerable autonomy, which can be seen as the reason why the former German-Russian and German-Galician borders that became the eastern border of the Silesian Province, separating them from the rest of Polish lands, did not lose its significance [quoted from Mikolajec 2013: 231-232]. Of particular importance here were the disproportions in the

economic development of the part of Silesia that had belonged to Germany and the Basin that had belonged to the Polish Kingdom, the latter itself having been part of the Russian Empire before the First World War. The border between Upper Silesia and the Basin, as the line separating the differing ethnic and cultural regions, has retained its significance until contemporary times. This is visible, primarily, in the mutual image of the inhabitants of the both historical districts of Poland. After the Second World War Silesia became incorporated into the Polish state, its territory, initially, lying within the borders of the Śląsko-Dąbrowskie Province. It was not until the administrative reform of 1975 that the area was divided between four provinces: Częstochowskie, Katowickie, Bielskie and Opolskie. In turn, as a consequence of the successive administrative division of the country (in 1998), when the new division of Poland's territory into 16 provinces was executed, the area of Upper Silesia was divided between two provinces: Śląskie (Silesian), with the capital city of Katowice, and Opolskie, with the capital in Opole.

These lands also differ as far as their national, ethnic, religious character, and languages are concerned. Until the twentieth century the territory had been inhabited chiefly by Silesians of Polish and German origins. Allocation of Silesia to Poland caused an influx of Poles who settled next to Silesians. The national status of the area was also influenced by escapes and displacements that followed after the Second World War, as well as emigration of the native population (especially the inhabitants of German origin) to the FRG. At present this territory is inhabited by a population of both Polish and German roots. To a lesser extent there are elements of the Czech, Moravian, and Jewish cultures present here as well. The native culture of Upper-Silesians contains elements of both Polish and German origin, the same concerning the Upper Silesian dialect, which, while belonging to the Polish language, contains numerous Germanisms. Some of the inhabitants of Upper Silesia consider themselves to be representatives of the Silesian nation, and regard the Silesian dialect as an independent language. Bearing in mind the results of the National Censuses of 2002, when 173.2 thousand people declared they belonged to the Silesian community [cf. *Wyniki Narodowego Spisu Powszechnego Ludności i Mieszkań 2002* 2003: 40] and 2011, with 847 thousand people who declared their Silesian nationality in the census [cf. *Przynależność narodowo-etniczna ludności – wyniki spisu ludności i mieszkań 2011* 2013: 3], the number of people who see themselves this way is still growing (see Table 1). As for the territorial area, the phenomenon is particularly visible in the Opole Region and Upper Silesia (see Figure 2).

Table 1. The population according to the type and ordering of national-ethnic identifications – results of the National Census of 2011.

| National-ethnic group | Number of declarations in total | National identity declared as the first one | National identity declared as the only one | National identity declared as the second one | National identity declared along with the Polish one | National identity declared along with the non-Polish one |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Silesians | 847,000 | 436,000 | 376,000 | 411,000 | 431,000 | 40,000 |
| Germans | 148,000 | 74,000 | 45,000 | 73,000 | 64,000 | 39,000 |
| Czechs | 3,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | — |
| Slovaks | 3,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | — |

Source: Author's own elaboration on the basis of *Przynależność narodowo-etniczna ludności – wyniki spisu ludności i mieszkań 2011. Notatka informacyjna. Materiał na konferencję prasową w dniu 29.01.2013*, p. 3, http://stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbr/gus/Przynaleznosc_narodowo-etniczna_w_2011_NSP.pdf (accessed on: 28.04.2014).



Fig. 2. Communes in which the total share of people who declared they belonged to national-ethnic group other Polish in the first or the second question amounted to at least 10%. Source: *Przynależność narodowo-etniczna ludności – wyniki spisu ludności i mieszkań 2011. Notatka informacyjna. Materiał na konferencję prasową w dniu 29.01.2013*, p. 3, http://stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbr/gus/Przynaleznosc_narodowo-etniczna_w_2011_NSP.pdf (accessed on: 28.04.2014).

