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THE NATIONAL MINORITIES IN THE POLISH POLITICS. THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

Reborn in 1918, from the very outset, the Polish State was confronted with the necessity of coping with an important internal issue – the one regarding the relations between ethnic Poles and the representatives of other nations who after 1923 became new citizens of the Polish Republic. Three basic factors seem to have determined the way in which the problem under discussion was dealt with in the inter-war period: 1/ the ratio of Poles to non-Poles and social differences between the two groups; 2/ interference of external forces; 3/ disputes which arose between those who opted for the building of mono-ethnic nation State and those who wished to see the restoring of a multinational Republic similar to that existing before the partitions in the 18th century. During the Second World War the problem of how to regain independence became again of crucial importance for all Poles. The problems connected with the ethnic minorities had quite naturally moved to the margin of political considerations. The Polish leaders stressed the need to grant national minorities the right to develop their cultural activity and secure for them the freedom of religious practice. The German minority, however, was excluded from this offer. It was demanded that the Germans as bearing responsibility for the suffering of the Polish people, should be forced to leave Poland. The effects of social-mechanisms that were decided in Yalta caused Poland to become a mono-ethnic state. The factors that determined it were as follows: 1/ the Nazi Holocaust which nearly occasioned the total physical annihilation of the Polish Jews community; 2/ displacement of the Germans from the lands granted to Poland; 3/ the lack of choice of a “new mother country” among Ukrainian, Byelorussians, and Lithuanian people, and automatic ascription of Soviet nationality to the former citizens of the Republic of Poland those of Slavic but non-Polish descent; 4/ settlement of the expelled Poles from behind the eastern border into the so-called “Recovered Territories”. In turn, the imperative of integration and willingness to implement the rules in force in the structure of United Europe defined the status of national minorities in Poland after 1989.

Keywords: national minorities, internal politics, political concepts.

1. THE PERIOD OF THE INDEPENDENT POLAND 1918-1939

Reborn in 1918, from the very outset, the Polish State was confronted with the necessity of coping with an important internal issue – the one regarding the relations between the ethnic Poles and the representatives of other nations who after 1923 (the date which marks the final delineation of the Polish borders) became new citizens of the Polish Republic. Three basic factors seem to have determined the way in which the problem under discussion was dealt with in the inter-war period: 1) the ratio of Poles to non-Poles

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and social differences between the two groups which made itself apparent in the course of introducing a new social order in the resuscitated Poland. 2) interference of external forces 3) disputes which arose between those who opted for the building of a mono-ethnic State and those who wished to see the restoring of a multinational Republic similar to that existing before the partitions in the 18th century.

a) national and socio-economic structure

According to the census carried out in 1921 there were 27 million people in the Polish Republic which covered the area of 388 000 square kilometers. The Poles made up 69.2 percent of the total number of the population; the Ukrainians 14.3 percent, the Jews 7.8 percent, Byelorussians and the Germans 3.9 percent of the total. Russians, Lithuanians, Czechs, Tartars, Hungarians and Gypsies constituted less than one percent of the whole society. At the same time there were a few million Poles staying outside the Polish State. The largest Polish diaspora lived in the old Russian Empire (about 2 million people out of whom seven hundred thousand returned to Poland in the years 1921-1924) A smaller group about 1 million and a half were residents in Germany. There were also some Poles living in Lithuania (two hundred thousands) the Czech Republic (one hundred twenty thousands) and Latvia (80 thousands).

Two constitutions adopted by the Polish Parliament in 1921 and 1935 formed the basis for normalizing the relations between different ethnic groups³. The first of the Constitutions mentioned in the above rested for its treatment of national minorities on a compromise reached between the National Democrats (the representatives of the right wing party gathered around the leader of the Polish nationalists, Roman Dmowski) who formed a leading political force in the Legislative Assembly and the leaders of socialist and popular parties. If the representatives of the strongest faction in Parliament aimed at reducing the rights of non-Polish citizens to an absolute minimum trying to secure for the Poles a dominant position in the country, then the members of the leftist parties wanted to put the relations with ethnic minorities on equal and friendly terms. The text of the Constitution tried to reconcile a drive for eliminating ethnic minorities altogether from public life with a tendency to enable them to get themselves integrated into the social fabric.

The efforts, however, to achieve such conflicting ideological goals resulted in passing regulations which were contradictory, harmful to ethnic minorities and went against a desire expressed in the preamble to the Constitution to ensure “the development of all moral and material powers for the good of the whole of regenerated mankind and to ensure the equality of all citizens, respect for labor, all due rights, and particularly the security of State protection”. Some regulations also conflicted with the article 109 of the Constitution which gave each citizen the right to preserve their national identity and to use their mother tongue. Under the article, ethnic minorities were also guaranteed the right to develop their own cultural activity. To exemplify incompatibility between various articles,

³ A little earlier – that is - in February the twentieth, 1919, the Constitutional Charter was adopted supposed to be in effect only in the so-called transitional period until the Constitution proper was established. This charter, however, confined itself to regulating nothing but the relations between the executive and the legislative branch of government addressing neither rights nor duties of citizens. *Dziennik Praw Państwa Polskiego (Law Gazette for the Polish Republic)* (1919) No. 19, item 226.

it suffices to juxtapose the article 96 (which guarantees legal equality and announces the abolition of hereditary and class privileges and titles) the article 104 (which gives everyone the right to express freely their opinion) and the article 111 (which states that all citizens are guaranteed the freedom of conscience and religious practice) with the article 114 under which the Catholic Church was granted a leading position among formally equal denominations on the ground that it represented a religion of the vast majority of the nation. Provisions included in the articles 109-116 concerning the right to form public organizations could and were used against national minorities. The provisions in question enabled the State to exercise control over various associations and interfere in people's life each time social order and good mores were claimed to be disturbed. Furthermore, the Catholic Church was not subject to the supervision of the State administration. The activity of the Catholic Church was regulated by the treaty concluded with the Holy See (in practice, after the ratification of the concordat by the Polish Parliament, the State willingly gave up any form of interference in the Church activity – except for those cases where Catholic priests were suspected of breaching the regulations of the Civil Code)⁴.

