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**ATTITUDES TOWARDS LUSATIA AND
ITS HERITAGE IN POLISH.
HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES***

Abstract: The paper discusses contemporary attitudes towards Lusatian heritage in Poland, with special attention to the region called Eastern Lusatia situated in the western part of the country. This approach aims to present the phenomenon within an interdisciplinary context of history and social sciences. The broad historical context included in this paper covers mostly the period of post-war border changes, especially those between Poland and Germany. The communist period in Poland and the specificity of communist minority policies is one of the key factors shaping today's image of Sorbian heritage. Another important perspective is the contemporary trend for creating new localities as a form of the affective bond with the place of inhabitation. This, in the authors' view, is deeply rooted in post-war social phenomena such as mass-scale migrations. The authors claim that today's presence and presentation of Lusatian heritage is mostly instrumental and serves local communities as tourist attractions rather than including the Sorbian minority in the discourse of identity.

Keywords: Sorbs, Lower Lusatia, Lower Sorbian, minorities in Poland, Polish Western and Northern Territories, new locality, memory discourse.

1. Introduction

Sorbs are said to be the smallest Slavonic nation, who today dwell predominantly in Germany and are strongly Germanized. Parts of the Lusatian region inhabited by Sorbs became part of the Polish state together with the areas of the Western and Northern Territories after the end of World War II. The historical division of Lusatia into

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lower and upper parts shows not only topographical but also distinct linguistic differences, as well as differences in clothing, architecture and the coats of arms of both provinces. The main goal of the paper is to demonstrate how Sorbian heritage is presented in Polish discourse and in local practices and what the conditions that constitute this heritage are. In Poland there are currently numerous institutions which concentrate their activities on historical and social matters related to Lusatia and Sorbs. Moreover, activities undertaken by various institutions cannot be directly transposed to the views of the general public and local communities. This is due to numerous factors, such as the post-war minority policy, Germanisation of Lower Lusatia and instrumentalization of heritage.

The specific context in which the presented phenomena are analysed is the context of Polish Western and Northern Territories and characteristics of post-migration communities. This type of local community appeared after World War II as a result of the shift of the borders and the geopolitical location of Poland. The so-called “Recovered Territories” – territories which were detached from German and annexed to Poland – have their social specificity, related mostly to major cultural changes and a total exchange of populations after 1945. In this light, the authors focus on Lusatia as a post-migration community which developed attitudes towards local heritage differently than in other regions of Poland. These attitudes are based on post-war migration processes and the communist propaganda directed towards border regions, especially towards the newly-established (however only later lawfully sanctioned) Polish-German border. It is also important to note that Lusatia is a trans-border region, located between Poland and Germany. Therefore, this article focuses on the Polish side of it, where Lusatian heritage is less known and the Sorbian minority is almost absent.

In the paper, the authors first present a set of topics which are followed by the complicated image of Sorbs and Lower Lusatia. It concerns the historical interest of Polish historiography and the context of post-war migrations and border changes. Further, the authors discuss the issue of Sorbian heritage in Poland – how it has been perceived over time and what attempts have been made to restore it. Finally, the last passages of the paper focus on the creation of the image of Sorbs and Lusatia in Poland – how Lusatia can be imagined, defined and attributed in the processes of constructing a new local identity and an emotional bond with place of inhabitation.

2. Sorbian versus Lusatian Identity

Discussing Sorbian and Lusatian identity and heritage requires disambiguation, especially when considering territories which have changed their state attachment and experienced a total exchange of populations. It is important to mention that today a firm line can be drawn between the territory of Lower Lusatia and the Sorb minority. This has a significant impact on today’s development of the local identity. The particular context of Polish Western and Northern Territories involves a discussion on the migration processes and their tremendous impact on developing local identities.



