

Attributes of the Silesians' political subjectivity in the context of a debate on the 2021 National Population and Housing Census and attempts to establish the Silesian language as a regional language

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Abstract:

The objective of this paper is to present the attributes of political subjectivity of the Silesians in the context of the debate on the 2021 National Population and Housing Census, as well as the accompanying debate on the attempt to amend the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language, which provides for the inclusion of the Silesian language as a regional language in the provisions of the Act. The thesis presented in this text assumes that the agitation and commitment related to the census not only make it possible to analyse the sense of identity and/or distinctiveness of the Silesians and to develop, for instance, reflection on the issue of recognition, but also open up a space for research on the political subjectivity of those who identify with Silesianness. I intend to use a political theory interpretation that does not focus on political competition or participation in the governing process, but takes into account political activities of individuals and groups also outside the strictly state sphere in the field where various social and political aspirations and interests interact.

Keywords:

Silesians, political subjectivity, Census 2021, Silesian nationality, Silesian language

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One of the important elements of political activity is, on the one hand, acknowledging the fact of existence of an individual or a group undertaking such activity, and, on the other hand, actions oriented towards the achievement of established objectives and expressing the causative power and deliberate (conscious) presence of an individual or a group. With regard to the former, possible

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strategies include that of benevolent acknowledgement, as well as discrediting or even ignoring (Karwat 2009). With regard to the latter, the essence is the pursuit and mobilisation of resources with the intention of influencing and altering reality.

Both elements are determined by the environment, external factors that have a significant impact on the implementation of this activity and a vision that an individual or group has of themselves in relation to this environment. Ultimately, transforming this environment, not remaining in a completely passive relationship with it, allows one to identify subjective aspirations. Such aspirations are present in the context of various regionalisms. Undoubtedly, they are also present among the Silesians, who have been expressing them for a long time in various fields, starting with actions in the area of culture, maintaining the specificity of multicultural and borderland identity, and ending with efforts to participate in governing in the area of political competition.

The goal of this paper is to present the attributes of political subjectivity of the Silesians in the context of the debate on the 2021 National Population and Housing Census, as well as the concomitant debate on the (subsequent) attempt to amend the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language, which aimed at the inclusion of the Silesian language as a regional language in the Act's provisions. Adequately to this goal, it is assumed in the text that the agitation and commitment related to the census not only make it possible to analyse the sense of identity and/or distinctiveness of the Silesians and to develop, for instance, reflection on the issue of recognition, but it also opens a space for research on the political subjectivity of those who identify with Silesianness. I intend to use a political theory interpretation that does not focus on political competition or participation in the governing process, but takes into account political activities of individuals and groups also outside the strictly state sphere in the field where various social and political aspirations and interests interact.

The theoretical premises of the category of political subjectivity

One of the basic notions the most frequently used to describe the activity of the Silesians, or regional movements in general, is the notion of identity. It shows unquestionable cognitive values in the context of phenomena connected with the specificity of the Silesian region and its inhabitants, especially taking into consideration the fundamental role of self-identification in regional issues. The category I refer to is political subjectivity, which goes beyond the problems of identity. The premises for this are twofold: theoretical, as well as those relating to the hitherto modest use of this concept in the analysis of the Silesians' activity. The latter is also

a consequence of the fact that the situation in this respect has „matured” - it has been unfolding, as it were, to the researchers along with subsequent events, which no longer appeared to be incidental (cf. Białasiewicz 2002).

