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WEST-POMERANIAN MEDIEVALISM: THE OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM

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1. INTRODUCTION

The subject matter of medievalism is the existence of elements of medieval culture in subsequent epochs. It was Agnieszka Kruszyńska who expressed the essence of the phenomenon: “I use the term «medievalism» to refer to the total use of medieval elements in contemporary culture”¹. In a more strict sense, medievalism may be defined as an area of research interest which is not a separate scientific discipline². As a result, it comprises a variety of research on the history of literature, art (including music, dance and theatre), architecture and urban studies along with the preservation of monumental buildings. In a broader sense, it also includes the awareness of the continuation of medieval religion, politics, or the economy. In fact, in each field of culture understood in broad terms there exist antecedents referring to the medieval period. The presence of elements from the past constitutes part of the present of each epoch.

Cultural medievalism appeared in the West as a phenomenon accompanying Romanticism. However, it did not merely mean romantic references to the Middle Ages or the commemoration of medieval times, but the generally accepted method of expressing contemporary ideas and problems with the use of medieval requisites. Architectural objects, paintings, sculptures, literature and the design of public ceremonies served this purpose. Generally speaking, the phenomenon could

¹ Agnieszka KRUSZYŃSKA, *Średniowieczność w literaturze i kulturze XX wieku. Propozycje badawcze*, Pultusk 2008, p. 16, comp. also p. 33.

² Comp. Maciej MICHAŁSKI, *Wokół definicji mediewalizmu*, Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka, vol. 66: 2011, no. 1, pp. 83–91; Andrzej DĄBRÓWKA, Maciej MICHAŁSKI, *Wstęp*, [in:] *Oblicza mediewalizmu*, ed. Andrzej DĄBRÓWKA, Maciej MICHAŁSKI, Poznań 2013, pp. 9–20 (here the review of the literature of the subject matter).

be interpreted as a search for the ideal anti-world for modern contemporaneity³. On the other hand, the medieval *imaginarium* could serve only as a formal basis to express the problems of the contemporary times. Medievalism could even be considered as a process of the continuous creation of the Middle Ages. It is not restricted exclusively to reproducing events from the medieval past. The essential part is the construction of cultural images of the epoch and references to it among specific societies and in defined times. Normally, such phenomena are shaped irrespective of historical science. Medievalism consists in using the medieval cultural heritage. In this way, the Arthurian myth was created for the creation of the British Empire, as were the Nordic myths and Old-German myths for the need to unite Germany⁴.

Historiographic medievalism remains only one of the types of the cultural forms of the phenomenon along with others such as the artistic, political or religious. However, in the cultural sphere the image of the Middle Ages is open to many interpretations, which is visible in the fantasy genre, in literature, films and computer games⁵.

A special type of medievalism is the commercial use of medieval requisites with the intention of raising the rank of contemporary programs in their various forms. What is taken into account is the possible ability of medievalism to soothe socio-political conflicts⁶. In historiography numerous cases are known when medieval references gave rise to general social debates. Historical references served to maintain the false pretences of being apolitical or neutral. Among such cases one can enumerate the competition between the apology of the Hohenstaufen Empire and the apology of the Empire of Otto's dynasty, which was conducted in German historiography during the times of the Second Reich⁷.

Medievalism appears in political sciences apparently in connection with the process of the European integration. According to Piotr Toczyski, "medievalism is an indicator of a several-hundred-year process of Europeanisation, particularly of the Europeanisation of culture". It serves to integrate collective images, "imagined associations of the present times with the past" on the basis of a mythologized picture of history or utopia⁸.

One of the concepts of the European integration was to refer to the structural phenomena which functioned in the Middle Ages in political, economic and cul-

³ Comp. Otto Gerhard OEXLE, *Vom „Staat“ zur „Kultur“ des Mittelalters. Problemgeschichten und Paradigmenwechsel in der deutschen Mittelalterforschung*, [in:] *Die Deutung der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft in der Moderne*, hrsg. v. Natalie M. FRYDE, Pierre MONNET, Otto Gerhard OEXLE, Leszek ZYGNER (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, Bd. 217), Göttingen 2006, pp. 15–60.

⁴ Piotr TOCZYSKI, *Jak mit jednoczy Europę? Analiza arturiańskich elementów kultury symbolicznej jako czynników spajających współczesną Europę*, Warszawa 2013, p. 61.

⁵ M. MICHAŁSKI, op.cit., pp. 106–107.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 107–108.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ P. TOCZYSKI, op.cit., pp. 9, 61.

tural terms. As says Jan Zielonka, “the first and main reason for the creation of the medieval model is an incredible increase in variety, which is the result of the last stage of extending the European Union”. According to the author of the cited extract, it could be defined as “the neo-medieval empire”. It would have the following features: relatively open borders, a marked division into the centre of the unified Europe and its peripheral territories along with “the diversified ranges of sovereignty in individual functional and territorial areas”. What is doubtful in the light of the medieval knowledge is the author’s assumption concerning the existence of “the co-existence of various cultural identities”. According to the author cited above, the medieval structure of the state differed from the Westphalian model for a super-state, which was characterised by “established and tight borders” and total sovereignty. In the continent there should exist “the dominance of the pan-European cultural identity”. The author stipulates the models suggested by him are treated “only as theoretical models and reference points, but not as the description of the historical process”. However, as he believes, “the medieval references would become a certain kind of indicator of the European integration”⁹.

Historiographic medievalism refers to the contribution of medieval historical writing in current social and political issues along with historical politics. This phenomenon is reflected in Pomeranian studies. The positivist concept of history made people believe in the possibility of establishing assumptions of eternal value. In contemporary times, the concept is clearly criticised in historical methodology. Here, it should be noted that medievalism as a cultural phenomenon could be perceived in opposition to the anthropological concept of man. Clifford Geertz puts forward a thesis according to which, in various spheres of life such as law or art, facts are socially constructed on the basis of what he metaphorically defined as “the locally imagined concept of life”. On their grounds the image of the world is created, the sense of which is established by description resulting from a tightened perspective. “In each of such places the knowledge, which is what is spoken about the world there, takes on a local shape. This fact might be obscured by ecumenical rhetoric or analyzed theoretically, but it is hard to omit it”. The local perspective “in a «special manner» troubles those who deal with the external reality, which permanently reveals the otherness”¹⁰. The knowledge is understood by the author cited above as a local symbolical universum. Science in this perspective is one of the cultural practices. As part of culture it should be an element of its symbolic systems.