Map 1 – Map of post-war territorial changes in Poland, a result of the Potsdam conference – the detachment of Eastern Territories behind the Curzon Line (the so-called: Kresy Wschodnie) and the attachment of the “Recovered Territories”, i.a. Lower Silesia and Pomerania based on the natural borderline of the Oder and Neisse rivers. Areas marked white were within Polish borders before and after the war and are often called “Central Poland”. Retrieved 14.08.2017 from <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

The term ‘Lusatia’ itself was coined in the 15th century. Before this, in historiography Lusatia (German: Lausitz, Latin: Lusatia) referred only to the areas of Lower Lusatia. The territories of Upper Lusatia were referred to as Milsko or pagus Budissin (the Budissin country)¹. After the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Lusatia was divided into different parts. The areas of Lower Lusatia were annexed by Prussia, along with parts of Upper Lusatia. Also, the main part of Upper Lusatia was annexed by Saxony. Today, the capital of Lower Lusatia – which is the particular subject of interest in this paper – is Cottbus, Germany. The Polish part of Lower Lusatia is located in Lubusz Voivodeship and consists primarily of regions on the western bank of the Oder and Neisse rivers, including the large towns of Gubin and Żary.

The polynomial reference to Sorbs as an ethnic group is taken from 19th-century German terminology, where “Sorben” is pronounced similarly to Sorbian (Serbian). To distinguish the Lusatian Serbs from the Southern Serbs – the inhabitants of present-day Republic of Serbia – Polish scientists have started to refer to this group as “Serbołużyczanie” or “Serbowie Łużyccy”. The explanation of Polish etymology can be found in works of i.a. Jan Otrębski or Aleksander Brückner².

Lower Lusatia is located on the Polish-German borderland. This fact has had a tremendous impact on the local community. Lusatia was mostly annexed by communist Eastern Germany, with which Poland signed a border treaty in 1952, whereas the same document was long contested and signed only in 1990 between Poland and Western Germany. However, the location just by the border in a community formed by post-war migrants resulted in the development of an unstable identity. On the other hand, as Andrzej Sakson points out, post-migration communities were not only borderland communities in terms of location but also in terms of inner divisions between different groups³. The marginalisation of Sorbian identity was also related to the physical absence of this minority and lack of personal encounters between the new residents and the Sorbian community. In the Polish part of Lower Lusatia after World War II there were only a handful of representatives of Sorbs: seven people near Żary⁴, in the Gubin District, as noted by official statistics: zero with the addition that there are Germans who have Slavic names, but they do not admit to the Lusatian nationality. They feel German and are employed as Germans⁵. Therefore, the Polish parts of Lower Lusatia can be considered a historical region without indigenous people. In this light, it can be claimed that nowadays the concept of Lusatian identity is grounded in a territorial understanding (linked solely to the name of the inhabited land) rather than linking it to the once-present ethnic minority and its culture. Hence, in discussing Lusatian identity the authors refer to Lusatia in terms of territory; when Sorbian identity is mentioned, the authors link it to the ethnic group.

¹ Lehr-Spławiński 1947: 23.

² Otrębski 1947; Brückner 1985.

³ Sakson 1990.

⁴ Siatkowska 1992: 19-22, 2000: 392-399; Lewaszekiewicz 1996: 22-23.

⁵ Kuberski and Pałys 2005: 80.



Map 2 – Territories of Lower Lusatia. Source: authors' own work.

3. Polish Discourse on Lower Lusatia

Polish discourse, both historical and social, was shaped in different occurrences and was influenced specifically by the post-war policy on minorities of the newly established communist state. History, culture, ethnography and the Sorbian language become a subject of interest for a few Polish scientists in the 19th century. The dynamics of discourse changed rapidly after World War II, especially in the first post-war years, and this period is of particular interest to the authors. It is to be noted that in the beginning Poland, to a certain degree, became involved in claims about the creation of an independent Lusatian state. However, as soon as it became clear that no new political body would appear in this area, the public discourse was silenced.



Map 3 – Map of Lusatian required territories – the territory of the postulated independent Lusatian state by Petr Johánek, a Czech cartographer. Maps were one of the ways to propagate the idea of Lusatian independence, related to the Łużiskoserbski narodny wuběrk (Lusatian National Committee). The map above presents the historical boundaries of Lusatia (both Upper and Lower). On the map vertical lines mark territories which were supposed to be attached to Germany. Areas marked with horizontal lines were to be attached to Poland. Source: K. R. Mazurski, *Mapy Łużyc z 1945 i 1946 roku w kontekście dążeń niepodległościowych Łużyczan*, „Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny”, t. 45, 2013, nr 3, s. 261