The aim of this paper is to answer the question about what way communities of an ethnic-national borderland represent their interests, and also to diagnose what way taking advantage of political forms, such as participation in elections by leaders of the communities, or their being in

power, influence the identifiability among the inhabitants of Upper Silesia. Seeking answers to these questions is possible solely through an analysis of the activities of the organisations functioning within Upper Silesia and the results of local government elections on all of the three levels of the territorial self-government. For the needs of the present paper attention was focused on the following organisations:

– **Silesian**, i.e.: *Ruch Autonomii Śląska* (RAŚ; Movement for Autonomy of Silesia), *Związek Górnośląski* (ZG; Upper-Silesian Union), *Związek Ludności Narodowości Śląskiej* (ZLNŚ; Union of People of Silesian Nationality);

– **Polish**, i.e.: *Związek Wypędzonych z Kresów Wschodnich RP* (Union of the Displaced from Former Eastern Lands of the Republic of Poland), *Polska-Wschód* (Poland-East);

– **German**, i.e.: *Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Niemców Województwa Śląskiego* (TSNK; The Socio-Cultural Society of Germans in the Silesian Province), as well as organisations and election committees affiliated to the Society.

The tables below (see Tables 2 and 3) present the results of an analysis of local government elections and the forms of activity of the organisations, their aims, areas of activity, and also examples of initiatives or projects run by them. Formal documents related to the organisations (e.g., the statutes of the organisations), as well as information on their websites (in particular, the range of undertaken activities and realised projects) constituted the basis of the analysis. It needs to be explained that Table 2 contains the total of election committees of ethnic-national origin that were set up in Upper Silesia (including the committees affiliated with the TSKN)

Table 2. Political activity of communities in the ethnic-national borderland of Upper Silesia

| Election | Number of candidates/mandates | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|---|--------|---|----------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|----|-----|----|
| | Province | | County | | Communes below 20 thousand inhabitants | | Communes over 20 thousand inhabitants | | Cities with the county rights | | Sum | |
| | C | M | C | M | C | M | C | M | C | M | C | M |
| 1998 | — | — | — | — | — | 17 | — | 13 | — | — | — | 30 |
| 2002 | 112 | — | 29 | 4 | 72 | 24 | 33 | 3 | 108 | 5 | 242 | 36 |
| 2006 | 68 | — | 72 | 4 | 87 | 26 | 41 | 4 | 32 | — | 300 | 34 |
| 2010 | 84 | 3 | 73 | 6 | 49 | 20 | 42 | 4 | 200 | 11 | 448 | 44 |

C – number of candidates; M – number of mandates.

Source: author's own elaboration on the basis of results published by Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza / State Election Commission/ (www.pkw.gov.pl)

Table 3. Characteristics of selected organisations of the ethnic-national community of the borderland of

| Name of organisation | Form of activity | Interests/goals | Political activity |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Ruch Autonomii Śląska</i> (Movement for Autonomy of Silesia) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – association of supra-party character; – form of organisation: circles. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – regaining the pre-War autonomy of Silesia in a modern form; – introduction of strong, autonomous provinces in Poland, independent financially from the central authorities, able to decide on their own matters in an independent way. | Yes – since 1994 they have taken part in elections for local government. |
| <i>Związek Górnośląski</i> (Upper Silesian Union) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – association – form of organisation: sodalities and circles (the largest number in: Katowice, Chorzów, Ruda Śląska) | <p>concerns the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identity of Upper Silesian; – regional education and knowledge about Upper Silesia in the European context; – the culture of Upper Silesia and its development on all levels and also reminding of the richness and variety of the historical heritage of the land; – the family and religious values as principles of the social order; – territorial self-governance of Upper Silesia beyond the administrative borders; – local entrepreneurship and economy in Upper Silesia; – social communication and the image of Upper Silesia; | Yes – although to a lesser and lesser extent and only on the level of communes since the Union designates fewer and fewer candidates every year in only a few communes. |