The legal order created by the March Constitution met with a disapproval from the Piłsudski's adherents (and the Marshall himself) who managed to seize power by carrying out successful coup d'état in May 1926. Most ideas which underlay the Constitution of 1921 (including regulations concerning the rights and duties of the ethnic minorities) clashed with political conceptions of the new rulers of Poland. The latter were especially opposed to elevating the concept of nation to the status of a crucial political value. The representatives of the Piłsudski's camp believed that overemphasizing the significance of the concept of nation led to the diminishing of the authority of the State which was given an all-important place in the structure of political conceptions they had developed. With the idea of the State put at the head of their ideological arrangements, the concept of nation sank into a level of secondary importance. By the same token they denied the need for "national consolidation" and stressed the necessity of building a strong state capable of coping with all the problems that might appear because of ethnic differences. Such an approach was later mirrored in the regulations included in the Constitution of 1935. In the first article of the Constitution the Polish State was described as a common good of all citizens⁵. With the State assumed to be a common good, the authors of the Constitution saw no need to tackle - at least at the constitutional level - the problem of the ethnic minorities.

As for the inter-war period, minority policy can be said to have engrained in the hope for assimilating the aspirations of national minorities into the idea of "modern nation building" (which was contradictory) or (after 1926) "modern state building"⁶. As a matter

⁴ *Ustawa z dnia 17 marca 1921 r. Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w: Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Fundamental Statute dated the seventeenth of March, 1921. The Constitution of the Polish Republic: Law Gazette for the Polish Republic) (1921), No 44, Entry 267.*

⁵ *Ustawa z dnia 23 kwietnia 1935 r. Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w: Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Fundamental Statute dated the twenty-third of April, 1935. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland: Law Gazette for the Polish Republic) (1935), No 30, Entry 227.*

⁶ That is why Andrzej Chojnowski is absolutely right in concluding his research on the relations between the Polish State and the ethnic minorities with a remark that there was no chance of overcoming national antagonisms in the socio-economic reality of the Second Republic. A.

of fact, it was only a circle of the adherents of Marshal Józef Piłsudski and - it needs to be added, in the period limited to the years 1918-1921 - that took into consideration the eventuality of the Polish assistance in the process of forming separate national states satisfying ambitions of those non-Polish nations that had once inhabited the pre-partitioned Poland. The conclusion of the treaty of Riga (21 III 1921) putting an end to a war between the Soviet Russia and Poland marked the abandoning of all the plans for creating political organisms separating Poland from the Soviet State, which in turn meant that Poland had been left with no other option but to incorporate territories where the Poles were in the minority. The final delineation of the Polish borders along the lines of 1921 (which were recognized by an international community in 1923) necessitated the recognition of one-third of the non-Polish population as Polish citizens. The Polish elites were quite aware that such a development was likely to result in the representatives of national minorities oscillating between loyalty, indifference, and hostility to the Polish State.

The Ukrainians were a group that caused most problems for the Polish administration. Separatist tendencies were the strongest among them and they took the lead in the acts of violence directed against both the representatives of the Polish elites as well as against ordinary Poles. The fact that Poland failed to meet the obligations incurred during the Polish-Soviet war was used by the Ukrainians as a pretext for anti-government action. Cultural autonomy, the freedom of speech or political rights did not suffice to satisfy their ambitions and discourage them from carrying out violent acts⁷. The extremist actions such as the assassinations of the Vice-Chairman of the Polish parliament Tadeusz Hołowko (1931) and Minister of Internal Affairs Bolesław Pieracki (1934) or the assaults on the villages situated near the Soviet border with the majority of the Polish population made it necessary for the government to react firmly. In response to the acts of terror the government decided to conduct military "pacification" of the eastern parts of Poland, which had the effect of significantly deteriorating the living conditions of the Ukrainians⁸.

Chojnowski, *Koncepcje polityki narodowościowej rządów polskich w latach 1921-1939 (The Conceptions of National Minorities Policy of the Polish Governments in the Years 1921-1939)*, Wrocław 1979, p. 248.

⁷ The elites of the Ukrainian nationalists did not rely in their demands on the so-called Piłsudski-Petlura agreement (June, 21, 1920) as it included provisions putting a great stress upon the protection of the Polish property in the future Ukrainian State and upon equal rights of both nations. More often they called for carrying into effect the bill passed by the Polish Parliament (September, 26, 1922) concerning local self-government in the Eastern provinces of Lwów, Tarnopol and Stanisławów. Under the bill, the local legislative body was to be made up of two separate houses – Polish and Ukrainian. Furthermore, Polish authorities were under obligation to establish the Ukrainian University in Lwów and South-Eastern districts of Poland were not to be affected by the Polish colonization.

⁸ According to Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski the pacification of Poland Minor lasted 10 weeks - from September the 16th to November the 30th 1930. It started with the arrest of 30 former Ukrainian Deputies to the Polish Parliament and about hundred of the most active and harmful Ukrainian activists. The youth organization "Płast" controlled entirely by the terrorists was disbanded. These steps were followed by the shutting down of the three Ukrainian secondary schools in Rohatyn, Drohobycz and Tarnopol. The police restricted their actions to searching houses for weapons or for some links likely to help in detecting illegal organizations usually based in public reading rooms or cooperatives of various kind. The latter were usually run by young and educated abroad members of

Political terrorism of the latter also led the authorities to set up a seclusion camp in Bereza Kartuska which was later made use of by the ruling camp for combating political opponents of every hue⁹.

The difficulties caused by the Jewish population were of a different nature and can be put down to two factors: 1) a reluctance to integrate into the whole society 2) high natural growth of the Jews¹⁰. Contrary to what is generally assumed, the Jews living in Poland were far from being as well-off as their brothers from Western Europe or from the US. Hence, the increase in the Jewish population, combined with a tendency to isolate oneself from the rest of the society, was a fact that contributed to the expansion of the areas of poverty in the Polish Republic, fostering conflicts between the Jews and the Poles. And with the Jewish elites reacting only half-heartedly to some Polish friendly gestures¹¹, the approval of a policy calculated to make the Jews integrate and live on a peaceful basis with the Poles was gradually giving way to a conviction that it was better-advised to help the program of the Jewish emigration¹².