The cultural locality does not mean the locality in reference to the place and time, but it results from the performance of culture which exists in the condition of variety, part of which is the otherness¹¹. “The scientific knowledge for Geertz

⁹ Jan ZIELONKA, *Europa jako imperium. Nowe spojrzenie na Unię Europejską*, transl. Anna MAZIARSKA, Jacek MAZIARSKI, Warszawa 2007, pp. 16 ff, 222 ff.

¹⁰ Clifford GEERTZ, *Wiedza lokalna. Dalsze eseje z zakresu antropologii interpretatywnej*, transl. Dorota WOLSKA, Kraków 2005, inter alia pp. 63 ff, 153 ff.

¹¹ Wojciech PIASEK, *Historia jako wiedza lokalna. „Antropologiczne przesunięcie” w badaniach nad historiografią PRL*, Toruń 2011, p. 19.

constitutes a certain special intellectual way of looking at life, of constructing and understanding the world. It is one of the perspectives different from religious or ordinary perceptions with the help of which a human builds their world¹².

Historiographic concepts concerning the Polish identity of Pomerania and its inseparable links with Poland, which were created by several generations of Polish historians, should be judged as a specific manner of constructing the world within the borders of the limited “local knowledge”. This point of view may refer to the historiography of the Polish People’s Republic, but its significance is far broader, for on its ground one may notice special characteristic features of medievalism as a set of ideas and collective beliefs in the postwar reality of Poland.

Historiographic medievalism may be considered in the category of the hermeneutic circle. The image of the subject we get to know is created on the basis of the general knowledge which refers to it. At the same time, the way of understanding the subject matter forms the foundation for the subject to formulate the knowledge about itself. Hence, the knowledge about the Middle Ages generated by historiography allows one to recognise the features of a historian, of some intellectual shape. Obviously, there exists a plethora of types of historical writings reflected in a variety of individual categories¹³.

2. THE PAST AND THE PRESENT TIMES

The remote past, not connected with memory, is perceived in terms of antiquity. It does not arouse such emotions as current events may. “Antiquity – as defined by Agnieszka Kruszyńska – is... a term, which does not have to be understood unambiguously¹⁴. As it is rightly pointed out, antiquity may be considered to be the opposition of the present times; and in this form it can be made present¹⁵. The very word “antiquity” has a subjective tone; that is why, one may speak about the phenomenon of “cultural antiquity”. It would be one of the forms of retrospection¹⁶

¹² Ibid., p. 72.

¹³ It is possible to indicate only the most important works: *Uniwersalny wymiar hermeneutyki*, ed. Andrzej PRZYŁĘBSKI, Poznań 1997; Marek SZULAKIEWICZ, *Filozofia jako hermeneutyka*, Toruń 2004; Andrzej PRZYŁĘBSKI, *Gadamer*, Warszawa 2006; Jean GRONDIN, *Wprowadzenie do hermeneutyki filozoficznej*, transl. Leszek ŁYSIEŃ, Wrocław 2007; Paweł DYBEL, *Granice rozumienia i interpretacji. O hermeneutyce Hansa-Georga Gadamera*, Kraków 2011.

¹⁴ A. KRUSZYŃSKA, op.cit., p. 70.

¹⁵ Marian WAŃCZOWSKI, *Dawność uobecniona (Na podstawie wiersza „Szyby” Ewy Lipskiej)*, [in:] *Dawność kulturowa w literaturach słowiańskich drugiej połowy XX wieku. Materiały konferencji naukowej, Opole 19–20 X 1993 r.*, ed. Marian KACZMAREK, Opole 1993, pp. 133–143.

¹⁶ The opinion by A. Kruszyńska (op.cit., p. 71), arises some doubts; she writes: „Proponuję tu oddzielenie dawności (rozumianej jako dawność kulturowa) od przeszłości, która może być przywoływaniem jakichkolwiek zdarzeń minionych [...] [“I suggest here separating antiquity (understood as cultural antiquity) from the past, which might be the recollection of any past events [...]” – transl. by Agnieszka Chabros]; „Przeszłość w przyjętym tu znaczeniu jest tym wszystkim, co kiedyś się wydarzyło, niezależnie od formy jej wspomniania i upamiętniania” [“The past in this meaning is first of all what happened sometime ago, irrespective of the form of its recollection and commemoration” – transl. by A.Ch.]”.

coexisting with other forms. The present in Poland's West Pomerania commenced in the middle of 1945¹⁷. This new beginning was the basis for the integration of the newly created communities; it became part of their identity, an object of commemoration. One should maintain detachment from the less and less common beliefs that the communities were the effect of the actions undertaken by the communist regime. The communist authorities noticed the usefulness of the social integrity for their own purposes, but members of the communities were far from cooperative with the regime.

Earlier, prior to 1945, there existed a German past, which was observable and felt by Polish settlers. This kind of the past could not be domesticated, for it was in opposition to the identity of the settlers¹⁸. The German inhabitants of Pomerania who did not leave their Pomeranian homes after the war remained detached from the Polish settlers and felt the omnipresent sense of hostility and otherness¹⁹. This material substance which Polish immigrants had to face did not correspond with their social features. A German official, doctor or craftsman was not replaced by a Polish counterpart. An agricultural farm, left behind by a German peasant, was not normally taken over by a successor who could restore its full functionality²⁰.