Upper Silesia

| Other spheres of activity | Exemplary projects/initiatives |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - charity; - culture; - protection of Silesians' identity; - publishing; - education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The event entitled "Let's make a yellow-blue heart"; - <i>Tyta dlo pierszoka</i> (A school cone for the First-Grader) – a charity drive organised by circles of RAŚ in Ruda Śląska and Świętochłowice; - "Let's talk about Silesia" – 5 June 2011. Katowice Circle of RAŚ inaugurated a cycle of discussion meetings under this title. - Popularisation of Silesian system of symbols – RAŚ strives to popularise the knowledge of Silesian and Upper-Silesian colours and symbols. They are used in the system of visual identification of the Movement, and also popularised by distribution of gadgets. RAŚ cooperates closely with the Internet shop Silesia Progres, which sells flags, elements of clothes and accessories decorated with Silesian symbols; - founding the Rev. Augustin Weltzl Prize – <i>Górnośląski Tacyt</i> (Upper-Silesian Tacitus) – the prize was founded in 2007 with the aim to honour efforts of researchers and popularisers of the history of Upper Silesia; - editing the monthly <i>Jaskółka Śląska</i> (<i>The Silesian Swallow</i>); - <i>Marsz na Zgodę</i> (A March Towards Agreement) – which was meant to commemorate Upper Silesians who, upon the Red Army entering Silesia, were persecuted – transported into the heart of the USSR, imprisoned in camps or murdered; - <i>Marsz Autonomii</i> (A March of Autonomy) – to commemorate the circumstances of establishing autonomy with the Act of Constitution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 15 July 1920, organised in Katowice annually; - an inventory of the lost or stolen goods of culture from Upper Silesia; - organising <i>Górnośląskie Dni Dziedzictwa</i> (Upper Silesian Heritage Days). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - culture; - protection of Silesians' identity; - publishing; - education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mysleć i żyć Śląskiem</i> (To Think and Live with Silesia) – the Vision of ZG; - <i>Górny Śląsk. Program edukacji regionalnej</i> (Upper Silesia. Programme of Regional Education) – the new edition and elaboration of an anthology of primary sources together with a methodological guidebook and workbook; - Appeal submitted at the Ministry of National Education concerning introduction of the subject "Regional Education" into the framework teaching programmes; - All-Polish Forum of Regional Education – cyclical meetings of regionalists; - Contest of Knowledge about Upper Silesia designed for youth of secondary schools; - <i>Wszelchnica Górnośląska</i> (The Upper Silesian University) – an open university; a series of meetings, lectures, presentations addressed to a broad public; - <i>Górny Śląsk w procesie przemian tożsamości</i> (Upper Silesia in the process of transformation of the identity) – an international conference; - <i>Sejmik</i> (A Little Parliament) of regional non-governmental organisations, regional and creative unions and associations. ZG in the role of the initiator and coordinator; - <i>Śląskie schody</i> (Silesian stairs) – a social project of thinking in the Silesian style, addressed to different age groups; - New media-related initiatives of ZG, with the participation of the journalists' environment, including, among others, the initiative of establishing a regional daily; - <i>Śląska Diaspora</i> (The Silesian Diaspora) at home and abroad – building contacts with people and environments functioning outside Silesia; |

Table 3 contd.

| Name of organisation | Form of activity | Interests/goals | Political activity |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – support and propagation of the concept of establishing Upper-Silesian Metropolis and its implementation. | |
| <p><i>Związek Ludności Narodowości Śląskiej</i> (Union of People of Silesian Nationality)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – association of Silesian national minority | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – revival and establishment of the national identity of Silesians; – renaissance of Silesian culture; – propagating knowledge of Silesia; – protection of ethnic rights of people who declare the Silesian nationality; – social care extended to members of the Union. | No. |
| <p><i>Związek Wypędzonych z Kresów Wschodnich RP</i> (Union of the Displaced from the Former Eastern Lands of the Republic of Poland)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – association established as an answer to threats to Poland's and Poles' interests, resulting from the revival of German demands (with reference to lands incorporated into Poland after WWII) and an expression of a concern about the realistic threat of Germans submitting demands on a mass scale of compensation for the property left in the so-called Lands Regained by Poland; – the basic organisational unit is a Local Circle formed by at least 10 members of the Union. | <p>Informing about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – causes and circumstances of expelling Poles from the Eastern Lands of the Republic of Poland, about ethnic cleansing, genocide perpetrated on citizens of The second Republic of Poland; – seizing and appropriating by force of the property of the Polish State, its cultural property and also that of its individual citizens who had been accumulating it for many generations by occupants of the land after the invasions of 1 September and 17 September 1939; – dangers to the vital interests of Poland and the inhabitants of the today's so-called "Regai- | No. |