The Byelorussian minority occupied the least place in the Polish politics. The reason for this was a low national self-awareness of the Bielorrussians themselves – the fact of which the Polish authorities were clearly aware¹³. It was believed that this group was

secret societies. If in carrying out their operations the police was disturbed in any way, then a more painful search was administered, which consisted in putting salt in sugar or spilling oil over flour in the shops. In doing this the police only copied the methods employed by the Ukrainians. The policemen resorted to beating only when resisted with the use of force. After September the 16th, the troops intervened only to prevent the Ukrainians from carrying out the acts of violence. At the request of a governor, military authorities sent in the cavalry to a disturbed region. For a few days up to a few weeks, the population was required to billet soldiers and provide hay and clover for horses. This duty was usually accompanied by bothersome police searches. No single shot was fired for the whole duration of the pacification. Beating was the only punishment suffered by those who attempted the armed resistance. No Ukrainian building and no single haystack was set on fire, even though that was exactly the method of action employed by the Ukrainians. W. Pobóg-Malinowski, *Najnowsza historia polityczna Polski (okres 1914-1939) (Political History of Poland. The Period 1914-1939)*, t. 2, Gdańsk 1990, pp. 726-727.

⁹ See. I. Polit, *Miejsce odosobnienia w Berezie Kartuskiej w latach 1934-1939 (The Isolation Place in Bereza Kartuska in the Years 1934-1939)*, Toruń 2003; W. Śleszyński, *Obóz odosobnienia w Berezie Kartuskiej (The Isolation Camp in Bereza Kartuska)*, Białystok 2003.

¹⁰ J. Tomaszewski, *Zarys dziejów Żydów w Polsce w latach 1018-1939 (The Outline of the History of the Jews in Poland 1018-1939)*, Warszawa 1990, pp. 36-38.

¹¹ In the years 1926-1931 the question of the citizenship of half a million of the Jews, who moved to Poland after the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution, was settled. Józef Piłsudski gave the Minister of Internal Affairs, Sławoj Składkowski, a clear order to grant these Jews the Polish passports. "Poland – said Piłsudski – cannot afford to have a few hundred thousands of dissatisfied and second-class citizens who are highly likely to hate the country of their residence". A. Adamczyk, *Generał Sławoj Felicjan Składkowski (1885-1962) Zarys biografii politycznej (General Sławoj Felicjan Składkowski (1885-1962). Political Biography. The Outline)*, Toruń 2001, p. 172.

¹² B. Miedziński, *Uwagi o sprawie żydowskiej (Remarks on the Jewish Question)*, Warszawa 1938.

¹³ According to Waldemar Paruch, his fact made the authorities willing to treat Byelorussians as a transitional group and not as a fully formed nation. W. Paruch, *Od konsolidacji państwowej do konsolidacji narodowej. Mniejszości narodowe w myśli politycznej obozu piłsudczykowskiego 1926-1939 (From the State to National Consolidation. National Minorities in the Political Thought of the Piłsudski's Camp 1926-1939)*, Lublin 1997, p. 209.

highly unlikely to become the source of any serious problems¹⁴. The same, however, cannot be said of the German question a special complexity of which resulted from the necessity of meeting the obligations incurred by Poland right after the regaining of an independent State.

b) International environment and the policy towards minorities

All the problems which the Polish authorities had with the German minority did not stem simply from the fact that there was a great number of Germans resident in the Polish Republic. Not only were they thought of as a creative and useful element but they were also considered to be generally loyal to the Polish State¹⁵. The core of the problem lay in the instrumental use of the minority question by the Weimar Republic and later by the Third Reich. The so-called small treaty of Versailles gave Germany the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Poland if these pertained to minority situation¹⁶. With the Polish Foreign Minister Józef Beck denouncing the treaty (13 IX 1934), this meddling was brought to an end. By this act the western neighbor of Poland was given to understand that Poland put a free hand in shaping its minority policy ahead of a long diplomatic haggling aimed at securing some concession to Poles staying abroad¹⁷. The refusal to honor the treaty just mentioned was also a clear signal to others; for it needs to be said that not only did the politicians of the Weimar Republic aid and abet the German minority in the acts directed against the Polish authorities but they also egged the Ukrainians on to follow suit.

In formulating its minority policy the Polish government was forced to take into consideration the plans and intentions of the Eastern neighbor of Poland. Taking advantage of the Communist cells existing in Poland the Soviet government tried to destabilize the internal situation in the Polish Republic by instigating the Ukrainians, Byelorussians and the Jews to carry out anti-Polish acts. The Poles considered the threat posed by the Soviets to be more harmful than the one posed by the Germans¹⁸.

¹⁴ *Stenograficzne sprawozdanie 12 posiedzenia Sejmu RP* (9 II 1931) (*Stenographic record of the twelve session of the Polish Parliament* (February, 9, 1931))

¹⁵ Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, Protokoły posiedzeń Rady ministrów, sygn. 34, k. 478. Protokół z 28 posiedzenia RM w dniu 18 VIII 1926 r, s. 2. (The Modern Record Office in Warsaw, Presidium of the Cabinet, The Minutes of the Cabinet Sessions, Sign. 34, Col. 478. The Minute of the 28th Session on the 18th of August 1926)

¹⁶ The small treaty of Versailles was imposed upon the States that emerged after the First World War. Poland as one of those states was not allowed to invoke reciprocity principle and call for respecting the rights of the Poles resident in the countries of the so-called Vienna Order of 1815 (the Weimar Republic among others)

¹⁷ M. Mroczo, *Polska myśl zachodnia 1918-1939. Kształtowanie i upowszechnianie* (*The Polish „Western Thought”. Its Crystallization and Promulgation*), Poznań 1986, p. 271.