The history of Pomerania was available only as antiquity, mostly as the antiquity of the geographical shape of the space and objects situated in it. Despite omnipresent relics of the German presence, the material realia did not help settlers to domesticate the new territory. The identity with the territory was developed on the basis of the imagined heritage of old Pomeranians presented as a Polish tribe, who had been deprived of their motherland by the German occupying forces. The references to the Middle Ages as to the imagined pre-German past allowed the settlers to ignore antiquity connected with the many centuries of German presence in the area.

Medievalism was an essential element of the German culture in West Pomerania. In the epoch of Romanticism, it generated the valorisation of the Slavic origin of the territory and its people²¹. In the public space it was revealed both by the increasing interest in the architectural monuments, particularly in cities, represented by defensive establishments, and in erecting Neo-Roman and Neo-Gothic buildings in Szczecin and other cities of the area. All this suggests that medieval inspi-

¹⁷ Lucyna TUREK-KWIATKOWSKA, *Świadomość historyczna społeczeństwa pomorskiego*, Przegład Zachodniopomorski, vol. 31: 1987, no. 2, pp. 67–74.

¹⁸ Comp. Zenon ROMANOW, *Kreowanie „polityki pamięci” na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach 1945–2000* (Zeszyty Instytutu Zachodniego, no. 24), Poznań 2002, p. 2 ff, here further literature of the subject matter.

¹⁹ From among numerous memoirs it is worth presenting as an example: *Stargard – moje miasto. Wspomnienia polskich i niemieckich stargardzian z przelomu 1945 roku. Stargard – meine Stadt. Erinnerungen deutscher und polnischer Stargarder von der Zeit um 1945*, ed. Andrzej BIERCA [et al.], Stargard Szczeciński 2005.

²⁰ Comp. Andrzej SAKSON, *Procesy integracji i dezintegracji społecznej na Ziemiach Zachodnich i Północnych Polski po 1945 roku*, [in:] *Pomorze – trudna ojczyzna? Kształtowanie się nowej tożsamości 1945–1995*, red. idem, Poznań 1996, pp. 131–154.

²¹ L. TUREK-KWIATKOWSKA, op.cit., pp. 67–74.

rations stemmed from the bureaucratic and military sphere, which administered public finances. They reflected German tendencies shaped by an elitist education. Lately in Poland, research has developed on the identity of West-Pomeranian art²². A question has been posed as to what extent the use of medieval architectural forms resulted from the conscious choice of the inhabitants of Pomerania. In the light of the research, it turns out that the Roman style was used to promote the imperial ideas according to which the medieval empire was to constitute the prefiguration of the empire of the Hohenzollerns. Nevertheless, a greater influence should be attached to searches of a spiritual and aesthetic kind. "The medieval style is considered the most appropriate form for public buildings of this kind (a cemetery chapel and a care centre) by both decision-makers and the inhabitants of the city"²³. It goes beyond doubt that patterns and details existing in the region were applied. One should agree with the viewpoint expressed by Rafał Makąła, according to whom Gothic motifs were closer to pan-German elements of the state ideology than to regional motifs²⁴.

As is commonly known, in the 19th century scientific historiography developed as a sign of emancipation from culture and a liberation from the influence of subjective images. Two parallel narrations about the Middle Ages appeared; still, they were dependent upon each other since the narrative schemata and their content had the common source. The trends formed at that time, both the cultural tradition and the "academic" historiographic tradition revealed their historical character and transient nature. That is why the main features common for both phenomena shall be presented below.

German medievalism in historiography entailed the idealisation of the colonial period and acculturation; in the background it reconstructed the historical grounds for the negative image of Slavs, particularly Poles, which affected social relations in West Pomerania in the 19th–20th centuries²⁵. Nevertheless, it should be

²² Barbara OCHENDOWSKA-GRZELAK, *Odkrywanie sztuki Pomorza Zachodniego w XIX i w pierwszym trzydziestolecu XX wieku*, [in:] *Regionalizm w kulturze Pomorza Zachodniego od XIX do XXI wieku. Rekonesans*, ed. eadem, Szczecin 2008, pp. 21–35.

²³ Małgorzata PASZKOWSKA, *Nawiązania do motywów i ornamentyki średniowiecznej w XIX-wiecznej architekturze Szczecina*, [in:] *Kultura i sztuka Szczecina w latach 1800–1945. Materiały z seminarium Oddziału Szczecińskiego Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki, 16–17 październik 1998*, ed. Maria GLIŃSKA [et al.], Szczecin 1999, pp. 63–74, quotations pp. 64–65, 69.

²⁴ Rafał MAKĄŁA, *Pomorski styl regionalny? O problemie nawiązywania do tradycji pomorskiego gotyku w architekturze Szczecina końca XIX i początków XX wieku*, [in:] *Regionalizm w kulturze Pomorza Zachodniego*, pp. 11–20; idem, *Między prowincją a metropolią. Architektura Szczecina w latach 1891–1918*, Szczecin 2011, passim.

²⁵ Jan Maria PISKORSKI, *Pomorze plemienne. Historia, archeologia, językoznawstwo*, Poznań–Szczecin 2002, passim; Tomasz ŚLEPOWROŃSKI, *Polska i wschodnioniemiecka historiografia Pomorza Zachodniego (1945–1970). Instytucje, koncepcje, badania*, Szczecin 2008, pp. 34–62, 101 ff. Yet, it must be noted that in education and the formation of the political consciousness what had the major influence were the events from the Early Modern period starting with the introduction of Lutheranism, comp. Mirosława KOZŁOWSKA, *Teatry szkolne w Szczecinie w XVII–XIX wieku. Rekonesans*, [in:] *Regionalizm w kulturze Pomorza Zachodniego*, pp. 47–66.

noted that it referred to the universal thought concerning the cultural condition of the West at that time, which were expressed in the nostalgia for the clarity and simplicity of rules governing life along with the tendency to idealise both the burghers' culture and the knightly ethos and religiousness.