To begin with, let us look at an example of the exploration of political subjectivity in Silesian issues. As it has been mentioned before, during a library search it is impossible to come across a wide selection of analyses focusing on the problem. Political subjectivity appears as a term in a study by Ewa Michna (2018), who analyses the context of the problem of recognition of the Silesians in the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language. The author looks at subjectivity as an opposition to objectification. She relates the former category to the concept of recognition. She observes that the lack of recognition has become acute due to the institutional protection of the fourteen entities in the aforementioned Act. When the law was passed, a significant distinction was made with respect to the groups receiving support for the promotion of their culture and language. Consequently, subjectivity is achieved through a process of democratisation that materialises in the institutional space of the state, particularly its legislation. This guarantees freedoms and determines the democratisation of the public sphere, including through associations and similar forms of expressing identity. In this context, recognition had primarily a legal-state dimension (Michna 2018). Consequently, the granting of a certain status and thus the creation of opportunities, also in terms of funds, is a case in point here. Michna is under no illusions and aptly notes that, among other things, due to the lack of unambiguous international regulations concerning the definition of a national minority, a compromise concluded in the political sphere, as an expression of political will, plays a fundamental role (Michna 2018). Apart from the process itself, subjectivity understood in this way primarily presupposes the existence of legal circumstances and consequences. This is because it has a top-down character and assumes being the recipient of certain opportunities. However, this does not mean that these legal conditions are secondary or irrelevant. On the contrary, they significantly constitute conditions for the functioning of all kinds of entities in the socio-political space. Nevertheless, the very emphasis on the importance of the political decision shows that the phenomenon of subjectivity is multifaceted, and the legal aspect does not define it as a whole, and sometimes even is not its most important aspect, when actions taken in particular legal circumstances are not adequate and effective.

Meanwhile, the concept of subjectivity as an analytical category entails far more political consequences as well as premises. It provides an important and interesting complement to the above interpretations, also connecting them

in a certain sense. It goes beyond questions from the cultural and legal spheres, or questions concerning representation in the competition for seats in governing bodies. We then refer to their relation to the political sphere, which is not independent and remains in relation to other social spheres (cf: Karwat, 1980). Political subjectivity in this sense mobilises a group's resources and places them in the context of political action.

The category under discussion is cognitively related to the term „object”, which, by analogy to an object in the sense of a thing, has a passive character and undergoes the influence and impact of external forces and the environment. However, a human being does not absorb all characteristics of an object, even when fully influenced by external factors and forces. As political scientists point out, a human being, unlike an inanimate object, has consciousness, and this element alone makes us remember that subjectivity is relative and gradable, since complete deprivation of subjectivity is, in principle, impossible. Moreover, contrary to the colloquial view, a much more frequent relation is not unidirectional, but a dynamic feedback, where the subject is involved in and dependent on various external forces, and conversely, the ‚object’ in a state of objectification generally aims to change the status quo (Karwat 2013a).

The basic element that distinguishes the subject from the object is its ability to define its goals, actions, and give them meaning. It results from the awareness of one's needs and interests, the use of free will in terms of decision making. Subjectivity presupposes a permanent ability to take rational and independent actions in the scope of not only satisfying one's own needs, but also exerting influence on a situation in the environment, especially to cause changes in the area of social relations, which are subject to objectification over time. What is important is that this attribute does not result from the incidental abilities of a given entity, or from situational activity, but it describes its established characteristic. To synthesise, the following should be treated as attributes of subjectivity: awareness, self-awareness, self-identity, rationality and sovereignty. It is under such circumstances that political subjectivity may be referred to, when in the long run a given entity remains capable of articulating its interests and expressing its attitude towards various issues (Karwat 2013a).

When examining political subjectivity, one should take into account these dynamics of the phenomenon. It is composed of its distinguishing features and attributes. In a detailed analysis of this phenomenon, Filip Pierzchalski describes its distinguishing features, also referring to its political character. For this purpose, he points to three groups of characteristics. Firstly, the objective politicisation of subjectivity, which results from the fact that it is entangled in contradictory

interests, conflicts of aspirations, etc., which also has a correlation to a political system. Secondly, political awareness, which manifests itself in the use of political as well as non-political content in actions on the basis of politicisation. Thirdly, the methodology of action, which concerns the selection and coordination of social interests, within which particular interests of an entity as well as the interests of the entire community are confronted. In view of the characteristics discussed above, the following levels of analysis appear: the objective functioning of an entity as an object of the impact of political relations, an entity's actions in the political context (in its specific conditions), and the awareness of its political character and actions in this entanglement for the benefit of its own interests (Pierzchalski 2009).

