

# Nations in Synthesis: the Ideology and Practices of Transnationalism in the Prussian East, 1871-1914

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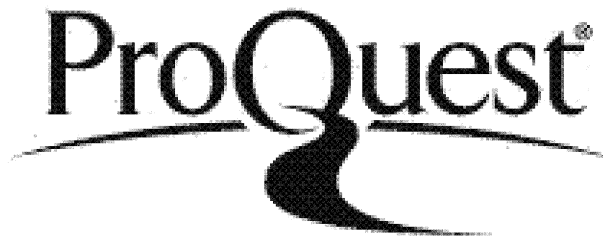
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## Abstract

The subject of this thesis is the socio-political relationship between the German and Polish nationalities that inhabited the eastern Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia in the period 1871-1914. The thesis begins with an analysis of the paradigms hitherto employed to interpret the German-Polish relationship in the region, as well as a discussion of the branch of nationalism studies concerning borderlands and regions to which this study belongs. The dominant paradigm, both in the period and in historiography, has been of 'conflict'. A national conflict existed throughout most of the nineteenth century, featuring social, economic and political dimensions. This research advances a new paradigm of 'synthesis': the social interaction between Germans and Poles produced qualitatively new identities, social structures, and cultures which transgressed the national divide, and as such, contravened the logic of nationalism as it existed in the region. Consequently, this research posits a dichotomy between 'national' and 'transnational' categories, and this distinction informs the overall structure of the thesis.

It is the aim of this study to examine the extent and socio-political significance of transnational modes of thought and behaviour in the provinces of Posen and West Prussia. This research results in a distinct and original conception of 'transnationalism' as *deviation* from national categories. The thesis therefore represents a contribution to the theory and semantics of transnationalism. It also simultaneously contributes to the understanding of nationalism by demonstrating the *limits of nationalism*, as an ideology and as a principle of community, and the potential for alternative social units to the nation.

The central question of the thesis is explored according to four main facets of the German-Polish relationship: language and semantics, regional politics, marriage and sexual bonds, and cultural institutions. This research is based upon a diverse, and largely original, range of German, Polish and English language source material. The types of primary source material used include newspapers and journals, government and police files, novels, histories and academic studies, contemporary statistics, and political writings, polemics and memoirs.



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## Contents

List of Maps and Tables	7
Introduction	9
<i>Part I- Nationalism</i>	24
Chapter 1: The Logic of Nationalism in the Prussian East	25
(i) Origins of the Interface	25
(ii) The National Conflict	34
(iii) Solutions of the Polish Question	51
(iv) Conclusion	61
Chapter 2: The Nationalization of Culture	63
(i) <i>Kultur</i> and the State	63
(ii) Institutions of Higher Learning	69
(iii) Libraries	79
(iv) Theatres	87
(v) Conclusion	94
<i>Part II- The Cultures of Transnationalism</i>	96
Chapter 3: The Language and Semantics of Transnationalism	97
(i) Bilingualism	97
(ii) The Semantics of Nationalism	115
(iii) Conclusion	125
Chapter 4: Marriage and Sex across the National Divide	127
(i) Quantification and Methodology	128
(ii) The Primacy of Confession	140
(iii) Mixed Marriage, Nationalism, and Race	153
(iv) Conclusion	174
<i>Part III- The Politics of Transnationalism</i>	176
Chapter 5: The Politics of the ‘Catholic-Polish Axis’	177
(i) Origin and Ethos	177
(ii) Structure of the Axis	181
(iii) The ‘Confessional Conflict’	188
(iv) Conclusion	198
Chapter 6: Germans, Poles, and the Socialist Movement	200
(i) Ideology	200

(ii) Organisational Structure and Political Experience	209
(iii) Conclusion	227
Conclusion	230
Appendix	242
Bibliography	245