Jerzy Strzelczyk points out that already in the 18th century the Polish traveller Count Jan Potocki was one of the first foreign scholars to become interested in the linguistic and ethnographic phenomenon of Sorbs⁶. A later interest in the history of Lusatia is visible in the memoirs of Polish officers of the Napoleonic army, who after the defeat of the Russian campaign in 1813 were located in the vicinity of today's city of Zittau in Saxony⁷. In their accounts, travel records show admiration for the Lusatian people, who were not Germanized for several centuries. Later studies of Lusatian history, folklore and language were carried out by such institutions as Vilnius University – Michał Bobrowski (a priest travelling to Lusatia in 1822), the Warsaw Society of Friends of Science – Andrzej Kucharski (travelled in 1823 and 1826 / 1827), Warsaw University – Waclaw Aleksander Maciejowski (1839), and the Cracow Scientific Society – Karol Lange (1856). Nineteenth-century relations concerning Lusatia were the result of Polish Slavic studies undertaken at this time. “Slavic people” were discovered in lands that the German propaganda had always called Germanic⁸. The initial journals contained in memoirs and newspaper articles became the foundation for professional scientific literature. One example is the first ever completed comprehensive study of Sorbian national history, written and published in Polish by Wilhelm Bogusławski in 1861 and only 23 years later translated into Sorbian by Michał Hórnik – a friend of Bogusławski⁹.

After Poland regained its independence in 1918, interest in the history of Lusatia increased, especially when some Sorbs referred to point 13 of the Wilson Declaration demanding an independent German province under the supervision of the League of Nations or national-political freedom in the form of a Czechoslovak state united with the state organism. In the newly-established Polish state institutions and universities, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Łużyczan (Eng. Friends of Lusatia Society) was established in Warsaw, Poznań and Katowice. In Cracow the Serbo-Lusatian Department was founded by the Slavic Association. In 1921 the West-Slavonic Institute was established at Poznań University, in addition to strictly scientific work undertaken by such researchers as Henryk Batowski, Józef Gołąbek, Adam Fiszer, Zdzisław Steiber, Tadeusz Lehr-Splawiński, Alfons Parczewski Witold Taszycki and Józef Widajewicz. Evaluating the achievements of Polish science from 1918 to 1939, Grażyna Wyder writes: “Contrary to popular sentiments and opinions suggesting little interest in the Lusatian subject during the interwar period, it increased due to Poland's specific political and economic situation and its complicated political relations with Germany”¹⁰.

Out of the circle of scholars, the interest of Polish society in Lusatia was also increased thanks to the work of popular science¹¹ and especially because of the press coverage. After Hitler came to power, numerous articles in Polish newspapers emerged presenting the situation of the Sorbian in the Third Reich. At the same time, it should be noted that scholarly research relating to Sorbian culture was inspired by the individual

⁶ Strzelczyk 1994: 17.

⁷ Dembiński 1845: 128-131; Brodziński 1928: 93-102; Mazurski 1983: 179-190; Zieliński 1975: 7-46.

⁸ Wyder 2000: 142

⁹ Bogusławski 1884.

¹⁰ Wyder 1995: 34.

¹¹ Pałys 2013: 21-32, Jaroszewicz-Kleindienst 1970: 148-150.

interests of researchers, and they were not the result of the scientific policy of the Second Polish Republic¹².

The new geopolitical order after the war, as announced by Stalin, was supposed to bring liberation from “German enslavement” to the Slavonic nations, which also included Sorbs. However, for the authorities of the USSR Sorbs were a German population and “were not an ally in the denazification processes”¹³. Some Lusatian organizations, since the end of the Second World War, had sought to distinguish Sorbs from the German population. This was of particular importance because of the fact that during the march of the Red Army on Germany, many pre-war inhabitants of today’s Polish western territories became prisoners of the victorious army. In 1945, the Ministry of Public Security decided to resettle the Lusatian population of the Oder for “unexplained reasons”¹⁴. Probably, with regard to the far advanced Germanization of this population and not recognizing the Slavic origin of the Sorbs, it was decided to connect it with the German population.

Shortly after the end of the war, the Polish authorities began to realize that the Soviet Union was going to treat the Lusatian question exclusively as a problem within Germany. A note from the head of the Polish Military Mission in Berlin clearly confirms this:

Ivanov’s attitude towards the Lusatian question is very reluctant. He believes that it is not worthwhile to engage in these complex problems of a not quite politically mature Slavic group and impede their political position. He also thinks that we [Poles, M.Ł., M.M.] should not be too involved, so that we are not accused of reaching even further areas before we settle our borders¹⁵.