¹⁸ The reverse situation should also be mentioned. The Polish policy towards the Soviet Union also involved the so-called Promethean program which was to consist in the attempts to detach from the Soviet Union its national minorities and help them build their own states. This idea was designed to weaken the Russian influence in the Baltic area, central Asia, the Caucasus, and to form a buffer zone separating Poland from the Soviet Union. W. Bączkowski, *Prometeizm polski* (*the Polish Promethean Movement*), Warszawa brw; S. Mikulicz, *Prometeizm w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej* (*The Promethean Movement in the policy of the Second Republic*) Warszawa 1971; T. Schaezel,

c) national minorities in the Polish political conceptions

The minority problem was inherently bound up with two political conceptions that emerged at the dawn of an independence and contained different visions of what territorial shape the resurgent Poland should take on. The fundamental issue that had to be addressed by the authors of both conceptions was that of the security of the reborn Poland – both internal and external. The so-called incorporation program created by the leader of the Polish nationalists, Roman Dmowski, endorsed the idea of building an ethnically homogenous Polish State. As far as territorial issues were concerned, the Polish nationalists called for incorporating all the territories in which Poles constituted the majority of the whole population - plus some areas to which Poland could lay claims invoking the so-called historical rights. Leaving outside Poland the areas where Poles were considerably outnumbered by the representatives of other nations was to guarantee the possibility of building a coherent state organism and rule out the necessity of struggling with the separatist movements in the future. A different view was held by the Piłsudski's adherents supporting the federation program. In addition to the idea of creating small nation States federated with Poland – States which were supposed to form a bulwark separating Poland from the Soviet Russia, the proponents of this conception thought of achieving maximal objectives by planning to resuscitate the First Polish Republic (that is the one that had ceased to exist following the partitions taking place in the latter half of the 18 century). It was obvious that the projected State which the adherents of the federation program wanted to create was of course to include ethnic minorities - the latter were even considered to be a desirable element in the reemerging Poland. In this conception Poland was to derive strength from its demographic potential regarded as a real asset in the possible conflict with one of the two aggressive neighbors¹⁹.

The divisions between the supporters and the opponents of the idea of living on a peaceful basis with the ethnic minorities within one State crystallized in the period 1918-1921 prevailed until the mid-thirties. The rising tension in the international relations towards the end of the 30s made it of course necessary to pay some attention to the problem of the ethnic minorities but gave rise to no new phenomena²⁰ concerning minority question which would be worthy of separate analysis.

Racja stanu Polski na Wschodzie (the Polish Reason of State in the East), „Niepodległość” 1972, No VIII, pp. 225-249.

¹⁹ P. Bartosiewicz, *Polskie koncepcje geopolityczne w XX w.*, [w:] *Świat wokół Rzeczypospolitej. Problematyka zagraniczna w polskiej myśli politycznej w pierwszej połowie XX w. (The Polish Geopolitical Conceptions In the 20th Century w: The Word around The Polish Republic. The Problems of Foreign Policy in the Polish Political Thought in the First Half of the 20th Century)*. ed. by W. Paruch, K. Trembicka, Lublin 2007, pp. 36-42.

²⁰ Jacek Majchrowski, an expert in the political thought of the ruling camp indicates that the Polish elites had to address the Jewish question for demographic reasons, the German question because of the rising threat from the Third Reich, and the Slav minorities question due to their increasing emancipation demands. J Majchrowski, *Silni – zwarci gotowi. Myśl polityczna Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego (The Strong and the Ready. The Political Thought of the Camp for the National Unity)*, Warszawa 1985, p. 118.

2. THE PERIOD OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-1945

During the Second World War the problem of how to regain independence became again of crucial importance for all Poles. The problems concerning ethnic minorities had quite naturally moved to the margin of political considerations, which, however, does not mean that they stopped being dealt with altogether. During the war, minority problems were paid attention to in the context of the discussion of a more general question of how to organize social and political realm after the war had come to an end. The Polish leaders stressed the need to grant national minorities the right to develop their cultural activity and secure for them the freedom of religious practice provided the representatives of minority groups remained law-abiding citizens of the Polish State. The German minority, however, was excluded from this offer, which – considering atrocities committed by the Germans during the war – was hardly surprising. It was demanded that the Germans as bearing responsibility for the suffering of the Polish people, should be forced to leave Poland and their property should be confiscated. Despite the Holocaust, the future of the Jewish minority also became the object of the controversy. Some political circles wanted the Polish government to do its best to enable the Jews to emigrate. Most, however, opted for putting off the discussion of the problem till the restoration of an independent State²¹.

A more detailed stance on the minority problem crystallized gradually following the successive announcements of the decisions arrived at during the conferences held in Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. The representatives of the Great Powers decided that the German population would be compulsorily displaced from the areas to be incorporated to Poland. At the same time the Poles expected to settle the areas abandoned by the Germans were to be expelled from the Eastern provinces of the pre-war Poland (this displacement was referred to as a “willing repatriation”) – now, to be annexed by the Soviet Union. In taking the crucial decisions, the leaders of the Great Powers passed over in silence the non-Polish, mainly Ukrainian, minority living in the Polish East before the outbreak of the war. The Polish elites, however, could not ignore the fact that the Polish State had been robbed of more than half of its pre-war territory and that 3 million of its citizens had been put under the foreign jurisdiction. Even the changes in the sentiments of the national minorities²² discerned during the war - often put down to a wrong-headed minority policy carried out in the inter-war period - could not account for and justify so heavy a blow which Poland suffered because of the decisions made by the Great Powers. The Poles, it might be added here, were convinced that mutual relations between the Poles and the

²¹ Such an approach was characteristic of the representatives of the pre-war ruling camp. They predicted that with the war over the Jews were likely to play an important and secret role in the peace negotiations. That is why they considered the espousal of the idea of equal rights for the Jews to be indispensable for tactical reasons. They stressed that *ignoring this problem will not make it disappear from the Polish life but will be interpreted as an indication of the Polish hidden anti-Semitism to which the Poles do not want to own up*. Józef Piłsudski Institute of London, col. Uchodźstwo, sygn. 36, dok. 25, k. 5.

²²On the one hand the Polish politicians indicated that a greater part of the Ukrainian elites remained loyal to Poland during the German invasion but on the other hand the Poles also pointed out that the Ukrainians attacked the Polish population – especially in the district of Wołyń. These acts were accounted for by the abetting influence of the Germans and by the activity of the “Bolshevik fifth column”.

Ukrainians were likely to be improved soon as it was in the interest of both nations to defend themselves against the “benefits” of the Soviet occupation²³.