| Other spheres of activity | Exemplary projects/initiatives |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Congress of local government 'pioneers' deriving from ZG: "Where does regional and local government head for?" - Institute of Regional Studies – ideological support for establishing the Institute; - Creating a positive image of Upper Silesia; - <i>Ku wspólnej przyszłości</i> (Towards a common future) – a dialogue of sub-regions of Upper Silesia; - Reflexive-programme meeting of members of ZG on St Anna's Hill; - New forms of cooperation of Circles and Sodalities with a local community, local authorities, schools, parishes and other institutions; - Clear articulation of ZG's standpoint on all matters vital for the region; - Effective making a broad spectrum of the young take interest in issues dealt with by the Union, setting up groups of youth affiliated to Circles; - Tightening the cooperation between Circles, Sodalities and Lands. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - culture; - protection of Silesians' identity; - publishing; - education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - submitting the petition to have the Silesian ethnolect registered as a language and be entered on the SIL International list of languages; - since 2003 running the publishing house <i>Narodowa Oficyna Śląska</i>, which has edited about 70 publications on Silesia and in the Silesian dialect, it also publishes the monthly <i>Śląsko Nacjjo</i> (The Silesian Nation). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information; - publishing; - education; - culture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participation in the civic initiative to acknowledge the crimes committed by OUN-UPA (Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists – Ukrainian Insurgent Army) as genocide; - running the programme under the title <i>Lwowska Fala</i> (The Wave of Lvov) in the Polish Radio in Katowice; - running <i>Kresowy Ośrodek Studiów Analiz i Dokumentacji im. Męczenników Kresów Wschodnich</i> (Kresovian Centre of Studies Analyses and Documentation). |

Table 3 contd.

| Name of organisation | Form of activity | Interests/goals | Political activity |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | | <p>ned Lands”, who – in their mass – hold the status of displaced from the Former Eastern Lands, resulting from demands lodged by Germans – former inhabitants of Silesia – for the property left by the latter in this area.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – realisation and execution of the right for compensation for Poles expelled from the Former Eastern Lands for the property left there | |
| <p><i>Stowarzyszenie Współpracy Polska-Wschód – Oddział w Katowicach</i> (Association of Cooperation Poland-East, branch in Katowice)</p> | <p>– association</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – undertaking initiatives, actions and shaping attitudes which contribute to building and developing neighbourly relations, cooperation and friendship on the principle of equality, mutual benefits, trust and respect between Polish society and the societies of the states lying east of Poland, Poles living there and the national minorities of these states, living in Poland; – actions for a better acquaintance with, mutual understanding and bringing closer of the inhabitants of Poland and those living in the states lying east of Poland, spreading reliable information and knowledge about the history, traditions, culture, economy and everyday life in the countries and the nations; – overcoming mutual prejudices and historical grievances that burden mutual relations today; – promoting and supporting economic cooperation and trade exchange between countries, both on the level of economic subjects and | <p>No.</p> |

| Other spheres of activity | Exemplary projects/initiatives |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- information;- publishing;- education;- culture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- co-organisation of All-Polish Contest of Recitation of Poetry and Prose of A. Pushkin and A. Mickiewicz "PUSZKINIANA 2014";- conferences, seminars, trainings. |

Table 3 contd.

| Name of organisation | Form of activity | Interests/goals | Political activity |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | individual citizens, showing the significance of this cooperation and mutual benefits for the current interests and economic development; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – initiating and backing up scientific-technological and cultural cooperation between institutions and centres dealing in culture and science, cooperation between schools and organisations, one that mutually enriches the cultural and intellectual potential of our societies and allows creating new material and spiritual values. | |
| <i>Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Niemców Województwa Śląskiego</i> (Socio-Cultural Society of Germans of Silesian Province) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – association; – organisation: branches (e.g., in Bytom, Gliwice, Zabrze, Racibórz, Rybnik). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – cultivating German traditions and history; – cultivating the German language. | Yes – at the beginning of its activity the Society designated its candidates to local government elections. In the election of 2010, these were only some individual cases. |

Source: author's own elaboration on the basis of the data inserted on the websites listed in the news.php; <http://www.kresowianie.com/main.php?d=15&p=24>; <http://www.swpw.org/index.php?pw&Itemid=49>; <http://www.dfkschlesien.pl/> (accessed on: 13-14 and 28 and 29.04.2014).