A closer look at the last sentence reveals another factor which was crucial for settling the dispute from the Polish side. The situation with Poland’s western border remained unclear and tense and concerns about the Germans re-entering territories on the western banks of the Oder and Neisse were widespread. On the contrary, the problem of creation of the Lusatian State was taken at both the political and public levels. The first propaganda press releases concerning Lusatia appeared in the “liberated” areas of Poland even during the Second World War. In March 1945 “Dziennik Polski” published *Do not forget the Sorbs*¹⁶. This journal also published the article *The Last Sorbs. We must return to Bautzen*¹⁷. In April appeared a publication in the Western Journal *When victorious armies are fighting in Lusatian lands*¹⁸. All of these articles and those written in the following months recalled the historical relationship of the Poles with the Sorbs. They also drew the readers’ attention to the historical moment of liberation of the fraternal nation and emphasized the role of Lusatia in securing the new Polish western border¹⁹.

Often, the titles and postulates of Polish journalists towards Lusatia were formulated in an emotional way. In 1946 in Poznan, a landmark publication entitled Freedom for

¹² Czubiński 1985: 20.

¹³ Szczepankiewicz-Battek 2005: 130.

¹⁴ Szkopek 1996: 206-207.

¹⁵ Kuberski and Pałys 2005: 86.

¹⁶ “Dziennik Polski” 33/1945.

¹⁷ “Dziennik Polski” 47/1945.

¹⁸ “Dziennik Zachodni” 74/1945.

¹⁹ Marczak 1995: 34-47.

Lusatia! was issued²⁰. In the published volume of articles one can find texts on ethnic issues such as Bożena Stelmachowska's article Lusatian Folk Costumes, and history articles such as Poland and Lusatia over the centuries. Another publication which aimed at highlighting the Lusatian problem and the justification of the argument for creating a separate Lusatian state was Wanda Goebel's *Forgotten Island*²¹. Over the course of time, varying, though weakening, press releases and reports, which were to introduce readers and Polish society to the Lusatian minority, were also published.

The issue of the territorial affiliation of Lusatia involved Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany. The fate of these areas after the war had three major solutions at the time: the establishment of an independent state, Lusatia, with Czechoslovakia or Poland, the creation of an autonomous region within Germany, the relocation of Sorbs to Poland or Czechoslovakia in the protection against deprivation of identity²². Due to the lack of confidence and interest by the USSR and the lack of Polish and Czech initiative, despite mutual competition, until 1948 no action was taken to legally settle the issue of the Sorbs and territories of Lusatia. On the other hand, German communist activists perceived Sorbian aspirations as "undesirable political separatism"²³. As a result of widespread disagreement between the Sorbs concerned and the reluctance to engage in minority issue, the hopes of the Sorbian intellectuals were not fulfilled. Also, since 1948 in Poland there had been a decline or even loss of interest in the Sorbian problem, which lasted until 1990. As pointed out by Małgorzata Miecznikowska, in the period 1945-1947 it was possible to declare pro-Belarusian postulates freely, but in the period 1949-1956 it was not possible at all²⁴. By the 1950s, the pro-Russian organizational structures, created in Poland in the second half of the 1940s, were liquidated²⁵.

As a result, Polish authorities began to slowly distance themselves from Sorbian matters, as did Czechoslovakia. In spite of this, it should be noted that the two countries, as a few others did, supported Sorbian independence aspirations. However, they did this on the basis of supporting a good cause without any special obligation²⁶.

4. Lusatian heritage in Poland after 1945

Another dimension of imagining Lusatia and Sorbs in Poland is heritage, especially material heritage. Although, as previously mentioned, discourse on it started in Poland much earlier, the authors consider the post-war policies and general social situation after 1945 to be of particular interest in this paper. This is because post-war changes which reached Lusatian areas as well thoroughly re-shaped not only the local community but also the material environment.

The Polish Western and Northern Territories embrace regions which lost their ties

²⁰ „Freedom for Lusatia”, 1946.

²¹ Goebel, 1947.

²² Miecznikowska 1991: 99.