Polish medievalism prior to 1918, which referred to the region, was more present in journalism than in scientific historiography. It had very little in common with German medievalism. The radical opposition of historical judgements of the reality in the Middle Ages remained in the background for a long time. In the Polish version of West Pomeranian medievalism there is more of the discourse of the Enlightenment, which presented the human being against the relatively advanced civilisation of ingenuous people remaining still tightly connected with nature. The presence of Herder's paradigm may be traced here. In popular literature a Pomeranian is presented as a farmer or fisherman, loyal to the tradition of the predecessors and loving their country. Instead of knights proud of their individuality, there appear nameless knights, daring and loyal, but in the long run deemed to lose. There is nothing original in this image. As early as the Romanticism the Slavic history was imagined as a continuous struggle of peaceful Slavic peasants against the hordes of pugnacious nomadic tribes. Architecture was to be presented by countryside cottages and reconstructions of bulky burgwalls [gords]. The pagan religious life was valorised thanks to its contribution in the cult of the ancestors and tradition²⁶.

In the interwar period the sharpening Polish-German historiographic conflicts concerning the medieval history of Pomerania referred mainly to its Vistula area. West Pomerania, however, became clearly present, but its identity in the early historical period was ignored, as was the case with other regions acknowledged to be naturally Polish. Polish archeology considered the very old monuments in West Pomerania (where the Slavs were believed to have settled about 500 B.C.) to be evidence of the high cultural level of the Slavs. Józef Kostrzewski, who conducted archeological research and extended it to the territories of the old Poland of the Piast dynasty, wrote: "Under the influence of such viewpoints, some German politicians dare to state that «the purely Polish land does not exist at all; there is not even a square mile of land which would not have been inhabited by the Germans in the past»"²⁷. The Wends – known already in the early Middle Ages – were unanimously taken for early Slavs²⁸.

²⁶ Danuta PIOTROWSKA, *Biskupin, ideologie, kultura*, [in:] *Archeologia, kultura, ideologie*, ed. Bogusław GEDIGA, Wojciech PIOTROWSKI, Biskupin–Wrocław 2004, pp. 91–155.

²⁷ Józef KOSTRZEWSKI, *Czy jesteśmy tubylcami na ziemiach dzisiejszej Polski*, *Z Otchłani Wieków*, vol. 1: 1926, no. 1–2, p. 7. Comp. also Bernard PIOTROWSKI, *O Polskę nad Odrą i Bałtykiem. Myśl zachodnia i badania niemcoznawcze Uniwersytetu Poznańskiego*, Poznań 1987, p. 69 ff.

²⁸ Kazimierz TYMIENIECKI, *Rola Pomorza we wczesnych dziejach Polski*, [in:] *Polskie Pomorze*, vol. 2: *Przeszłość i kultura*, ed. Józef BOROWIK (Pamiętnik Instytutu Bałtyckiego, Balticum, no. 2), Toruń 1931, pp. 13–29. More comp. Tadeusz MALINOWSKI, *A la frontière de la science et de la politique*, [in:] *Archeologia, kultura, ideologie*, pp. 35–56.

After 1945, scientific historiography entailed the more intense tendency of the modernist understanding of history, which remains valid now²⁹. In the predominantly modernist perspective of the history of Pomerania, the major significance of material grounds is stressed. They include: natural conditions, the forms and development of settlement, agricultural technology and cultivation, the breeding of livestock, secondary activities of the rural population (hunting, wild-bee keeping, fishery, rural craft), production relations and classes of peasantry, burdens of the peasantry³⁰. One of the signs of Modernism consisted in showing the Pomeranians as people equipped with the attributes of a sea tribe. The opening commentary was written by Franciszek Bujak³¹. In archeology and historiography the sea power of Wolin, Kołobrzeg and Rugia³² was emphasised.

The historiographic image of the Middle Ages in West Pomerania was also present in the 19th century; in the second half of the 20th century it was promoted on a large scale. It was characterised by the scientific narration marked by its preference for structures, processes and phenomena developing above the people

²⁹ *Pomorze Zachodnie. Nasza ziemia ojczysta*, ed. Kazimierz ŚLĄSKI, Poznań 1960; Gerard LABUDA, *Fragmenty dziejów Słowiańszczyzny Zachodniej*, vol. 1, Poznań 1960, p. 9 ff; *Historia Pomorza*, vol. 1/1, ed. Gerard LABUDA, Poznań 1969, p. 219 ff; *Historia Pomorza*, vol. 1/2, ed. Gerard LABUDA, Poznań 1969, p. 5 ff (the part written by Kazimierz Ślaski); Zdzisław CHMIELEWSKI, *Historiografia zachodniopomorska w latach 1945–1949. Cz. I: W sprawie programu badawczego*, *Przegląd Zachodniopomorski*, vol. 31: 1987, no. 2, pp. 7–27; idem, *Historiografia zachodniopomorska w latach 1945–1949. Cz. II: Główne kierunki badań*, *ibid.*, vol. 32: 1988, no. 1–2, pp. 33–53; idem, *Zachodniopomorskie badania regionalne po II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Historia w ruchu regionalnym*, ed. Anatol Jan OMELANIUK, Wrocław–Ciechanów 2001, pp. 21–38; Edward POTKOWSKI, *Obraz wczesnodziejowego Pomorza w historiografii polskiej*, [in:] *Pomorze Zachodnie w tysiącleciu*, ed. Paweł BARTNIK, Kazimierz KOZŁOWSKI, Szczecin 2000, pp. 75–84.

³⁰ The catalogue of research issues comes from *Historia Pomorza*, vol. 1/2, p. 19 ff (the part written by K. Ślaski). Comp. also: Lech LECIEJEWICZ, *O modelu kultury wczesnosłowiańskiej*, [in:] *Kraje słowiańskie w wiekach średnich. Profanum i sacrum*, ed. Hanna KÓČKA-KRENZ, Władysław ŁOZIŃSKI, Poznań 1998, pp. 31–37.

³¹ Franciszek BUJAK, *Dziejowe znaczenie morza*, Zamość 1921. Comp. Gerard LABUDA, *Fragmenty dziejów Słowiańszczyzny Zachodniej*, vol. 3, Poznań 1975, p. 62 ff; Władysław KOWALENKO, *Związki polityczne i gospodarcze Słowian zachodnich i Polski z Bałtykiem*, [in:] *Pomorze Zachodnie. Nasza ziemia ojczysta*, pp. 102–125 (earlier works by the author to be found here).