## List of Maps and Tables

### *Tables*

- I Populations of the Regencies of Posen and West Prussia by Nationality and Confession in 1861- p. 38
- II Populations of the Regencies of Posen and West Prussia by Nationality and Confession on 1 December 1890- p. 39
- III Principal Employment in Posen, West Prussia, and the Prussian State, 1882-1907- p. 40
- IV Distribution of Nationalities among Principal Occupational Groups in Posen, 1882-1907 (%) - p. 45
- V Distribution of Nationalities among Principal Occupational Groups in West Prussia, 1882-1907 (%) - p. 46
- VI Language Distribution in Posen and West Prussia, 1849-1910- p. 99
- VII Language of Children in the Elementary Schools of Posen and West Prussia, 1886-1911- p. 114
- VIII Polish-German Marriage in the City of Posen, 1815-1848- p. 130
- IX Catholic-Protestant Marriage in the City of Posen, 1815-1848- p. 130
- X Total Mixed-Confession Marriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Posen and West Prussia, 1870 -1910- p. 132
- XI Mixed-Confession Marriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Rural Communities, 1870-1910- p. 133
- XII Mixed-Confession Marriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Towns, 1870-1910- p. 134
- XIII German and Polish Marriages in Posen in 1911- p. 136
- XIV Marriages between Germans and Poles in the City of Posen, 1905-1914- p. 137
- XV Marriages between Protestants and Catholics in the City of Posen, 1905-1914- p. 138

- XVI Relative Frequency of Mixed-Confession Marriage according to Gender- p. 139
- XVII Confessional Status of the Children of Catholic-Protestant Marriage in Prussia on 1 December 1885- p. 150
- XVIII Population Change of Catholics and Protestants in the Regencies of Posen and West Prussia, 1871-1900- p. 179
- XIX Reichstag Mandates-Posen, 1871-1912- p. 182
- XX Reichstag Mandates-West Prussia, 1871-1912- p. 182
- XXI Landtag Abgeordnetenhaus Mandates-Posen, 1867-1913- p. 183
- XXII Landtag Abgeordnetenhaus Mandates-West Prussia, 1867-1913- p.183
- XXIII Social Democrat Membership in the Provinces of Central and Eastern Prussia, 1906-1914- p. 222
- XXIV Denomination and the Social Democrat Vote for the Reichstag in 1907- p. 225
- A1 Reichstag Mandates-Posen and West Prussia, 1871-1912- p. 242

#### *Maps*

- A2 German and Polish Settlement in Posen and West Prussia, circa 1913- p. 244

## Introduction

In the close confines of today's city of Posen,  
Germans and Poles treat each other like foreigners.  
(Moritz Jaffé, 1909).<sup>1</sup>

Poles and Germans were divided as two completely inimical  
Peoples; there was no contact between them.  
(Eugen Kühnemann, 1937).<sup>2</sup>

Poles and Germans are so mixed together that a political division  
would harm the one or the other people.  
(Dietrich Schäfer, 1913).<sup>3</sup>

In the back of Schulze's farm sheds, they're kicking up a row,  
the Polish ox is dancing with the German cow!<sup>4</sup>

It was the paradox of German-Polish history that Germans and Poles were at once enemies and lovers, strangers and friends; multiple forms of interaction structured the national relationship as it existed in the German Empire. The problematic at the centre of this paradox was not only a matter of hermeneutics, but also of the viability of a particular mode of social existence: the nation. In the German-Polish provinces this question became ever more critical as the two principal nationalities became increasingly embroiled in conflict during the latter decades of the nineteenth century. A radical and highly significant feature of this dialectic was that certain individuals and groups came to deviate from national categories of thought and behaviour, effecting the creation of 'transnational' modes of existence. It is the formation and political significance of these transnational practices and ideologies which is the subject of this study.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Jaffé, *Die Stadt Posen unter preussischer Herrschaft: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Ostens* (Leipzig, 1909), p. 407.

<sup>2</sup> Eugen Kühnemann was the first rector of the Posen Academy, opened in 1903 as part of the government's Germanization programme of the eastern provinces. E. Kühnemann, *Mit unbefangener Stirn. Mein Lebensbuch* (Heilbronn, 1937), p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Die deutsche Ostmark* (Lissa, 1913), p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> 'Hinter Schulze's Schuppen da giht's lustig zu, tanzt der pul'sche Ochse mit der deutschen Kuh'. Popular rhyme of 18<sup>th</sup> century origin. Quoted in R. Arnold, *Geschichte der deutschen Polenliteratur von den Anfängen bis 1800* (Halle, 1900), p. 8.