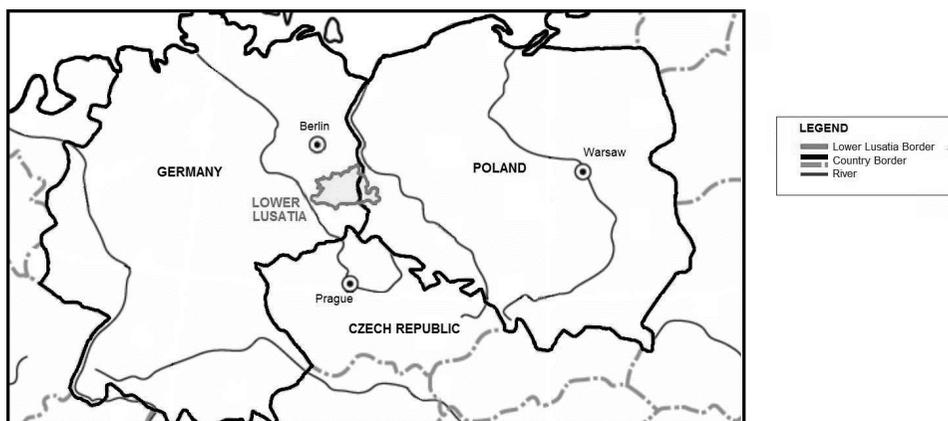
²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ Miecznikowska 2005: 9.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ Borodziej 1990: 317.

with the political bodies they had once been part of²⁷. The inhabiting communities have certain characteristics which determine their specific difference from other regions of Poland. First, they are based upon massive migration processes which occurred over a short period of time, such as the post-war expatriations from Polish lands incorporated into the USSR after 1939 and 1945, forced expulsions of Germans and other local inhabitants, and free-will migrations from central regions of Poland. Moreover, in such communities the migrants were the dominant group, diminishing or even discriminating against locals²⁸. In extreme cases, migrants inhabited a “social vacuum” – an area which had been abandoned by the former local community²⁹.



Map 4 – Map of Lower Lusatia in Central Europe. Source: Authors' work.

This is strongly bound up with the materiality of cultural memory. What was left by previous inhabitants shortly after the war was supposed to be either hidden or destroyed. The post-war minority policy aimed at creating a homogenous society with no place for cultural diversity. Not only were pre-war Polish territories to be considered multicultural, but also the incorporated Western and Northern Territories which included different ethnic and national minorities. The policy included a set of operations aiming at erasing local specificities. First, it embraced national verification processes, which were to establish *de iure* the percentage of Polish people on newly-gained territories. However, as Sylwia Bykowska points out, the real aim was Polonization and proving the legitimacy of Polish rule³⁰. Furthermore, a set of interventions defined as ‘re-building’ the Polish state after the war resulted in diminishing local material heritage referred to as German and that which

²⁷ Kwaśniewski 1989: 49.

²⁸ Poniedziałek 2011: 110, Łukowski 2002: 57-59.

²⁹ Poniedziałek 2011: 110.

³⁰ Bykowska 2012: 183.

was German was supposed to be destroyed.

Those actions also included the Lusatian people inhabiting Lower Lusatia. The first discriminating factor was referring to Sorbs as a German people, ignoring the Slavic roots of this national group. Furthermore, as a result of Polonisation policies, the language, heritage and identity were slowly disappearing, not only from local areas, but also from a wider discourse. At the same time attempts of Sorbs to establish an independent state failed. These factors combined led to the disappearance of the Sorbian context in Poland, which was successfully created homogenously after the end of World War II.

As Wanterton and Smith point out, heritage “shapes reality, both mystifying and naturalizing existing power relations”³¹. Moreover, the notion of heritage in communities might not always have an empowering function, but can also lead towards negative feelings, such as a lack of self-esteem and identity³². This is precisely the case of Sorbian heritage in Poland. The disappearance of Sorbs from the Polish context is closely tied to post-war power relations – the Soviet area of influence and depriving local groups of self-identity and self-esteem. The situation of minorities, especially those in the Western and Northern Territories, is the history of the borderland – both state and cultural. This comes with a number of consequences.