Finally, it is necessary to state that political subjectivity exists in at least three theoretical perspectives: holistic, realist and individualist (nominalist-individualist). According to the third perspective, only an individual is the holder of political subjectivity. It tends to treat an individual as being outstanding, possessing extraordinary qualities (charisma, etc.). This view favours a romantic vision of politics and history seen through the prism of great rulers and the deeds of „great figures”. In the realistic perspective, it is assumed that social forces (e.g. elites, large organised social groups) are the starting point. More or less formally organised groups, associations influencing the balance of power, decisions and actions of the state, etc., can therefore be endowed with subjectivity. In the holistic interpretation, social entities whose interests constitute the content of politics are placed in the centre. In the case of the latter two perspectives, the subject is collective and, as such, its nature is based on interactions, aggregation and selection of interests and aspirations (Karwat 2013b; Karwat 1980, Karwat 1989; Pierzchalski 2009).

A valid supplement in this context is the conclusions of Wiesława Sotwin, who distinguishes between internal subjectivity and external subjectivity on the grounds of empirical psychology and psychology of politics (Sotwin, 2003). This highlights the peculiar Janus-faced nature of subjectivity, which consists of aspirations and conditions of possibility. Indeed, the author sees two forms of reflection on this phenomenon: on the one hand, the possibility of influence (action) is at the centre, and on the other hand, it is the individual. Their consequence is a different perception of the source of subjectivity: the environment versus the individual. However, this does not mean that they should be treated separately. They express not only the nature of the subject, but also certain cultural trends.

Internal subjectivity is correlated with being an object for oneself and being able to make choices and implement them in the environment. Not insignificant are the cultural conditions of contemporary society, which we have observed together with progress since the 19th and 20th centuries, and which emphasise

diversity and possibility. Tradition and the previously universal authorities are being replaced by individual experience and the need to make individual choices. There appear theses of breaking numerous relations between man and the environment, while man's identity is formed on the basis of the necessity of ever new choices, and the simultaneous creation of new standards. The individual independently determines social roles and strives for self-determination. Kazimierz Obuchowski refers to this process of the growth of the individual's significance as the revolution of subjects. Sotwin proves that it is related to a research trend in psychology that starts to treat subjectivity as being determined by the freedom of choice. Referring to Obuchowski, she emphasises, among other things, that subjectivity is „given to man phenomenologically as an intentional self”. As an inner experience, it is irreducible. In this context, intentionality is an expression of self-control and choice, and the object of this control is the „objective self” (to be distinguished from the „subjective self”). This strand of thinking about subjectivity also includes claims concerning transgression, i.e. the expansion of the subject's previous boundaries, also known as emancipation (Sotwin, 2003).

A slightly different logic is characteristic of external subjectivity. The basis of such subjectivity is the achievement of an effect, while the object of control that the subject pursues is the environment. The experience of influence plays an important role here, while its opposite is activity controlled by external factors. In this sense, the pursuit of subjectivity aims to limit this external determination. Furthermore, external subjectivity has a potential for conflict. This is because it causes contradictions among those striving for subjectivity, as well as in man: between striving for dependence and independence. The publications referred to by the author emphasise such problems as the processual character of subjectivity, the component of awareness, while some of them stress alienation as a particular opposition to subjectivity. Moreover, the subjective sense of subjectivity turns out to be an important issue. The sense of subjectivity itself is linked to perceived influence and aspirations, which in the political sphere raises important issues such as the radicalisation of social groups or issues of participation in decision-making processes. It is also pointed out that participation is a form of subjectivity in organisational systems (Sotwin 2003).

The above remarks, from the fields of research in both the theory of politics and psychology, are a necessary introduction to the identification of the elements of the said phenomenon in the aspirations and actions of the Silesians.

The context of Silesian subjectivity

At this point, it is worth mentioning the context of the problem posed in this paper. In the case of the issue of the Silesians' political subjectivity, we analyse group subjectivity. Consequently, elements of the holistic and realistic perspective will be justified here, with emphasis on the latter. On the other hand, if a reflection concerns the actions of an individual, it will be treated as a different level of analysis: the individual in this system remains in close relation to the social group, its interests and position in social and political relations, and not a separate subject in the individualistic approach (Karwat 1980).