The research illustrated above was carried out in cities with the rights of a county and in two counties. It follows from it that the organisation that is the most recognisable among the inhabitants of Silesian Province is RAŚ. The Movement achieved the best results in the cities in which it designated its candidates to fight for the mandate of a councillor, that is in Ruda Śląska, Świętochłowice or Mysłowice. The other two associations ranked much lower. However, it needs to be noted that both of the other organisations engage themselves to a much lower degree (e.g., the Union of Upper Silesia) or do not engage themselves at all (like the Association of People of Silesian Nationality) in the fight for power on the local political stage.

| Other spheres of activity | Exemplary projects/initiatives |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information; - publishing; - education; - culture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organising courses of the German language and numerous contests, e.g., the German Language Contest. Literary-Artistic Competition, Joseph F. von Eichendorff Contest of Knowledge and Creativity, Song and Theatre Contest, Dictation in the German Language, designed for the whole Silesian Province; - organisation of cultural events (Provincial Culture Holiday of Local Circles, concert "Music knows no borders", German Cinema Week, and also a variety of meetings, exhibition, excursions for children and senior citizens, Christmas meetings and summer camps for children; - editing the information-cultural bulletin <i>Oberschlesische Stimme</i>; - running radio programmes (e.g., "Die Deutsche Stimme aus Ratibor" /"The German Voice from Racibórz"/ broadcast in German, „Mittendrin“ addressed to the young); - running a library and a museum. |

table on the organisations: <http://www.zg.org.pl/>; <http://www.autonomia.pl/>; http://zlns.ubf.pl?option=com_content&view=article&id=105:slaski-oddzial-wojewodzki-katowice&catid=78:sw

CONCLUSIONS

- The activity of the majority of organisations of communities in the ethnic-national borderland concentrates on the *propagation of culture, history, language and is of a social character*;

- Only a few of them (RAŚ, TSKN, ZG) are *politically active*; this is in connection with the number of their members and sometimes their extensive organisational structure;

- In the case of the TSKN and ZG, *political activity is very limited and focuses solely on the level of communes*;



Drawing 1. Recognisability of Silesian associations

Explanation of the Polish vocabulary used in the image (successive lines from the top): *Rozpoznawalność...* = Recognisability of Silesian associations; *“O których spośród...?”* = Which of the Silesian associations have you heard about?; *Popularność ogółem* = Popularity in total; *Badanie przeprowadzono...* = The survey, which was commissioned by RAŚ, was conducted on a sample of 3,000 respondents

Source: accessed on the website of Ruch Autonomii Śląska, <http://www.autonomia.pl> (accessed on: 14.04.2014).

– *The only organisation that delegates its candidates to fight for mandates on higher level of territorial self-government is RAŚ.* This organisation won mandates on each level of local government in the last election of 2010; on the other hand, the activity of this organisation is decreasing on the level of communes (in the 2010 election they designated 49 candidates, nearly half the number of the candidates delegated in 2006). It can be concluded from the results of the last local election that the political activity of the organisation concentrates, primarily, on cities with county rights, as the largest number of candidates are found there;

– Organisations that are politically active are more easily recognisable by the inhabitants of the region, most probably due to the fact that they also articulate their needs on the local political stage; in turn, those which do not engage in political activity are not widely identifiable by the community in the region;

– Organisations of communities of the ethnic-national borderland represent interests of narrow social groups, whose aim is to maintain the cultural and historical difference and cultivate their own language;

– The local committees established by them perform various functions, beginning with pro-social functions, through the cognitive ones, with the customary-cultural implications, ending with those encouraging community members in the area of political activity;

– They fall in line with the framework of politics functioning on the local level, that is the lack of ideology for pragmatism and realism in the activity of individual social groups;

– They are characterised by relevance;

– The membership, organisational structures, declared expectations (interests, needs) are decisive for the level of their activity.

Concluding the present considerations, Upper Silesia, undoubtedly, can be treated as a borderland territory due to the intensive spatial and temporal relations between local communities (Silesians, Germans) and the Polish state. The groups try to voice their interests, e.g., by taking part in local elections they negotiate the relations of subordination (fighting for the autonomy of Silesia), and thus, they question authority in this part of the Polish state in its full dimension.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ewa Ganowicz – a research worker and lecturer in the Institute of Political Sciences, University of Opole; her research interests, which are reflected in her rich scientific output, focus on problem areas connected with local politics, territorial self-government, national minorities and the theory of democracy.

Contact: wylatkowo1@tlen.pl