The Polish part of Lusatia is situated at the border of the influence of the German state. The context of “Slavic-German rivalry” in particular is visible – for centuries German states prevailed there and only periodically the influence of Poland or the Czech Republic was visible³³. Sorbs were much subordinated to German influence (for example, by the incorporation of the Lusatian people into the circle of German culture after World War II)³⁴.

Administrative reforms carried out in Germany and Poland in the 1990s have led to the division of the present. Upper Lusatia (in the German part) is located in the Land of Saxony, and (in the Polish part) in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship. Lower Lusatia (in the German part) is located in the Brandenburg State and (in Polish part) in the Lubusz Voivodeship. In the German part, Sorbs enjoy the privileges of a national minority, have their own schools, cultural and political organizations and even in some bilingual towns (German and Sorbian) the names of offices, streets and railway stations in both languages. In Poland, there are no such phenomena due to the expulsion after 1945 of the Lusatian population beyond the Oder and Neisse rivers (rivers constituting the western Polish borders).

At present, traces of Lusatian culture can only be observed in the architecture of certain farmsteads, where houses have always been oriented to the top of the road. They are also to be found in Sorbian-speaking places which have undergone Polonization, e.g. Matuszójce/Matuszowice, Biełojce/Białowice, Zabłoto/Zabłocie, Merkojce/Mirkowice.

The subject of the cultural heritage of Lower Lusatia in Poland is primarily concerned with regional organizations. In the Lubuskie Voivodeship after World War II, the “Prołuż” organization had an active branch in Zielona Góra. A second branch was located in Gubin

³¹ Wanterton, Smith 2010: 9.

³² *Ibidem*: 10.

³³ Obracht-Prondzyński 2003: 61.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

and had about 30 members³⁵. On April 24 1992, at the initiative of Tomasz Jaworski, the Society of Lusatian Studies (Pol. Towarzystwo Studiów Łużyckich) was founded in Zielona Góra. This society brings together academics, regionalists and sympathizers interested in Lusatian issues. The results of their activities are numerous publications, lectures, exhibitions, conferences and academic meetings, both regional and international.

On June 4 1997 in Żary, at Witold Piwoński's initiative, the Association for Promotion of Eastern Lusatia was founded. Today, the association has branches in Lubsko and Gubin. As its main aim the association has adopted the creation and promotion of the Eastern Lusatia region and popularizing Slavic culture and tradition. The Association's meetings are held quarterly and the writings of the entire year are collected and published as a bulletin. Their activities are also promoted by the local press: "Chronicle of the Land of Zary" ("Kronika Ziemi Żarskiej") or "Gazeta Lubuska"³⁶.

In Poland, the problem of Sorbs is not widely known in the social sphere; however, it is present in academic discourse. Grażyna Wyder points out that the fate of Lusatian and Sorbian remains beyond the awareness of Poles³⁷. This originates from the international situation and the absence of the Sorbian minority, also in public discourse. For a long time, until 1989 in Poland, there was only one publication related to this subject – Jan Šolta, An outline of the history of the Sorbs (Pol. Zarys dziejów Serbołużyczan). However, as Szczepankiewicz-Battek writes, this work was politically biased and was therefore accepted by the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland. Other works began to emerge only after the political transformation in 1989³⁸.

5. Conclusion: Name-gaming in Lusatia today

The result of different policies was establishing the term and region of Eastern Lusatia. The aforementioned Lusatian division along the rivers forming the state border between Germany and Poland led to the creation of the name "Eastern Lusatia" in the 1970s to define the whole territory of Lusatia within the territory of the Polish state. This name was popularized by Krzysztof R. Mazurski and it is popular in Lower Lusatia, where it tries to distinguish and emphasize the separateness of Eastern Lusatia.

This distinction can be demonstrated, for example, by the language, the Eastern used by the inhabitants of the area between the Neisse and Bóbr rivers, with the most important language monuments – a translation of the New Testament in 1548 by Nicholas Jakubica and the single Lower Sorbian passwords in Hieronim Megiser's multilingual dictionary, which he collected in the villages around Gubin. The distinction is also emphasized in the local, regional historiography³⁹. The vast area of the eastern part of Lower Lusatia was occupied from the Middle Ages until 1815 by the Żary land ownership, the Lesser Brody land ownership, and the small areas of land belonging to the city of Gubin. On the basis of

³⁵ Pałys 2008: 257.