In view of the above, the problem so crucial for the subject in its political practice as the space of action concerns two issues: the articulation of interests and political mobilisation. They correspond to the necessary elements of the category of subjectivity related to the problems of aspiration, awareness and causality. Thus, these will be activities taking place in the period of intensification concerning the National Census and, in the meantime, of drawing attention to the efforts aimed at giving the Silesian dialect the status of a regional language (i.e. the draft to amend the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language). Two objectives were pursued, which can be reproduced at the most general level. Firstly, to spread knowledge about the Census and the opportunities this ethnic group has within it, as well as to criticise the actions of the authorities and provide arguments for the group's aspirations. Secondly, to stimulate one's social group to manifest the characteristics on the basis of which the group develops its distinctiveness, on the ground of both customary cultural practices and on political practices: the expectation of new institutional solutions and the expression of resistance to the existing ones, considered inadequate and unjust. Thus, resources are mobilised in favour of group awareness, which is then to be translated into encapsulating the identity with political activity in the same context, in order to gain not only visibility, but above all an important argument for further action. It is important from not only the perspective of the authorities' actions –for instance, as evidence of the scale of existence and thus the necessity for legal changes – but also as a result acting somehow inside the group, arguing for the ability to achieve effects on a certain scale.

As Bartosz Czepil and Wojciech Opióła (2020) point out in the context of the last two censuses, the Silesians – in contrast to the German minority – are not a politically empowered group, they are not characterised by such a high degree of institutionalisation of social life as the aforementioned minority, and they continue to fight for their own political representation. I understand the struggle on which this paper focuses as an element of that fight, the difference being, however, that I

attempt to reconstruct certain elements of subjectivity that occur precisely because of the very struggle.

For me, an important point of the struggle is not only pursuing the status of an ethnic group status and the legitimisation of a variant of „Silesian nationality” in the Census, but also striving for the Silesian dialect to become a regional language and the presence of the same variant in the Census concerning the question of the language dominant in the daily practice of a given household. Both components correspond to significant characteristics of subjectivity, such as the intention to trigger political decisions in the process of expanding one’s subjectivity, as well as the expression of one’s own particularity and one’s relation to the current paradigm on the basis of which the political community is currently defined.

At this point it is worth emphasising again that a declaration of nationality that is part of the Census refers to self-identification. This is of course a truism, nevertheless, in this context it is of great importance for the sense of subjectivity. The dictionary explication itself refers to an understanding of identity as self-identification and an awareness of shared characteristics in relation to a community. Benedict Anderson’s concept of imagined communities applies here. It captures the relevance of the problem of awareness and self-identification in a given communal and socio-political reality. As Anderson writes, members of a nation are strangers to one another, they are distant from each other, and they have no knowledge of each other. Consequently, relations among them and, eventually, a community are the effect of a certain creation, a consolidated collective image (Anderson 1991). And although Anderson’s remarks are meant to fulfil the anthropological definition of nationalism and to provide a tool for an analysis of nationalism as a cultural phenomenon, it seems that its cognitive potential goes far beyond this goal. It is not only political actions laced with nationalism that need some common imaginarium, an imaginary order organising the community within which we define our place (e.g. Marzec 2016; Matyja 2018). Going further, perhaps contemporary democracies facing regionalisms and challenges of multiculturalism need this imagined community much more than any other form of community life. The conclusions are also interesting for the case of the Silesians. After all, for historical and cultural reasons, Silesia and its inhabitants have been subject to various processes and are by no means homogeneous. Diversity seems to be an integral element of Silesianness (cf. e.g. Szmeja 2017). Thus, the Silesians themselves also discuss and explore a formula for such landmarks, something like an imagined community, which is reflected in the condition of their subjectivity, the weighing of particular issues under articulation.