3. THE PERIOD OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF POLAND (PRL), 1945 – 1989

At the time when Poland remained a satellite of the USSR the problem of national minorities did not bother the communist authorities in any particular manner. The effects of social-mechanisms that were decided in Yalta and Potsdam caused Poland, existing within the post 1945 borders, to become a mono-ethnic state. The factors that determined it were as follows: 1/ the Nazi Holocaust which nearly occasioned the total physical annihilation of the Polish Jews community; 2/ displacement of the Germans from the lands granted to Poland, likewise from the territory of Hungary and Czechoslovakia²⁴; 3/ the lack of choice of a “new mother country” among Ukrainian, Byelorussians, and Lithuanian people, and automatic ascription of Soviet nationality to the former citizens of the Republic of Poland those of Slavic but non-Polish descent; 4/ settlement of the expelled Poles from behind the eastern border into the so-called “Recovered Territories”. However, it did not mean that the communist leaders did not try to solve the nationality issues instrumentally. During the so-called “Vistula Action”²⁵ the PRL government dislocated about 150 000 thousands of Ukrainians, Lemkos and Boykos, inhabiting the Polish-Slovak borders in the Beskid Niski range, into western and northern regions of Poland. It is a fact that the Polish authorities did not hesitate to use anti-Semitic slogans to disentangle the significant social problems²⁶, consequently generating the exodus of Polish citizens of Jewish descent²⁷.

As will be argued below the basis for the conclusions on the transformations occurring in the Poland’s demographic profile (especially for the comparative research in comparison with the interwar period) is provided through the use of the statistical data, particularly information obtained from the census reports. Since the end of World War II seven censuses were conducted by the Central Statistical Office in Poland²⁸. The National Censuses that were carried out during the years 1950-1988 did not take into consideration the questions of nationality and language²⁹ and hence their value still remains a matter of discussion.

²³ S. Mękariski, „Przykuci tańcuchem do jednej galery” („Chained to a Single Galley”), „Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza”, No 14 (16 I 1946), p. 3; St. M-i, *Wspólna dola (Common Fate)*, „Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza”, No 277 (23 XI 1946), p. 2.

²⁴ T. Urban, *Utracone ojczyzny (The Lost Motherlands)*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 120-123.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 175-179.

²⁶ For the problem see K Kersten, *Pogrom Żydów w Kielcach 4 lipca 1946 (The Pogrom of the Jews in Kielce July 4th 1946)*, Warszawa 1996; T. Kowalik, „Pogrom kielecki” w *historiografii polskiej (the Kielce Pogrom in the Polish Historiography)*, Kraków 2007; Wokół pogromu kieleckiego (*On the Kielce Pogrom*), ed. by L Bukowski, A. Jankowski, Warszawa 2008.

²⁷ J. Eisler, *Polski rok 1968 (The Polish Year of 1968)*, Warszawa 2006; P. Oseka, *Marzec '68 (March '68)*, Kraków 2008.

²⁸ The Main Statistical Office carried out the following censuses: the summary census of the population - 14th February 1946 and National Censuses: December 3 1950, 6th December 1960, 8th December 1970, 7th December 1978, 6th December 1988, 21st May-8th June 2002.

²⁹ J. Żarnowski (rev.) A Gawryszewski, *Ludność Polski w XX wieku (the Polish Population in the 20th century)*, „Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych” 2006, Vol. LXVI, p. 209.

It is generally accepted that in the post-war period the creation of harmonious development on behalf of national minorities did not constitute a major interest of the communist authorities. Nevertheless, they attempted to construct the image of themselves as being the protectors of the rights of national and ethnic minority inhabitants.³⁰ More importantly, however, the strengthening of Polish state in respect of national homogeneity was one of the chief postulates of the Government of the Polish People's Republic.³¹ Practically, the communist interests in national minorities were limited to the issuance of permits and reglamentation of the privileges that allow those specified groups to cultivate their own separateness. Even in such cases the main motive of action was to confine strictly the indications of minorities's activity and to create the possibilities for supervising them and intervention should the occasion arise³².

One has to be aware that the Polish elites of the post-war emigration were concerned with the minority issues in a broader sense as well. In their view it was the nationality question that constituted the essence of struggle for the sovereign Poland together with the regaining of territorial *status quo ante bellum*. Therefore, the Polish political emigrees demanding Poland's return to the former Riga border were forced to raise the issue of coexistence with the alien ethnic groups. Their main program's slogan was to reject all attempts reducing the nationality questions toward realization of the idea of Piast Poland, created to meet the demands of communist propaganda. This concept was interpreted only as a formula imposed by PRL authorities to justify the abandonment of claims to the Polish eastern lands. Nevertheless, the idea of Piast Poland was respectively balanced by another factor; namely the conception of Jagiellonian Poland. As far it was concerned, this idea framed as a tool for contending, questioned the alleged historical arguments addressed to the formation of Poland's national state³³. Although the political circles in exile were thoroughly aware of the mistakes committed by the Polish people in the age of independence, they understood the truth that previously existing tensions and antagonisms

³⁰ H. Bojar, *Mniejszości społeczne w państwie i społeczeństwie III Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Social Minorities in the Third Republic of Poland)*, Wrocław 2000, p. 80-96.

³¹ W. Choruży, *Białoruski drugi obieg w Polsce 1981-1990 (The Byelorussian Second Press-Circulation in Poland 1981-1990)*, Białystok 1994, pp. 19-22. Quite characteristically, the communist authorities that declared atheism to be among their ideological fundamentals applied religious criteria when trying to differentiate the Poles from the non-Poles.

³² J. Kiliński, *Symbole narodowe i problemy narodowościowe w polityce polskiej (National Symbols and Nationality Problems in the Polish Politics)* [in:] J. Wiatr, J. Raciborski, J. Bartkowski, B. Frątczak-Rudnicka, J. Kiliński, *Demokracja polska 1989-2003 (The Polish Democracy 1989-2003)*, Warszawa 2003, p. 310.