³⁶ Swoboda 2008: 271.

³⁷ Wyder 2000: 5.

³⁸ Szczepankiewicz-Battek, 2005: 8.

³⁹ Piwoński 1998, Piwoński 1997, Siatkowska 2000, Schuster-Šewc, 2001: 65-74, Gutschmidt 2001: 89-106.

the history of these estates, the aristocratic families accentuated the uniqueness of eastern Lusatia⁴⁰, although similar possessions existed in the western part of Lusatia.

As part of academic discourse, attempts were made to periodize Polish-Lusatian relations and interest in Lusatia as a region and Sorbs in Poland up until 1989. Krzysztof R. Mazurski points out the differences that occurred in this matter in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. As a result of the political thaw in 1956, publications focusing on the topic of Lusatia only had a touristic character⁴¹. At the same time, the inhabitants of the then Wrocław Voivodeship were convinced that only the Lower Silesia region was situated in the territorial area of the voivodeship. Meanwhile, it was in Lower Silesia that the renaissance of Lusatian interest began. In the 1970s Polish researchers and tour operators managed to establish contacts with Domowina and also organized several trips to the German Democratic Republic⁴². The 1980s, in Mazurski's opinion, brought increased interest in the Lusatians and the transfer of the center of gravity from Wrocław to Lubsko and Żary. Since 1985, within the framework of the Polish Genealogical Society, there have existed linguistic circles. Meanwhile, the author presents a perspective that shows that the Lusatian activity has its consequences, namely:

They understand [Poles living in Lower Silesia today – M.Ł., M.M.] – in relation to themselves, the notion of the Sorbian not as a separate nationality of Poles, but as equivalent to Mazovia, Greater Poland, Silesia, a Pole associated with a given region of Poland, a common homeland⁴³.

Today, references to the “Lusatian” origins of these lands can be seen mostly in the names and prove the aforementioned thesis that the “Lusatian” component has been deprived of cultural links with its ethnic group and rather marks the boundaries of a region. After World War II, the names of villages and cities had to be Polonised and some of them were given both Polish and Lusatian names, such as Dąbrowa Łużycka, Lipa Łużycka and Lipinki Łużyckie, which is to link new, Polish names of villages to the historical context. The use of the “Lusatian” attribute in them was dictated by indicating the location of these places in historical Lusatia. On the other hand, some historians may argue, for propaganda reasons⁴⁴. Another example is the name of Lusatia television Łużyce TV, where the reference to the Lusatian name indicates the extent of dissemination (regional), as well as the subject matter. The coverage of Łużyce TV focuses on regional and local news of a different kind, without especially emphasizing Lusatian culture or its memory.

This phenomenon can be explained by the forming of a new type of locality in Lusatia. The specificity of these areas is that today's community members and local heritage (both material and intangible) are not linked to each other due to massive processes of population exchange. The result of this was settling Lusatia with people the vast majority of whom were used to a different cultural landscape and encountered for the first time not actual, indigenous inhabitants but what was left after their departure. A new locality is forming where dwellers of a given region create a bond based upon emotions and choice

⁴⁰ Piwoński 2000: 77-87.

⁴¹ Mazurski 1998: 80-81.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ Mazurski 1998: 83.

⁴⁴ Żuraszek-Ryś 2014: 100-101.

with a place rather than real, historically-based, primordial ideas or possession⁴⁵. In the case of Lower Lusatia in Poland now, one might claim that name-gaming with “Lusatia”, without giving it the quality of subjectivity is, on the one hand oriented towards a simple, commercially-motivated differentiation. However, given that the region was deprived of both inhabitants (indigenous Sorbs) and identity, the present creation of “Polish Lusatia” might aim not only at establishing the lost discourse, but at differentiation from other regions, motivated by attracting tourists. The real question remains whether referring to Sorbian heritage is based on knowledge regarding local identity.

The city of Żary has been developing a promotional strategy for many years using the name “Żary – the Capital of Polish Lusatia”. It is hard to talk about the “Lusatian” city in an architectural and spatial sense. However, according to Frido Mětšk’s research in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Sorbian population in the present county of Żary constituted a substantial percentage⁴⁶. Later we see its decline, which is related to the changes within society in the 19th century.