Elements of subjectivity in the public sphere

The activity of the Silesians in the matter of the National Census is manifested in the local and regional media, as well as in the actions of local and regional leaders, some of whom participate in politics at the national or even international level. As a result, the voice of those concerned is present on websites run by various Silesian organisations and activists (e.g. www.wachtyrz.eu), in newspapers widely known in the region and considered to be relatively sympathetic to regional issues (see: „Dziennik Zachodni”). It is worth noting, however, that it is visible primarily in the Silesian province, i.e. in Upper Silesia, and to a lesser extent in the Opole and Lower Silesian provinces .

Concern about the National Census, which is conducted every ten years, was already signalled by regional activists in 2019. At that time, Piotr Długosz, the founder of the Association of People of Silesian Nationality, sent a query to the Central Statistical Office, responsible for conducting the census, concerning the possibility of declaring Silesian nationality and use of the Silesian language. As Długosz argues, this was due to fear of the actions of the current government, perceived by activists and organisations as hostile. In response, the CSO explained that with regard to the issue of nationality the list would not be closed, and it would be possible to select a different variant, as well as to declare double self-identification. At that time, the CSO was not planning to ask people about their mother tongue. It is known that it will be a question concerning the language used in the household (Długosz 2019; Pawlik 2019). As Długosz commented, this was good news for the Silesians (Pawlik 2019).

The scale of the results of the 2011 census, with 847,000 Silesian declarations (as many as 376,000 people indicated Silesian as their only identification), was surprising, which was also felt on a nationwide scale. Hence, expectations were high, but also mobilisation on the occasion of the next census gained momentum. While only a few years ago Robert Geisler, commenting on the discourse in relation to Silesian nationality, emphasised that it was the Silesian Autonomy Movement that was the actor whose activity was greater than that of others (Geisler 2016), in this case the situation is different. Public space is no longer controlled by just one entity, while activities in this area are dispersed. The 2021 Census has resulted in the mobilisation of communities. This alliance involved several dozen larger and smaller organisations focused on promoting Silesianness in various fields such as culture (e.g. Pro Loquela Silesiana), political competition (e.g. Silesian Regional Party, Silesian Autonomy Movement), cultivation of historical memory (e.g. www.wachtyrz.eu), etc. In 2020 a tangible effect of this mobilisation was the establishment of the Committee of Silesian Organisations,

also known as Śląska Sztama, that is the agreement of these associations itself became known as “Ślōnsko Sztama” (www.slonzoki.pl 2020).

Besides the local and regional organisations and their activists, MEP Łukasz Kohut, MP Monika Rosa, MP Maciej Kopiec and MS Marek Plura were particularly active, also in the case concerning a draft act changing the regulations to make the Silesian language an ethnolect. They acted as ambassadors of these issues at the national as well as EU levels (www.slonzoki.pl 2020). Apart from handling legislative initiatives and using parliamentary tools, they publicised the issues in areas corresponding to their respective positions. Łukasz Kohut’s speech to the European Parliament made in the Silesian dialect in December 2020 was particularly memorable. In the local and social media there were opinions that it had been a moment of significant attention for the Silesians on the international forum (Łukasz Kohut’s social media).

On its website, the Committee of Silesian Organisations gives detailed instructions on how to correctly declare Silesian nationality and language in the census form. It also lists the census centres where support can be obtained in this area (www.slonzoki.pl).

The mobilisation campaign for declaring Silesian nationality was emblematic. Due to the structure of the census form, in order to be able to identify oneself as Silesian, one should initially choose the option „other” in the question about nationality, and similarly in the case of language. Hence, the graphic design and various promotional materials necessarily combined the term „other” with „Silesian”, which creates a symptomatic pair. Silesianness may therefore appear as a deviation, as a somehow illegitimate identification, also due to its complexity. This aspect will be discussed later. The debate was attended by figures from the spheres of culture (e.g. Szczepan Twardoch) and science (e.g. Prof. Małgorzata Myśliwiec). It was a desire to show that Silesianness had a serious face and it was not something to be ashamed of, nor was it reserved for stereotypically associated groups (wachturz.eu).