³³ Émigré circles argued it was out of the question to state categorically that Poland throughout its thousand years of history was as a state an ethnically homogenous organism. What can be said, they claimed, is that from the 14th century onwards Poland certainly was not a mono-ethnic state. What is more, no single part of Poland can be considered to have ever been nationally homogenous in the contemporary sense of the term. The Jagiellonian Poland comprising the Poles, the Lithuanians and the Ruthenians formed the same commonwealth as the United Kingdom comprising the Englishmen, the Scots and the Wales. The émigré authors indicated that even the partitions - that might be expected to lead to the destruction of all former bonds - failed to shatter cultural cohesiveness of multinational community which turned out to be stronger than the rising nationalisms and separatist tendencies. *Rada narodowa czy państwowa (National or State Council)*, "Listy z Londynu" (Letters from London) No 6/80 (11 IV 1945), pp. 4-5.

were the result of inspiration directed toward the Polish statehood by her external enemies. Considering that fact the representatives of the Polish emigrant elites indicated that ethnic arguments turned out to be not a sufficient reason in regard to the so-called "Curzon Line". According to them removing the Polish people behind that demarcation line did not create a panacea for Poland's national malady³⁴.

4. THE PERIOD OF NEW INDEPENDENT POLAND, 1989-2009

The National Census, already conducted in the Third Republic of Poland, showed that the national and ethnic minority residents in Poland constituted 1.23% of the entire population for 471 500 have declared themselves as belonging to national status other than Polish. As for the remaining 2.03% (774 000) they did not define their national affiliation³⁵. According to data provided by the Central Statistical Offices Poland is inhabited by the representatives of nine national minorities that include Belarusians, Czechs, Lithuanians, Germans, Armenians, Russians, Slovaks, Ukrainians and Jews. There are also four ethnic groups in Poland consisted of Karaites, Lemkos Roms and Tartars³⁶.

The political transformation in Poland in 1989 brought the essential reorientation of the Polish political system and also laid basis for implementation of fresh policy³⁷ with the new regulations toward national minorities and ethnic groups³⁸. The most important documents regulating the legal status in this field comprise the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the Electoral Law, the Association Act, the Act on the Polish Language, the Education System Act, the Radio and Television Act, Penal Code, the Code of Administrative Proceeding, of Civil Proceeding, of Criminal Proceeding, Personal Data Protection Act and the Regulations by the Minister of National Education.

The legal status concerning the national and ethnic minority inhabitants in Poland was temporarily modified by the Small Constitution of 1992. The final law regulations on the constitutional level, especially the guarantees in the scale of preservation of own identity, was granted by the virtue of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997³⁹. The detailed questions in the sphere of national minorities' rights are secured by numerous acts, decrees, regulations and circulars issued by central and local governments.

It is worth mentioning that the national minorities in Poland possess guaranteed political rights including the prerogative to own representation in the Polish Parliament.

³⁴ R. Habielski, *Polski Londyn 1945 r (The Polish London 1945)*, „Dzieje Najnowsze” 2005, No 4, p. 68.

³⁵ According to National Census the Poles make up 96% of the whole population. Details on the percentage of particular minorities living in Poland can be found in J. Kiliński, *op. cit.*, s. 310-311.

³⁶ For more details see the government website: http://www.mswia.gov.pl/portal/pl/112/WYZN_RELIGIJNE_I_MN_NARODOWE.html.

³⁷ R. Kuźniar, *Droga do wolności. Polityka zagraniczna III Rzeczypospolitej (The Road to Freedom. The Foreign Policy of The Third Republic of Poland)*, Warszawa 2008, pp.18-28.

³⁸ H. Bojar, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-116.

³⁹ National and ethnic minorities are dealt with in the art. 35 that reads: *the Republic of Poland grants the Polish citizens belonging to national and ethnic minorities the freedom of sustaining and developing their own language, the freedom of sustaining customs, tradition and developing their own culture. National minorities have the right to set up their own cultural and educational institutions with a view to protecting their religious and cultural identity.*

By the virtue of the Electoral Law of the Polish Sejm and Senate⁴⁰ all national and ethnic minority groups have the privilege to submit their own electoral registers. Besides, their election committees, formed by the national minority organizations, are exempt from the requirements of passing the 5% election threshold. The real presence of the national minorities's delegates in the Polish Parliament represents a consequence of the previously passed resolutions⁴¹.

The national minorities are entitled to additional rights by virtue of the Education System Act⁴², the Radio and Television Act⁴³ and the Act on the Polish Language⁴⁴. Considering the first Act it follows that schools and other educational institutions are required to provide a mother tongue education to each minority group, and also offer them facilities to gain extended knowledge on their own native culture and history. In that way the certain conditions for crystallization and propagation of national, ethnic, language and religious identity are built. The autonomous ordinances of the Minister of National Education regulate the questions of minority kindergartens, schools and other public institutions for the national minorities⁴⁵. They also define the methods of educational

⁴⁰ *Act of Law dated 12th April 2001. Act on Elections to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and to the Senate of the Republic of Poland: Law Gazette 2007, No 190, E. 1360; Law Gazette of the Polish Republic 2008, No 171, Entry 1056.* The questions concerning national minorities are regulated by the articles 134 and 135 of the Act:

Art. 134 Electoral committees made up of members of registered national minorities organizations may have their electoral lists exempted from the provision mentioned in section 1 of the article 133, if they notify the National Electoral Commission about their intention to do so not later than 5 days before the Election Day. Along with the notification, mentioned in the first sentence, the committee is required to present a document issued by the respective statutory body of the organization confirming the formation of the committee by the voters-members of this organization. The National Electoral Commission has to confirm without delay that it has received the notification mentioned in section 1. The confirmation is binding.

Art 135. If the condition prescribed in the article 133 section 1 is met by the candidate lists of no election committee or one of the conditions is met by the candidate lists of only one election committee, then it is the lists of only those election committees that have received at least 3% of the votes nationwide that are taken into consideration in allotting seats in Parliament. The candidate lists of election committees established by political coalitions will be taken into consideration in allotting seats in Parliament if they manage to get at least 5% of all votes.

⁴¹ In the current Parliament there is one representative of Byelarussian minority who was elected on the Left and Democrats ticket, one representative of German minority who won his seat on the German minority ticket and one representative of the Ukrainian minority who ran on the Civic Platform ticket.