³² The most comprehensive literature on subject matter: Lech LECIEJEWICZ, *U źródeł bogactwa i potęgi Pomorza Zachodniego w średniowieczu*, [in:] *Pomorze średniowieczne*, ed. Gerard LABUDA, Warszawa 1958, pp. 5–35; Władysław FILIPOWIAK, *Wolin – największe miasto Słowiańszczyzny Zachodniej*, [in:] *ibid.*, pp. 36–72; Konrad JAŹDŹEWSKI, *Gdańsk X–XIII w. na tle Pomorza wczesnośredniowiecznego*, [in:] *ibid.*, pp. 73–120; *Historia Pomorza*, vol. 1/1, pp. 265–278 (the part written by Lech Leciejewicz); *ibid.*, pp. 19–167 (the part written by Kazimierz Ślaski), attempts to show the development of internal forces in Pomerania in terms of social classes; Władysław FILIPOWIAK, *Wyspa Wolin w prahistorii i we wczesnym średniowieczu*, [in:] *Z dziejów ziemi wolińskiej*, ed. Tadeusz BIAŁECKI, Szczecin 1973, pp. 37–137, particularly p. 89 ff; Lech LECIEJEWICZ, *Kołobrzeg – wczesne miasto na pomorskim wybrzeżu Bałtyku*, [in:] *Salsa Cholbergensis – Kołobrzeg w średniowieczu*, ed. Lech LECIEJEWICZ, Marian RĘBKOWSKI, Kołobrzeg 2000, pp. 73–83; idem, *Podstawy gospodarcze w świetle wykopalisk*, [in:] *Kołobrzeg. Wczesne miasto nad Bałtykiem*, ed. Lech LECIEJEWICZ, Marian RĘBKOWSKI, Warszawa 2007, pp. 187–197.

who had acted in the past. The main research areas embraced the modernisation processes of the region, which were connected with the influx of German settlers and the disappearance of the Slavic language³³. In the face of the fragmentary and selective approach towards medieval history in the public sphere it became indispensable to apply the narration referring to the feeling of antiquity. The popular image of the period was not at all connected with the collective memory. Medievalism may be associated with narrations about the origin and the beginnings of the national community. Agnieszka Kruszyńska underlines “the compensation functions of medieval antiquity”³⁴. Antiquity understood in this way is more tangible in Polish fiction referring to the history of West Pomerania. What prevailed in it was the post-Romantic discourse recollecting mainly Bolesław I the Brave, who had opposed the Germans being the hero of the victorious war for the state³⁵.

The legend of antiquity may transform in the collective memory, may be moved to history and historiography. Professional historiography of West Pomerania reveals its cultural context. It participates in the creation of the grounds for the legend of antiquity on the basis of previous assumptions, which had been established before 1945 and were somehow codified and promoted by Józef Kisielewski. It included some kind of “mysticism” which, according to Józef Borowik, comprised “all subjective traces which gave the specific character to writings concerning any Pomeranian issues”. It was also visible in the first years of the postwar period. In the same text the author wrote: “It will be neither a metaphor nor exaggeration to say that this country [...] has lived awaiting its peculiar destinies”³⁶.

For the contemporary inhabitants of West Pomerania, antiquity became the Middle Ages, split into two periods in opposition to each other – the pagan times and the Christian times. In West Pomeranian medievalism, this constituted a major difficulty in reconciling both periods³⁷. Even the acceptance of the concept of the indigenusness of the Slavs who were considered to have occupied an extensive area of Central Europe as early as in the epoch of the Roman Empire automatically led to the valorisation of the pagan period. The alleged Slavs were presented as a kind of the prefiguration of the Polabians who, from time to time, successfully resisted the German invasion³⁸.

The Christianisation of the Polabian area and Pomerania was judged by medievalists with ambivalence. It was approved of by Polish historians and journalists if

³³ Comp. Kazimierz ŚLASKI, *Słowo wstępne*, [in:] *Pomorze Zachodnie. Nasza ziemia ojczysta*, p. 5 ff.

³⁴ A. KRUSZYŃSKA, op.cit., p. 78 ff.

³⁵ Erazm KUŹMA, *Rozważania nad polskojęzyczną literaturą na Pomorzu Zachodnim po 1945 roku*, [in:] *Pomorze w literaturze po 1945 roku. Materiały z konferencji w Kulicach, 11–14 września 2003 r.*, ed. Lisaweta VON ZITZEWITZ (Zeszyty Kulickie, no. 4), Kulice 2005, pp. 87–104.

³⁶ Józef BOROWIK, *Nauka polska a Pomorze Szczecińskie*, Jantar, vol. 5: 1947, pp. 177–188, the quotations respectively in pp. 179, 186.

³⁷ In reference to the subject matter, J.M. PIKORSKI, op.cit., p. 7 ff and passim.

³⁸ Kazimierz WACHOWSKI, *Słowiańszczyzna Zachodnia*, after word Gerard LABUDA, Poznań 2000 [renewed], particularly pp. 79 ff, 96 ff, 107 ff.

the Christianisation was claimed to have been conducted by the Piast dynasty. On the other hand, the Christianisation initiated by the German church was regarded as Germanisation and annexation. Polish settlers arriving in West Pomerania from 1945 did not encounter Slavic monuments, but the medieval buildings from the times of the colonisation and introduction of German culture³⁹. They also had to cope with the numerous German population – hostile and distrustful towards the Polish settlers. While the Slavic past was recalled to the contemporary times, then the German present was treated the other way round — it was consigned to the past.