In relation to the Prussian East, the national relationship has been understood according to a number of interpretative paradigms which have structured both contemporary and historical understanding. A paradigm of *conflict* has been the dominant one for the analysis and interpretation of relations between Germans and Poles during the nineteenth century (and after). In essence, the growth of two national movements during the course of the century, and the oppressive policies exercised against the Polish nationality by successive Prussian governments, resulted in national *conflict*; Germans and Poles struggled over national rights, and against the perceived threat to the survival of their national communities. This paradigm is typical in the historiographical field. German and Polish scholarship concerning the German-Polish relationship between the Partitions of Poland and the First World War has, by tradition, centred on Prussian *Polenpolitik* and the adversarial social and political aspects of the relationship.<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of these critiques, it has been natural to utilize a bipartite national model. Studies such as William Hagen's history of Germans, Poles and Jews in the Prussian East have characterized the German-Polish relationship explicitly as a 'nationality conflict'.<sup>6</sup> This characterization originated in the vocabulary of Imperial Germany, where it was commonly articulated by the term 'Nationalitätenkampf'. The concept of 'national conflict' has subsequently been applied in a number of recent studies of European nationalism to a wide range of European regions.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For example, B. Balzer, *Die preussische Polenpolitik 1894-1908 und die Haltung der deutschen konservativen und liberalen Partei* (Frankfurt am M., 1990); S. Baske, *Praxis und Prinzipien der preussischen Polenpolitik vom Beginn der Reaktionszeit bis zur Gründung des Deutschen Reiches* (Berlin, 1963); M. Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik* (Frankfurt am M., 1978); K. Zernack (ed.), *Polen und die polnische Frage in der Geschichte der Hohenzollernmonarchie 1701-1871* (Berlin, 1982); C. Pletzing, *Vom Völkerfrühling zum nationalen Konflikt- Deutscher und Polnischer Nationalismus in Ost- und Westpreussen 1830-1871* (Wiesbaden, 2003); J. Kulczycki, *School Strikes in Prussian Poland 1901-1907: The Struggle over Bilingual Education* (New York, 1981); R. Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire (1871-1900)* (New York, 1981); J. Wojciak, *Walka polityczna w Wyborach do Parlamentu Rzeszy, Sejmu Pruskiego w Poznańskim w latach 1898-1914* (Warszawa, 1981); L. Trzeciakowski, *The Kulturkampf in Prussian Poland* (New York, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews; the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914* (Chicago, 1981). See also, H. Rosenthal, *German and Pole: National Conflict and Modern Myth* (Gainesville, 1976) and R. Jaworski, *Handel und Gewerbe im Nationalitätenkampf: Studien zur Wirtschaftsgesinnung der Polen in der Provinz Posen (1871-1914)* (Göttingen, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> For instance, P. Ther and H. Sundhausen, *Nationalitätenkonflikte im 20. Jahrhundert: Ursachen von inter-ethnischer Gewalt im Vergleich* (Wiesbaden, 2001); I. Oswald, *Nationalitätenkonflikte im östlichen Teil Europas* (Berlin, 1993). For a classic study of the national conflict between Germans and Czechs, see E. Wiskemann, *Czechs and Germans: A Study of the Struggle in the Historic Provinces of Bohemia and Moravia* (Oxford, 1938).