⁴² *Act of Law dated 7th September 1991 on the education system: Law Gazette of the Polish Republic 1991, No 173, Entry 1808.*

⁴³ *Act of Law dated 29th December 1992 on Radio and Television: Law Gazette of the Polish Republic 1992, No 253, Entry 2531.*

⁴⁴ *Act of law dated 7th October 1999 on the Polish language: Law Gazette of the Polish Republic 1999, no 90, Entry 999.*

⁴⁵ *Order of the Minister of Education dated 14th November 2007 on conditions and methods to be employed by kindergartens, schools, and public institutions in performing specific tasks with a view to enabling minority students to preserve their ethnic language and national identity: Law Gazette of the Polish Republic 2007, No 214, Entry 1579.*

process and teachers' requirements⁴⁶, specify the issues of budget subsidies⁴⁷ and adjust the core curriculum matters⁴⁸. The Radio and Television Act in turn ensures that the needs of national minorities in public radio stations and television are met. In regard to the provisions of the Act on the Polish Language (which constitutes a nucleus of the regulations of Ministry of Interior and Administration concerning national or ethnic minority residents living in organized and compact communities) one can emphasize that it allows using the Polish language together with the mother tongue within the minority communities. It can be applied to the public assemblies and utilizing native language in context of the ethnic proper names⁴⁹.

The issues concerning ethnic and national minorities have been settled in Penal Code⁵⁰, Personal Data Protection Act⁵¹ and mostly in Act on National and Ethnic Minorities⁵². According to the articles of the Penal Code every racially or ethnically motivated crime is liable to penalty. As for the Personal Data Protection Act it prohibits data transformation revealing ethnic origins of the citizens. Needless to say, the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and on Regional Language possesses the widest range of application. First of all it defines the term in regard to the national and ethnic minority. Furthermore, it states that *every person belonging to a national minority shall have the rights to decide freely about being treated as belonging or not belonging to a minority, and the relevant choice or the enjoyment or non-enjoyment of the related rights shall not entail any adverse effects*. The Act also stipulates that *no-one shall be obligated, unless by virtue of a law, to reveal information on his/her belonging to a minority, origin, minority language or religion*. In the light of the act, any measures leading to the assimilation are forbidden to use against the will of people, who belongs to a particular minority. By the virtue of the law, it is also prohibited to undertake any operations aiming at deforming the national or ethnic proportions in the territories inhabited by national minorities. It appears from the interpreted provisions that *no-one shall be obligated to prove his/her belonging*

⁴⁶ Order of the Minister of National Education dated 30th April 2007 on conditions and methods to be employed in evaluating, classifying and promoting students and in carrying out tests and exams in public schools: *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2004, No 199, Entry 2046; *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2005, No 74, Entry 649; *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2005, No 108, Entry 905; *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2005, No 218, Entry 1840; *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2006, No 10, Entry 964.

⁴⁷ Order of the Minister of National Education issued each December on the method to be employed in distributing educational subsidies among territorial self-government units during a given budget year.

⁴⁸ Order of the Minister of National Education dated 23rd August 2007 changing the order on pre-school education programs and general education programs offered by various types of schools.

⁴⁹ Order of the Minister of Internal Affairs dated 18th March 2002 on the cases in which Polish names and texts are permitted to be accompanied by their translations into foreign languages: *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2002, No 37, Entry 349. The order says nothing of bilingual names for towns and villages – this question requires separate regulations.

⁵⁰ Act of Law dated 6th June 1997. Penal Code: *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 1997, No 88, Entry 553.

⁵¹ Act of Law dated 29th August 1997 on personal data protection: *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 1997, No 133, Entry 883. Personal data processing which may result in the disclosing of ethnic descent is prohibited – except for a few clearly defined situations.

⁵² Act of Law dated 6th January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language: *Law Gazette of the Polish Republic* 2005, No 62, Entry 550.

to a given minority. Another paragraph of the act permits the national minorities to use their own language as a mother tongue. Such possibility may be anticipated in the territory of "gmina" where the particular ethnic group exists. It should be stressed that the minority language assumes a form of auxiliary communication and plays a significant role in maintaining relations and contacts with the local governments and court authorities. The Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and the Act on the Polish Language grant permission to every national or ethnic minority resident to use native language in regard to the geographical nomenclature of Poland. The regulations are applied to physiographic objects, localities, authorities and likewise in case of street names. The statute also guarantees the minority rights to official recording of surnames and first names with application to the rules of native language. From the context of the Act, it is evident that the administrative bodies are obligated to support national and ethnic minority activities in the sphere of security, preservation and development of cultural identity. For this purpose the authorities may undertake every kind of measures including privilege to granting destination-based subsidies. By the virtue of law the advisory and consultative body to the Prime Minister was established under the name of the "Joint Commission of Government and National and Ethnic Minorities"⁵³.

Any issues related to the national and ethnic minority culture were excluded from the competence of the Minister of Culture and subjected to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration. Under the Department of Denominations and National and Ethnic Minorities of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration two government bodies were appointed to deal with the nation and ethnic minorities affairs. In January 2000, the National Minorities Division was installed and in January 2005, Team for Culture of National Minorities was created.

The work on elaboration of the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Language in Poland occupied fifteen years. Poland's accession to the EU proved to be an impulse accelerating these efforts. The provisions of European law regulate the issues long since implemented concerning the displaying of minority language inscriptions and signs and the functioning of the minority mother tongues as the auxiliary languages in contacts with local authorities. According to a decree of the Minister of National Education and Sports the guarantees for the national and ethnic minority students were significantly enforced. The pupils were provided with unrestricted access to learning the language of their ancestors, and to acquire information about history, culture and geography of their native countries. The key element adjusting Poland to European legal system was the adoption of the European Race Equality Directive, which obligates its signatories to transpose anti-discriminative clauses into Polish law.

The Polish accession to the European Union (May 1, 2004) signified that Poland automatically has committed itself to observe the rules of the European legal system referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to its first paragraph *all people are born free and equal in their dignity and their laws*. In Europe the most important document regulating laws of national minorities is *Framework Convention for*

⁵³ The Commission made up of both the representatives of the Polish Government and national and ethnic minorities was formed under the article 23 section 1 of the *Act of Law dated 6th January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language*.

*the Protection of National Minorities*⁵⁴, including program directions for all Member States. Poland also has signed the European Charter for Regional or Minorities Languages⁵⁵. The provisions concerning rights of particular national minority have been included in bilateral treaties that were signed by Poland with her all neighbors⁵⁶.