The medievalism of the period of the Polish People's Republic belongs to the traditional methodological trend. A typical example of the attachment to the research tradition in the reconstruction of the history of Poland was the prioritisation of written sources based on the belief about the hermeneutic possibilities of medievalists⁴⁰. The historiographic image of the medieval past of the region, which managed to become a canon, belongs to the past. This results from the gradual historiographic breakthrough of the 1960s and 1970s. The medieval forms imagined in the second half of the 20th century were based on the assumption that the past is available for scientific research.

The communist ideology up to WWII was based on the modernist discourse revealing the unfriendly, or even, hostile attitude towards tradition and particularism of any kind, including regional particularism. The defensive war of the USSR against Hitler's Germany implied the return to tradition including numerous events from the medieval period. Despite frequent opinions that this phenomenon of the regime's reference to tradition was of an economic nature, it can be assumed that its aim was to shape the collective identity. It was transferred to Poland and applied there by communists assuming power.

For doctrinal reasons, the authorities preferred the social-economic research along with the research concerning the political system, maintaining their averse attitude towards the events of the past. The evolutionist paradigm allowed exposing the general at the expense of the regional. The medievalist trend was disclosed in many areas, obtaining its special significance thanks to the political and historical context. In the communist propaganda the reborn and subjugated Poland was to find its prefiguration in the period of the first Piasts. In this context, the temporary and economic references to Western thought in the official propaganda becomes understandable⁴¹. The historiographic narration about the Slavic history

³⁹ Marek OBER, *Pomorze Przednie – Pomorze Tylne – Nowa Marchia. Problem różnic w fizjonomii krajobrazu kulturowego*, [in:] *Terra Transoderana. Sztuka Pomorza Nadodrzańskiego i dawnej Nowej Marchii w średniowieczu. Materiały z Seminarium Naukowego poświęconego jubileuszowi 50-lecia pracy w muzealnictwie szczecińskim Zofii Krzymuskiej-Fafius, 7–8 czerwca 2002*, ed. Maria GLIŃSKA, Krystyna KROMAN, Rafał MAKALA, Szczecin 2004, pp. 41–52.

⁴⁰ Comp. Przemysław URBAŃCZYK, *Trudne początki Polski*, Wrocław 2008, p. 16 ff.

⁴¹ Piotr MADAJCZYK, *Polska myśl zachodnia w polityce komunistów polskich*, Przegląd Zachodni, 1997, no. 3, pp. 15–36, here p. 32 ff.

of West Pomerania acknowledged that the primary feature of the “historical process” was the inclusive tendency of the Piast monarchs whose aim was to unite all the Polish lands.

“In the visible emotional and research emptiness”, as stated Włodzimierz Stępiński, regional medievalism in the Regained Territories reflected the spiritual condition of the narrow group of educated Polish settlers⁴². Let us quote once again W. Stępiński who said: “When we read books written in the first quarter after WWII, what strikes us there [...] is the powerful presence of the Slavic and Polish element in the presentation of the history of West Pomerania. This exposure of the Slavic past of the region, the Slavic character of its culture, the ethnicity of the dynasty, strong ties of the Pomeranian Duchy and its church organization with Poland of the Piasts – all this met the requirements of the scientific research. What prevailed was the political-dynastic perspective; the role of sacral culture and the Catholic Church was limited; the state authorities underlined the victories in the battles of Cedynia and Siekierki. The scientific entourage tacitly tolerated those historical constructions”⁴³.

Poland with its border on the Oder river and the Lusatian Neisse including territories it had never claimed before was legitimised only thanks to the persistent imposition of historical analogies and antecedents. The same mechanism was used to familiarise the image of Poland deprived of the territories east of the Bug river, which had constituted an integral part of the country in the collective consciousness of the Polish society. Politics and history were supported by a strictly defined attitude and interpretation of the present in the spheres of culture. The slogan which legitimised the act of taking over the western and northern lands was the ancient Slavic character of the territories. That is why so much attention was paid to searching for traces of Polishness in these territories which, as it was believed, had been totally obliterated owing to the centuries-long Germanisation of the country and its people.

West Pomerania was not an exception. The outline of the history of the region which underlined its connections with Poland was propagated⁴⁴. The basis for the narrative persuasion was the search the centuries-long ties of Pomerania and Pomeranians with Poland and the Poles. This kind of activity was possible thanks to the scarce knowledge of history among the Poles. More professional historical

⁴² Elżbieta NOWAKOWSKA, *Kształtowanie się świadomości regionalnej na Pomorzu Szczecińskim*, Warszawa–Poznań 1980, passim; L. TUREK-KWIATKOWSKA, op.cit., p. 70 ff.

⁴³ Włodzimierz STĘPIŃSKI, *Ewolucja percepcji historii Pomorza Zachodniego w XIX–XX wieku w kręgu szczecińskich historyków (1956–2010)*, [in:] *Od polonizacji do europeizacji Pomorza Zachodniego. Prace ofiarowane prof. Kazimierzowi Kozłowskiemu z okazji siedemdziesiątej rocznicy urodzin*, ed. Małgorzata MACHAŁEK, Jan MACHOLAK, Edward WŁODARCZYK, Warszawa–Szczecin 2012, pp. 309–357, quotation p. 314.

⁴⁴ Comp. Arkadiusz MAŁECKI, *Średniowieczne zabytki w zamierzeniach władz wojewódzkich na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach 1945–1949*, *Przegląd Zachodniopomorski*, vol. 27 (56): 2012, no. 4, pp. 17–48, here p. 17 ff.

studies revealed the separate identity of West Pomerania, but its significance was diminished by the argument that West Slavic territories shared a common history in the face of the German occupation. The mission of Otto of Bamberg was approved, but it was emphasised that at least during the first expedition to Pomerania he cooperated with the Polish state and church, which was true. However, his second expedition to Pomerania was considered to have opened the missionary territories to German influences. There were no more elements which could facilitate the adaptation of history to the present conditions. The Duchy of the House of Griffins paid homage to Germany, while the settlement process led to the change in the ethnic composition of the population.