A directly contrasting paradigm is that of *cooperation*. *Cooperation* occurred, for example, when the Catholic Centre Party began to collaborate with Polish political leaders during the 1870s for particular domestic political ends, such as agricultural protectionism and in order to oppose socialism. Although specific actions and experiences denoted by this concept have not usually been historiographically significant, in recent years, research has appeared which has aimed to explore and highlight the nuances of social life between Germans and Poles. In doing so, such work has often brought out the 'cooperative' or 'symbiotic' aspects of life between national groups at a local level.<sup>8</sup>

A third paradigm is that of *exchange*. The technical meaning of *exchange* is the act of (conscious) giving, with the receiving back of something else in return. It is, therefore, a two-way (or more) activity between two (or more) parties. In reference to the German-Polish relationship, instances of *exchange* are discernable in history. An example is that of the commemorations held at Thorn in February 1873, where German and Polish committees arranged two separate events to celebrate the birthday of Copernicus. Representatives from each of these organisations were invited to the other's event, where publications were exchanged between them.<sup>9</sup> By far the most eminent form of *exchange*, however, is economic exchange, or trade. The specifically economic relationship between Germans and Poles was one that has been considered as critical in period and later accounts of the national relationship. In addition to immediate forms of *exchange* between national groups, looser processes of two-way transfer over longer time spans are also conceivable; accordingly, the concept has been

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<sup>8</sup> For example, J. Sziling and M. Wojciechowski (eds.), *Neighborhood Dilemmas; the Poles, the Germans and the Jews in Pomerania Along the Vistula River in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Torun, 2002); N. Davies, *Microcosm: Portrait of a Central European City* (London, 2002); B. Lauer and H. Nogossek (eds.), *Polen, Deutsche und Kaschuben-Alltag, Brauchtum und Volkskultur auf dem Gut Hochpaleschken in Westpreussen um 1900* (Kassel, 1997); H. Hecker, *Deutsche, Slawen und Balten: Aspekte des Zusammenlebens im Osten des Deutschen Reiches und in Ostmitteleuropa* (Bonn, 1989); R. Blanke, 'When Germans and Poles Lived Together: from the History of German-Polish Relations', in Bullivant (ed.), *Germany and Eastern Europe: Cultural Identities and Cultural Differences* (Amsterdam, 1999) pp. 37-55; L. Trzeciakowski, 'Polen und Deutsche im alltäglichen Leben in Posen im 19. Jahrhundert', *Studia Historica Slavo-Germanica*, XVIII (1994), 35-49.

<sup>9</sup> K. Wajda, 'The Poles and Germans in West Prussia Province in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century', in Sziling and Wojciechowski (eds.), *Neighborhood Dilemmas; the Poles, the Germans and the Jews in Pomerania along the Vistula River in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Torun, 2002), pp. 9-19 (p. 13).



deployed explicitly by scholars, usually in reference to cases of cultural, linguistic or intellectual transmission over national borders.<sup>10</sup>

At the heart of all the paradigms discussed, indeed intrinsic to the very concept of interaction between national phenomena, is a seemingly paradoxical relationship between 'identity' and 'interaction'. This paradox lies in their mutual dependency: 'identity' is a prerequisite for 'interaction', but conversely, 'interaction' determines 'identity'. Both are tied in perpetual negotiation. In purely theoretical and reductionist terms we are presented with two ideal-typical processes, one of *interaction-before-identity* and one of *identity-before-interaction*. It is, of course, the case that in social reality this distinction is always one of degree, not of kind. In other words, we are presented with paradigms that differ by their respective points of emphasis and focus.

The paradigms of conflict, cooperation, and exchange, despite their qualitative differences, emplot processes of *identity-before-interaction*. In each case the primary analytical focus is the way in which predetermined and seemingly stable national identities interact; identity precedes engagement with the other. The mutability of national identity tends to be excluded or minimised because of the analytical need for stable categories. Moreover, the binary national construct is itself dependent upon the popular affirmation of this paradigm. To this end, statistics, language, and institutions each contributed in Imperial Germany and have done similarly since. The terminology widely found in contemporary discourse such as 'Polenfrage' and 'Nationalitätskonflikte' semantically constructed national difference.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the binary relationship was, as it will be shown, constructed and sustained through institutions and the foundational analyses of statistical science.