The Polish constitution and two primary European Union's documents have formed present foundation of national minorities' rights. This legal system concerning minorities is further complemented by a series of conventions which Poland decided to ratify. These are: Convention for the Protection of human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of November 4th 1950, International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination of 7th March 1966⁵⁷, Convention of the Rights of the Child of November 20th 1989⁵⁸.

According to Hanna Bojar, a state's attitude towards minorities is best seen in legal guarantees of civil equality and the right which minorities are given to preserve their own ethnic identity⁵⁹. Considering the fact that Poland guarantees a wide range of rights and tries to ensure a free development of national minorities, one is in a position to arrive at the conclusion that the ethnic Poles get on rather well with the representatives of minority groups. One is also justified in saying that some sensitivity to the needs and the interests of national minorities, along with the efforts to put all the relations with them on a peaceful basis, enabled the Polish State to co-operate even more closely with its neighbors, thus staving off a possible conflict that might break out for ethnic reasons⁶⁰.

⁵⁴ Poland ratified Convention on the Protection of National Minorities signed in Strasburg on January the 1st 1995. Under the Convention all parties consider themselves bound by the obligation to guarantee equality before the law and the security of legal protection to all persons belonging to national minorities. They also obligate themselves to help national minorities develop their culture and preserve key elements of their identity - religion, language and cultural heritage. Poland signed the document in 1995 ratifying it on November the 10th 2000.

⁵⁵ On May the 12th 2003 the Third Republic of Poland became a party to *European Card of Regional or Minority Languages*.

⁵⁶ After 1989 Poland signed 13 bilateral treaties (including all its neighbors) referring to minority questions. Bilateral treaties contained provisions concerning legal position of minorities, appeals to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The treaties also included provisions regulating rights and duties of minorities in respective countries. H. Bojar, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108.

⁵⁷ Provisions concerning the rights of ethnic, religious, and language minorities are included in the article 27 of the Convention. W. Góralczyk, S. Sawicki, *Prawo międzynarodowe publiczne w zarysie (The Outline of International Public Law)*, Warszawa 2000; R. Kuźniar, *Prawa człowieka. Prawo. Instytucje, stosunki międzynarodowe (Human Rights. Law, Institutions, International Relations)*, Warszawa 2000.

⁵⁸ For more information on the acts of international law mentioned in the above see: R. Bierzanek, J. Simonides, *Prawo międzynarodowe publiczne (International Public Law)*, Warszawa 2005, pp. 269-274, 278-280.

⁵⁹ H. Bojar, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁶⁰ Interdependence between the interests of minorities and those of the whole political community has been rightly elucidated by Jennifer Jackson Preece who said that the best thing that can be expected of minority rights is a delineation of legal and moral boundaries within which some difficult choices can be made. J.J. Preece, *Prawa Mniejszości (Minority Rights)*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 10, 28-32.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly, the relations between the ethnic Poles and national minorities were among the most difficult problems the Polish state was facing in the inter-war period. The problem remained unsolved for the whole of that time. The reasons for this were twofold. On one hand, the representatives of minority groups often showed reluctance to develop friendly relations with the Poles, and on the other, the Polish political circles used to treat the whole question instrumentally. Paradoxically, the problem ceased to exist with the Poles having no hand in solving it. It was the leaders of the Great Powers that took decisions turning Poland into an ethnically homogenous state. Actually Stalin stood behind all the decisions concerning Poland. He treated the Polish question as only a part of his wide plans the realization of which resulted in reducing the whole Eastern Europe to subjugation. An independent Poland that emerged again in 1989 turned to be free from any serious problems as regards minorities – owing this fact to the ethnic displacements taking place in the late 40s. The contemporary democratic Poland did not encounter much difficulties in developing good relations with the ethnic minorities (no doubt their small number made the task easier). The accession to the EU made it necessary for Poland to meet the European requirements concerning the minorities protection system, which only further accelerated the settlement of the problem in question.

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MNIEJSZOŚCI NARODOWE W POLITYCE POLSKIEJ. PRZESZŁOŚĆ I STAN OBECNY

Kwestia koegzystencji mniejszości narodowych z polską większością przed 1939 r. stanowiła jedną z głównych, nierozwiązanych problemów, przed którymi stanęło Państwo Polskie. Zdecydowały o tym zarówno niechęć przedstawicieli elit poszczególnych narodowości do ułożenia stosunków z Polakami, jak i instrumentalne podejście do zagadnienia ze strony polskich środowisk politycznych. Sytuacja mniejszości uległa pogorszeniu wraz z kursem nacjonalistycznym przybranym przez obóz piłsudczykowski po śmierci Józefa Piłsudskiego. Paradoksalnie, kwestia mniejszości w Polsce znalazła swe rozwiązanie bez udziału Polaków. O funkcjonowaniu Rzeczypospolitej jako homogenicznego państwa formalnie zdecydowali przywódcy Wielkiej Trójki, faktycznie zaś Stalin, traktujący kwestię polską jako marginalne zagadnienie w programie poddania Europy Środkowowschodniej hegemonii moskiewskiej. Przetasowania etniczne, dokonane w drugiej połowie lat czterdziestych i w początkach pięćdziesiątych XX wieku sprawiły, że gdy Polacy odzyskali zdolność decydowania o własnym państwie, problem mniejszości nie należał do zagadnień wzbudzających kontrowersje. Ułożenie harmonijnych relacji z zamieszkującymi Polskę grupami mniejszości narodowych i etnicznych (może ze względu na ich liczebność), nastąpiło stosunkowo szybko, a dodatkowym bodźcem dla zakończenia tego procesu była konieczność dostosowania systemu ochrony mniejszości do standardów unijnych w związku z przystąpieniem Polski do struktur unijnych. Świadomość współżycia z przedstawicielami innych narodów w warunkach jednego organizmu i w ramach istniejącego porządku prawnego może stanowić (i zapewne stanowi) inspirację dla kreowania wizji koegzystencji Polaków z innymi nacjami w strukturze Zjednoczonej Europy.

Słowa kluczowe: mniejszości narodowe, polityka wewnętrzna, koncepcje polityczne.

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