The period of the debate on the census, before it even started, was also a time of a discussion on granting the Silesian dialect the status of a regional language. This is because in the first quarter of 2021, the Council of Ministers gave its opinion on the parliamentary draft law amending the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and regional language. Its authors argue that the recognition of Kashubian as a regional language is not the result of some sudden systemic transformation, but the victory of an extra-linguistic factor, which took the form of a political decision. This factor was the determination, driven by the sense of identity, to preserve their regional language, which also characterises the

attitude of the Silesians towards the Silesian language (www.monika-rosa.pl, cf. Kamusella 2013, Kamusella 2016). After all, this is already the fifth initiative in this matter (cf. Osadnik 2021a). In February 2021, the aforementioned draft of the position issued by the Ministry of Interior Affairs and Administration appeared, which aroused much controversy. The authors present three groups of sentences critical of the proposal. Firstly, those from academic disputes about the differences between ethnolects and languages. Secondly, the excessive cost of implementing such changes. This is because they would result in the state budget's support for, among other things, language teaching in schools. The third and most significant argument is that it would pose a threat to the continuity of the Polish language, which could disappear as a result of the stimulation of further regionalisms (Ferfecki 2021). This argument caused quite a stir, as similar aspirations had not previously been interpreted as a threat to the Polish language or Polish culture. Such were also Silesian activists' comments, who claimed that there was hostility of the authorities towards the Silesians. In this context, the necessity to choose the „other” option in order to be able to declare the use of the Silesian language is as symptomatic as the corresponding arrangement regarding a declaration of nationality.

The described situation can be treated as metaphorical in several dimensions. A metaphor comes in handy in such research as that conducted by Maria Szmeja. Firstly, this „otherness” is a response to the impossibility of finding oneself in a strictly defined and unambiguously identified framework. It is undoubtedly an expression of a borderland character, whose classic description is the analogy to border stones by Emil Szramek (Szmeja 2017, Szramek 1934). Moreover, this declared „otherness” is otherness not as a coherent difference from the others, but also as internal diversity. For Silesia is not diversified in terms of a single national identity (Szmeja 2017). Just as the dialect itself differs to a small extent depending on the subregion (e.g. Cieszyn Silesia). Secondly, „otherness” also has its deeper meaning, falling within the scope of considerations on the grounds of political anthropology or political theory. The Other—in the sense of a theoretical figure—is part of a cultural and political, or even imaginary, resource used to define a political community. In this sense, the Other (or intruder) can serve as interesting heuristics on the question of the very political community to whose boundary this otherness refers. This is already evident in the previously discussed draft of the position of the Council of Ministers on the Silesian language, for it expresses above all an expectation concerning the Polish language and what it should be like. Consequently, it says more about the national community itself than about Silesia or the Silesian language.

In the case of language, an interpretation drawing on political theory can also be presented. From the perspective of the process of emancipation, and therefore the perspective of subjectivity (gaining subjectivity or expanding it), it provides interesting interpretations. Theorists consider language as an important feature of a recognised political subject, capable of representation. Although the remarks refer to the working class, they are nevertheless characterised by a certain universality. Language is what determines the socio-political condition or even makes it possible, determines the inclusion of an individual or a group into a political community (cf. Rancière 2004, Marzec 2016, cf. also Arendt 2007). The refusal to legalise the language of a given social group can, in this light, be interpreted as a form of refusal of political existence through the non-‘illegitimacy’ of a symbolic tool for expressing oneself and one’s needs, which is undoubtedly language, which in such circumstances is a political phenomenon.

This intensity of the political also correlates with the more radical overtones of the statements about the position of the central authorities towards both the Census and the language. A diagnosis of a threat entails hostility. This was also influenced by the fact that in the 2011 census the number of Silesian declarations reached such a high level, and almost half of them were declarations of only Silesian identity. Despite this, however, the entire decade did not bring any changes of a legal nature in the status of the Silesians (Osadnik 2021b). Consequently, the possibility of using Carl Schmitt’s classic concept of the political as an interpretative framework emerges. The author of *Political Theology* associated the political with enmity that arises from existential contradictions when parties identify themselves as a threat to their own survival (Schmitt 2007). This is, of course, a model extreme situation described by Schmitt. However, it has a heuristic potential, especially if it is assumed that it is the occurrence of enmity that creates political existence as such.