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<sup>10</sup> For example, R. Breyer, *Nachbarn seit Tausend Jahren: Deutsche und Polen in Bildern und Dokumenten* (Mainz, 1976); K. Sauerland (ed.), *Kulturtransfer Polen-Deutschland. Wechselbeziehungen in Sprache, Kultur und Gesellschaft*, 2 vols (Bonn, 2001); M. Lasatowicz (ed.), *Assimilation-Abgrenzung-Austausch: Interkulturalität in Sprache und Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999); M. Schalenberg (ed.), *Kulturtransfer im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1998); S. Szenic, *Za Zachodnią Miedzą. Polacy w życiu Niemiec XVIII i XIX wieku* (Warszawa, 1973). Karol Sauerland has led the study of cultural transfer or 'exchange' between nations, particularly in reference to Germany and east European nations. Research of this kind has shown how cultural transfer is not a one-way process, but multi-directional and inconsistent. Transnational relations and imitation are shown to have been long-standing and major features of European culture. Sensitivity to the consequences of 'exchange' between nation-states has also been promoted by works of 'Transfer History' by scholars such as Michael Werner and Michel Espagne associated with the 'Paris School'.

<sup>11</sup> Among the more eminent examples were Hans Delbrück's *Die Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1894) and L. Bernhard, *Die Polenfrage: das polnische Gemeinwesen im preussischen Staat* (Leipzig, 1907).

Conversely, there are paradigms which emplot processes of *interaction-before-identity*. In other words, the analytical foci are principally the processes by which social interaction determines identity. Paradigms of this genus are distinguishable by their focus upon, or emphasis of, transformative processes. Of this type, 'assimilation', a concept of ethno-cultural change, has been one of the most important examples in the social sciences. A process of assimilation is understood as one in which a minority individual or group adopts the culture of a dominant group, complete homogenization being the ultimate outcome.<sup>12</sup> The modern meaning of assimilation was rendered in Imperial Germany by the terms 'Germanization' and 'Polonization'.<sup>13</sup> Recent scholarship of the German-Polish relationship has started to readdress questions of assimilation (and 'acculturation': the diffusion of an alien culture into a society) between these two nationalities in central-eastern Europe, beginning with attempts to critically assess the meaning of these concepts, involving dialogue between

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<sup>12</sup> The model of assimilation is therefore inherently teleological. B. Nelson and R. Teske, 'Acculturation and Assimilation: a Clarification', *American Ethnologist*, 2 (1974), 351-367; B. Dohrenwend and R. Smith, 'Toward a Theory of Acculturation', *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 18 (1962), 30-39; F. Heckmann, *Ethnische Minderheiten, Volk und Nation. Soziologie inter-ethnischer Beziehungen* (Stuttgart, 1992); N. Elias and J. Scotson, *Etablierte und Aussenseiter* (Frankfurt, 1990).

<sup>13</sup> In Imperial Germany, these terms popularly denoted the processes by which members of one nationality became assimilated by the other, and consequently, each concept held strongly negative connotations for nationalists on the opposing side. The meaning of the terms 'Germanization' and 'Polonization' in the literature of German-Polish history has rarely been made clear. Witold Molik has written 'only rarely have historians offered in their considerations clear definitions of this term. The content of much work shows that its author understands the term "Germanization" variously and often does not differentiate Germanization as a process of national-cultural change from the political Germanization of the Prussian government. Rare also are works in which the author defines at the outset the term "Polonization"'. Bolesław Grześ has, however, suggested that the term 'Germanization' was used in Imperial Germany in the following ways: first, to refer to measures directed against the Poles; secondly, a process of change (of people and institutions); thirdly, the denationalization of the Polish population. It is also significant that there were different 'degrees' of Germanization. It was usual for provincial presidents to make recommendations to central government concerning the policies required in their provinces, and clear differences in sentiment and strategy are discernable between presidents. For instance, Karl von Horn, who had been appointed provincial president of Posen by Bismarck in 1862, rejected in principle the giving of concessions to the Poles, and consequently regarded as dangerous the government's decision to appoint Mieczysław Ledóchowski as archbishop of Gnesen-Posen. He held that the smallest concessions would lead to demands for more. It is demonstrable, however, that in numerous instances the refusal to make concessions did not further the government's ultimate goal of Germanization, but fuelled the fire of Polish nationalism. A somewhat softer approach was represented by Hugo von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, appointed president of Posen in 1891. He had advocated a process of gradual Germanization without the use of confrontational policies. W. Molik, 'Procesy asymilacyjne i akulturacyjne w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich w XIX i na początku XX wieku. Stan i postulaty badań', in Molik and Traba (eds.), *Procesy akulturacji/asymilacji na pograniczu polsko-niemieckim w XIX i XX wieku* (Poznań, 1999), pp. 65-96 (p. 69); B. Grześ, *Niemcy w Poznanskiem wobec polityki germanizacyjnej: 1815-1920* (Poznań, 1976), p. 213.