Romantic and Post-Romantic medievalism in Slavic countries derived from Pan-Slavism. The movement opposed the Slavic Middle Ages against the German Middle Ages and increased the value of the Slavic cultural heritage along with the extent of civilisation in Pomerania during the period prior to the colonisation. What appeared was a noticeable trend to marginalise the process of Occidentalisation which had taken place mainly thanks to the German settlers. According to the Pan-Slavic theory, German settlers were to have arrived in a relatively highly developed country, which did not require any substantial modernisation⁴⁵.

The regional enthusiasm allowed Pomerania to be presented as a country better developed than the Piast territories. Zygmunt Świechowski wrote: "In relation to the territories of the first Piasts, Pomerania was characterized by a higher level of material culture. The evidence for this are the sensational discoveries by Władysław Filipowiak in Wolin and the results of the recent research done in Nowe Objezierze and in Podzamcze in Szczecin, which are published in this collective volume. The gap became even bigger in the late medieval period. Pomerania takes advantage of the civilization advance of the Baltic Sea basin, which takes place thanks to the Cistercians introducing the western agrarian policy, the transformation of Slavic agglomerations soon incorporated into the Hanseatic union and transatlantic trade"⁴⁶.

Historical-military medievalism has sophisticated features. The unity of Pomerania with Poland, which was taken for granted, led to the fact that the Piast

⁴⁵ It is a paradigm taken over from the history of Pomerelia, created as early as the 19th century, formulated by Stanisław Kujot in *Dzieje Prus Królewskich*.

⁴⁶ Zygmunt ŚWIECHOWSKI, *Wstęp*, [in:] *Terra Transoderana*, pp. 11–23, quotation p. 12 ff. Comp. idem, *Architektura granitowa Pomorza Zachodniego w XIII wieku*, Poznań 1950, p. 7: „Koncentracja środków handlu w ręku szybko rozwijających się miast hanzeatyckich Meklemburgii, a od XIII w. i Pomorza Wschodniego, przyczynia się do złej sytuacji gospodarczej nie dotrzymującego im kroku Pomorza Zachodniego [“The concentration of trade centres in the fast developing Hanseatic towns in Mecklenburg, and since the 13th century of East Pomerania, affects the bad economic situation of West Pomerania” – transl. by A.Ch.]”. In such a situation Barnim I was to advocate the colonization: „Nie przesadzając rozmiarów tej kolonizacji [...] wypada jednakże stwierdzić, że wywarła ona duży wpływ na formy życia gospodarczego, przejawy kultury duchowej i materialnej [“Not exaggerating the magnitude of the colonization [...] it must be admitted that it exerted a major influence on the forms of economic life and both material and spiritual culture” – transl. by A.Ch.]”.

conquests in the region had been concealed until the 1960s⁴⁷. There was an attempt to create a myth about the common interests shared by the state of the Piast and Pomerania in the face of the German threat. The foundation for the myth was the battle of Cedynia⁴⁸ which, as it was believed at that time, was to have taken place in order to defend the area at the mouth of the Oder river, to prove the sagacity of Mieszko I – the feature of modern politicians⁴⁹. Military historians “reconstructed” the battle using scarce accounts concerning the event⁵⁰.

Nevertheless, in the collective imagination it was Bolesław I the Brave who was the symbol of the struggle for the Polishness of Pomerania. He became the hero of the historical novel written in the years of the occupation and after it (1940–1946). The same occurred in historical painting represented mainly by Michał Bylina. He painted the following pictures: Cedynia (1968, far from bellicose realism), Mieszko in the Cedynia hills (1966), the team of Bolesław (1951), The Knight of Bolesław I the Brave (1972)⁵¹.

The statehood of Pomerania in the early Middle Ages was for a long time perceived in a negative way. In 1985 Henryk Łowmiański described the beginnings of the state of West Pomerania: “It was a unique phenomenon within the borders of Poland: one land broke away from the complex and even attacked the land of their brothers”⁵².

Medievalism in the history of the Church reflects all the features of the difficult process of adopting the post-German heritage. Polish historical medieval studies traditionally attached great significance to the establishment of the bishopric in Kołobrzeg in 1000 as an expression of the strong position of the Piast monarchy in Pomerania⁵³. The contribution of Bolesław III Wrymouth to the history of Pome-

⁴⁷ Marek REZLER, *O problematyce badawczej i historiografii militarnych dziejów Pomorza Zachodniego*, [in:] *Związki Pomorza Zachodniego z Polską*, Koszalin 1996, pp. 25–46, the review of the literature included.

⁴⁸ J.M. PISKORSKI, op.cit., p. 75 n.; Paweł MIGDAŁSKI, *Bitwa pod „Cidini” w historiografii*, [in:] *Cedynia i okolice poprzez wieki*, ed. idem, Chojna–Szczecin 2013, pp. 37–64.

⁴⁹ Comp. Jerzy STRZELCZYK, *Mieszko I w świetle niektórych nowszych badań*, [in:] *Cedynia i okolice przez wieki*, ed. by Paweł Migdałski, pp. 31–35.

⁵⁰ P. MIGDAŁSKI, op.cit., p. 60 ff.

⁵¹ Lech GRABOWSKI, *M. Bylina*, Warszawa 1977; Jerzy STRZELCZYK, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Warszawa 2014, p. 281.

⁵² Henryk ŁOWMIAŃSKI, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, Warszawa 1985, p. 98.