In 2004, in Żary, the Lusatian Higher School of Humanities was founded. The Lusatian Medical Center was also established and there is a Lusatian Pharmacy. A group of people associated with the Żary branch of the Polish Tourist and Country Touring Association organize many events with a luso-regional theme and you can even get tourist badges emblazoned with “Friend of Lusatia” and “Żary: the Capital of Polish Lusatia”. The Silesian-Lusatian Border Museum has recently opened. In the whole of Lower Lusatia there are a variety of organizations that refer to the Lusatian past, e.g. Lusatian Culture Centre / Lusatian Open Air Museum. The names of companies, such as Lusatian Praliny in Lubsko, the names of shops and shopping malls, e.g. Lusatian Gallery in Gubin. However, this is another strategy of developing local identity without an ethnic subject – no clear links to Sorbian culture could be probably introduced in a pharmacy or medical centre.

Also, on the Internet one can find web pages and blogs devoted to the topic of Sorbs and Lusatia. However, the biggest and most developed source is social media and the biggest fan pages are on Facebook, publishing various trivia from the past. The most notable is Trjebulski Wendy presenting insightful posts on the southwestern part of the Lubusz Voivodeship, supported by graphics, pictures and drawings. Among other profiles on Facebook it is worth mentioning: Zielona Góra Lusatia Studies; Eastern Lusatia; Lower Lusatia / Lower Łużyca / Niederlausitz; Lusatian cuisine. Brody / Pforthen “Virtual Museum” also notices Brody / Pforthen, which publishes not only information from the past of the Brody area, but also presents numerous local initiatives, such as the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage in the area. The operation of such organizations / institutions on the Internet might be considered a signal of an emerging local identity and their names, bringing back Sorbian language, become a testament to these processes. Lusatian tradition is building and cementing the local society at the municipal level. This is to signal, for a further discussion and research, a discrepancy between practices and content distributed through the Internet and practices of name-gaming in the city space. They appear to obtain different strategies for developing what is “Lusatian” and including Sorbian elements.

⁴⁵ Kurczewska, 2006: 88-129.

⁴⁶ Mětšk 1957: 487-511. Mětšk 1956: 33-39, Jaworski 1993: 95-97.

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МАЛГОЖАТА ЛУКИЈАНОВ
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**СТАВОВИ ПРЕМА ЛУЖИЦИ И ЊЕНОМ НАСЛЕЂУ
ИЗ ПОЉСКЕ ИСТОРИЈСКЕ И ДРУШТВЕНЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ**

Резиме

Циљ рада је да се покаже како се представља лужичко наслеђе у пољском дискурсу и локалним праксама, те какви су услови који га сачињавају. У Пољској тренутно постоје многе институције чије се активности концентришу на историјске и друштвене теме везане за Лужицу и Лужичке Србе. Штавише, активности многих организација се не могу директно пренети на виђење јавности и локалних заједница. На ово утичу многи фактори као што је послератна политика према мањинама, германизација доње Лужице и инструментализација наслеђа.

Административне реформе спроведене у Немачкој и Пољској деведесетих година XX века су довеле до поделе у данашње време. Горња Лужица (у немачком делу) налази се у покрајини Саксонији и (у пољском делу) у Војводству доњошлеском. Доња Лужица (у немачком делу) се налази у покрајини Бранденбург и (у пољском делу) у Војводству лубушском. У немачком делу Лужички Срби уживају привилегије националне мањине, имају своје школе, културне и политичке организације, а у неким двојезичним градовима (немачким и лужичкосрпским) називе канцеларија, улица и железничких станица на два језика. У Пољској овако нешто не постоји због прогона лужичког становништва после 1945. године преко река Одре и Нисе (које чине западну пољску границу).

И историјски и друштвени пољски дискурс је обликован разним догађајима и на њега је много утицала послератна политика према мањинама коју је успоставила новооснована комунистичка држава. Ова политика је имала за циљ стварање хомогеног друштва у коме није било места за културну разноликост. Данас се референце на лужичко наслеђе у овим подручјима могу углавном видети у називима, што доказује раније поменути тезу да је „лужичка“ компонента лишена културних веза са етничком групом и да у већем степену означава границе једне области.

Кључне речи: Лужички Срби, Доња Лужица, доњолужички, мањине у Пољској, западне и северне пољске територије, нови локалитет, дискурс памћења.