anthropologists, historians and sociologists.<sup>14</sup> These developments mark a response to the predominantly dichotomous interpretation of the German-Polish relationship in the historical field. The more transgressive and 'symbiotic' features of this relationship have been until now relatively neglected.<sup>15</sup>

The present study advances a further paradigm of *synthesis*: a process in which the combination of contradictory phenomena produces something qualitatively new.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The concept of *acculturation* has been considered synonymous with *assimilation*.

<sup>15</sup> For an assessment of this project see W. Molik and R. Traba (eds.), *Procesy akulturacji/asymilacji na pograniczu polsko-niemieckim w XIX i XX wieku* (Poznań, 1999). For an overview of the recent historiography in this category, see Witold Molik's essay in the aforementioned volume: 'Procesy asymilacyjne i akulturacyjne w stosunkach polsko-niemieckiego w XIX i na początku XX wieku. Stan i postulaty badań' (pp. 65-96). Most studies pertaining specifically to processes of national change in the Prussian East have hitherto been based upon the territories of the Ermland (Warmia), Masuria, and Silesia. The research of assimilation in Posen or West Prussia is relatively undeveloped. Research of this kind has focused particularly upon the role of schools, universities and military service as mediators of assimilation, the integration of Poles in the Ruhr district, German Protestants in the Kingdom of Poland, and biographical accounts of the assimilation of prominent individuals, an eminent example being the Polish nationalist Wojciech Kętrzyński. Examples of this kind of research include: W. Molik, 'Die Assimilation der polnischen Intelligenz im preussischen Teilungsgebiet durch Bildung 1871-1914', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 32 (1992), 81-93; J. Tazbir, 'Procesy Polonizacyjne w Szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej', *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 1 (1987); K. Korzon, *Wojciech Kętrzyński 1838-1918. Zarys biograficzny* (Wrocław, 1993); M. Heinemann, 'Die Assimilation fremdsprachiger Schulkinder durch Volksschule in Preussen seit 1880', *Bildung und Erziehung*, 1 (1975), 53-69. Max Bar's *Die Bamberger bei Posen, zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Polonisierungsbestrebungen in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1882) is an important period example of the study of assimilatory processes.

<sup>16</sup> The concept of 'synthesis' (from the Greek *syn*, i.e. 'together', and *tithenai*, i.e. 'to set') is one of the most fundamental concepts in western thought; it is also one of the most complex, and has had a number of uses in philosophy since the Greeks, as well as in the modern social and natural sciences. Thomas Greenwood has listed the following five cases: (i) in logic, the general method of deduction or deductive reasoning; (ii) the logical composition or combination of separate elements of thought; and also the result of this process; (iii) the logical process of adding some elements to the comprehension of a concept in order to obtain its 'logical division'...; (iv) the third phase in the dialectical process, combining the thesis and the antithesis for the emergence of a new level of being; (v) in *natural philosophy*, the process of combining various material elements into a new substance... Also, the complex substance so formed. Cf. D. Runes (ed.), *The Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York, 2001). It is apparent from these cases that 'synthesis' may refer to a process or its outcome. As a process it is essentially one in which a qualitatively new condition is produced by interaction or contradiction. Of the five cases given above, the meaning of synthesis in *logic* (usage (i)) is the oldest and most fundamental. The beginnings of dialectical argumentation are usually associated with Zeno of Elea and Socrates in the Platonic dialogues, but it was left to Aristotle to create the science of formal logic. A highly significant development in the meaning of dialectic occurred in German idealist philosophy at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, the notion of contradiction was extended to reality as a whole. For Hegel this meant a continual process involving the resolution of contradictions generated in thought; world history was the objective character of thought (usage (iv)). The famous triadic formulation of 'thesis', 'antithesis', and 'synthesis' was subsequently provided by Fichte. According to the philosophy of Marx and Engels (cf. 'Historical Materialism' and 'Dialectical Materialism') 'matter' is the primary reality, and in Marxian thought the contradiction takes the form of oppositional class interests whose resolution (synthesis) takes the form of a social transformation. It is with Hegel and Marx that the modern usage of dialectic is most closely associated in the social sciences. In particular, the term dialectic represents a key concept in social science, namely the idea that social agents, in pursuing their objectives, can effect social