⁵³ The fundamental knowledge was compiled by Stanisław KUJOT, *Dzieje Prus Królewskich*, vol. 1: *Do roku 1309* (Roczniki Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu, vol. 20), Toruń 1913, p. 356 ff; Stanisław ROSIK, *Reinbern – Salsae Cholbergensis aeccliesiae episcopus*, [in:] *Salsa Cholbergensis*, pp. 85–93. To commemorate the anniversary of the establishment of the bishopric in 1000 a special catalogue of the exhibition was published titled *1000-letnie dziedzictwo chrześcijańskie Pomorza Środkowego. Katalog wystawy*, Koszalin 2000; *Chrześcijaństwo na Pomorzu w X–XX wieku. Materiały pokonferencyjne*, ed. Józef BORZYSZKOWSKI, Gdańsk–Słupsk 2001. In the preface and the introduction there is no reference to Kołobrzeg nor Bolesław I the Brave; yet, some information about the Pomeranian tribes appears; the alleged pagan worship in Góra Chełmska and Rowokole, which next lead to the description of the 12th century.

rania was doubtful. History written from the perspective of the Piast monarchy was not in accordance with the regional perspective. The nationalist perspective complicated the situation. In the light of the 12th century reality, it was pointless to maintain that Pomeranians, who had defended their identity, were Poles. With the exception of the bishop of Wolin Wojciech, it was hard to find any historical figures who could confirm the links of Pomerania with Poland. The mission of Otto of Bamberg was treated with ambivalence. The representative of the German church could not have received an unequivocally positive evaluation. However, to make Otto seem more familiar, it was emphasised that during his youth he had spent many years in Poland, where he learnt the language and won the trust of the prince and the court. Moreover, it was stressed that Polish priests had participated in his Pomeranian mission and the religious teachings had been conducted in the Slavic language.

Discrepancies resulting from the ethnic understanding of history were somehow compensated by the universal historiography written from the point of view of the Church and the Christian religion. Prior to 1939 the mission of Otto of Bamberg was treated as a momentous event in the history of Pomerania. Now the interest in Otto's mission has evoked an increasing number of publications concerning the subject matter⁵⁴. Here it should be indicated that the approval of Otto's mission was parallel to the familiarisation of the sacral structure, topography and church architecture by the Pomeranians.

Medieval history is the starting point in the history of the urbanisation of the region's towns. It goes beyond the scope of this work to show all the changes in the historiography of all small towns. Let us take the example of medieval Szczecin, or maybe what we imagine to be its origins and development in that period. The Slavic past of Szczecin was relatively well described in historiography; moreover, it became an essential element in the construction of the collective identity of the city's inhabitants. Yet, it was not reflected in the formation of the urban planning of the city. The reconstruction of the castle, the relic of the "Slavic" dynasty in its Renaissance shape, did not take into account the actual cultural and ethnic condition of Pomerania in the period of the last Griffins. The Old Town, which hid the undeniable elements of its Slavic past, was eradicated reportedly with the aim of exposing the "Wawel castle of the north".

CONCLUSION

Medievalism in its cultural and historiographic form took on specific forms in West Pomerania. A quarter of a century ago the period of the Polish People's Republic ended. It was one of the instruments of social integration and the historical policy of the regime. In this period it acquired its "canonical" form originating from strong emotional grounds, inalienable (as it was believed) "historical rights"

⁵⁴ Stanisław ROSIK, *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum. Studium świadectwa o wydarzeniu (XII wiek)*, Wrocław 2010, with the complete bibliography, p. 651 ff.

and ethnic patriotism. The generation of its animators and recipients was over. Historiography and the “everlasting memory” created by it revealed their historical conditions, their validity limited by what was “here and now”. At present, the consciousness of the medieval past has been marginalised. Local medievalism has now more universal references. It refers to the image of the common culture of medieval Europe, in particular to the imagined community of the Hanseatic towns.

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MEDIEWALIZM ZACHODNIOPOMORSKI.
ZARYS PROBLEMU

Streszczenie

Słowa kluczowe: medievalizm kulturowy, medievalizm historiograficzny, historiografia, Pomorze Zachodnie

Medievalizm w postaci kulturowej i historiograficznej na Pomorzu Zachodnim przybrał specyficzne formy. Przed ćwierćwieczem zamknięty został okres Polski Ludowej, kiedy stał się on jednym z instrumentów integracji społecznej i zarazem polityki historycznej reżimu. W tym okresie przybrał on „kanoniczną” postać, wyrosłą na silnym podłożu emocjonalnym, opartą na kanonie niezbywalnych (jak wierzono) „praw historycznych” i etnicznego patriotyzmu. Przeminięło pokolenie jego animatorów i odbiorców. Historiografia i kreowana przez nią „odwieczna pamięć” okazały swoje historyczne uwarunkowania, aktualność ograniczoną do „tu i teraz”. Obecnie świadomość średniowiecznej przeszłości została zmarginalizowana. Na korzyść lokalnego medievalizmu należałoby odnotować, że ma on współcześnie odniesienia bardziej uniwersalne. Odwołuje się do wyobrażenia we wspólnocie kulturowej średniowiecznej Europy, w szczególności zaś do wyobrażonej wspólnoty kręgu miast hanzeatyckich.

DER MEDIÄVALISMUS IN POMMERN.
EIN PROBLEMAUFRISS

Zusammenfassung

Schlüsselwörter: kulturelles Mediävalismus, historiographisches Mediävalismus, Historiographie, Pommern

Der Mediävalismus in kultureller und historiographischer Hinsicht hat in Westpommern besondere Formen angenommen. Vor einem Vierteljahrhundert endete die Ära der polnischen Volksrepublik, in der er zu einem der Instrumente gesellschaftlicher Integration und zugleich der Geschichtspolitik des Regimes geworden war. In dieser Zeit hatte er eine „kanonische“ Gestalt angenommen, die aus einer starken emotionalen Grundlage erwuchs, die sich auf einen Kanon von (wie man dachte) unveräußerlichen „historischen Rechten“ und eines ethnischen Patriotismus stützte. Die Generation seiner Schöpfer und Rezipienten ist vergangen. Die Historiographie und das durch sie geschaffene „ewige Gedächtnis“ haben sich als historisch bedingt erwiesen, ihre Aktualität war auf das „hier und jetzt“ begrenzt. Gegenwärtig ist das Bewusstsein von einer mittelalterlichen Vergangenheit an den Rand gedrängt. Zugunsten eines lokalen Mediävalismus sollte man feststellen, dass dieser heute universalere Bezüge hat. Er beruft sich auf eine Vorstellung innerhalb der Kulturgemeinschaft des mittelalterlichen Europas, insbesondere auf die vorgestellte Gemeinschaft des Kreises der Hansestädte.