The intensity of the political is also compounded by the fact that it is a highly political issue to decide who counts as a subject. As Wiktor Marzec repeats after Jacques Rancière, referring to the subjectivity of the working class, the distribution of places in an imagined social entirety is a political activity. The process of obtaining subjectivity is a unique form of intrusion and a demand for recognition (Marzec 2016). However, we are not talking about recognition as an undefined perception of existence, but about obtaining the qualities inherent in a political subject, such as, for example, the aforementioned language.

The arguments used by Śląska Sztama and its representatives also emphasise the qualities that characterise sovereignty in the proper sense of subjectivity. It is, among others, the necessity of an independent „head count”

(Jedlecki 2021). It is the possibility of creating a weapon in the political struggle for further issues that remain open (Malinowska 2021). These and similar arguments often appear in the narratives of regional activists. At the same time, it is a demand to develop one's own subjectivity and bargaining chips for the future, which will allow a transgression of the former condition of this subjectivity.

A certain form of solidarity of activists with other ethnic groups, such as Kashubians, is also significant. As reported by the Kaszuby Foundation and Łukasz Kohut on social media, three weeks after the launch of the census self-response, Kashubian diacritical marks, previously missing, were introduced into the form. This happened thanks to publicising the issue also by parliamentarians associated with Śląska Sztama (Twitter of the Kaszuby Foundation; Łukasz Kohut's Facebook profile). When this element is complemented with arguments referring to multiculturalism as an added value that serves the community as a whole and not only the interested group (Osadnik 2021b), it illuminates an important element of subjectivity, which is the consideration of one's own interests in the prevailing political system and linking them to the interests of a higher order as a whole, which fosters their articulation, builds alliances, support and eventually increases the chance of their fulfilment.

Conclusions

The activities under analysis seem to be an argument in favour of the polemic with statements concerning the Silesian population's apolitical nature and awkwardness, which are easily subject to mythologisation and stereotyping (Ozimek 2018). Social processes also influence the population of Silesia (cf. Zalega 2021); not only those past processes (increasingly being of interest to historians), but also contemporary ones that open up a space of political competition and the possibility of becoming a part of the modern forms of regionalism (Bałdys, Geisler 2014).

Elements of political subjectivity seem to play an important role here. Regionalism lives strongly in the sphere of culture, but not only. This sphere is after all secured by gestures, decisions, compromises of a definitely political character. This ranges from a financial issue allowing for education and the cultivation of customs and remembrance, to the inclusion of legitimate subjects, not intruders, into the community.

One can assume that the Silesians are aware of this. Hence the whole range of measures taken recently. A wide range of mobilisation, integration, aggregation of interests, the most important of which at this time is the promotion and instructions concerning the census. There has also occurred a coordination

of activities which, drawing on past events (the results of the 2011 Census), seek to break away from incidentality and create a sustainable capacity to influence reality in the existing political conditions. In the narrative layer, on the other hand, we observe attempts to link the particularism of one's own group with the universal interest of the entire community, as well as a growing awareness of the political nature of content that seemingly appears to be non-political, and the necessary sovereignty in action that facilitates anticipatory measures, which seems to be the result of a series of disappointments with the past decisions of the central authorities.

The considerations presented in this paper in relation to the attributes of political subjectivity of the Silesians lead to an observation of a paradoxical process. On the one hand, the existence of this numerous ethnic groups and the accompanying expectations of recognition and institutional security of cultural practices in the sense of not only propagating one's own identity, but also contributing to its long-term persistence, are met with refusal. As a result, this political subjectivity is in suspension, not fully constituted. On the other hand, this refusal gives rise to resistance that is all the stronger and more political, the blunter this refusal is. This, in turn, integrates the group against the common opponent, and makes it possible to determine relatively common actions and political goals, which in effect fuels aspirations to a certain extent. However, in the long term, this can also give rise to anger. For the time being, the result of this paradoxical process is not only the emanation of a cultural and ethnic identity, but also the components of political subjectivity. We will learn, among other things, the measurable effects of this from the results of the 2021 Census.

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