Accordingly, it is to be argued that the social interaction between Germans and Poles produced identities, social structures, and cultures which transgressed the national divide, and as such, contravened the logic of nationalism as it existed in the region; consequently, these are designated as forms of *transnationalism*.<sup>17</sup> This research therefore posits a dichotomy between ‘national’ and ‘transnational’ categories of thought and behaviour. It is the aim of this study to elucidate the formation of transnational modes of thought and behaviour in the German-Polish provinces, their scope and political significance, and in doing so, to offer a contribution to the theory and semantics of transnationalism. A definition of the transnational as *deviation* from national categories will be advanced in conclusion.

The broader meaning of the national-transnational dichotomy in modern society is elucidated further with reference to Zygmunt Bauman’s reflections upon modernity. According to Bauman’s sociological narrative, modernity’s central drive has been the maximization of conceptual order in a world of flux and contradiction. The paradigms of *identity-before-interaction* discussed above serve to establish this hermeneutic order. In the Prussian East, this drive became manifest in the nation-state’s efforts to reinforce

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phenomena that are distinct from, even contradictory to, the desired objective. The dual applicability of the concept of synthesis to ‘consciousness’ and to ‘matter’ makes it particularly applicable in the analysis of nationalism which has both ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ components. This dual applicability is utilized in this study where the paradigm potentially encompasses forms of consciousness, behaviour, and material artifacts. For a general overview of the semantics of ‘dialectic’, see R. Williams, *Keywords* (London, 1988) and R. Boudon and F. Bourricaud, *A Critical Dictionary of Sociology* (London, 1989); L. Schieder, ‘Dialectic in Sociology’, *American Sociological Review*, 36 (1971), 667-678. For an introduction to dialectical theory in the Hegelian and Marxian traditions, see K. Popper, ‘What is Dialectic?’, in *Conjectures and Refutations* (London, 1965), pp. 312-335; H. Action, *The Illusion of the Epoch: Marxism-Leninism as a Philosophical Creed* (London, 1955); H. Selsam and H. Martel (eds.), *Reader in Marxist Philosophy* (New York, 1973).

<sup>17</sup> In this study, the term *nationalism* refers to the following national phenomena collectively: (a) ideology, (b) socio-political movements, and (c) symbolism and discourse. This classification follows Anthony D. Smith’s analysis. Ideology is considered here the most fundamental of these, since *nationalism* is, before all else, an idea. Its goals may, however, vary, as German-Polish history shows. In the period of this study, the goal of Polish nationalism varied. Some Poles wished for the attainment of an independent Polish state, others for increased national rights or a degree of autonomy. In comparison, German nationalism had achieved a nation-state; its goals were invariably the consolidation, defence, or expansion of the state. The history of the German-Polish borderlands supports the view that nationalism is essentially a ‘politico-subjective’ condition. Nationalism is an ideology which, upon the basis of any criteria, defines its community as distinct from others, and affirms its collective wish for some degree of self-determination or sovereignty. These goals have invariably meant the creation of, or aspiration for, a state. Nations and nationalities are defined as the communities which result from the ideology of nationalism. A. Smith, *Nationalism* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 1-20. The classical statement of this essentially politico-subjective ‘voluntaristic’ conception of nationalism is Ernest Renan’s essay ‘Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?’ (‘What is a Nation?’). E. Renan, *Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?* (Paris, 1882).

its national border and elevate national consciousness under the constant threat of national instability from the incursions of the opposing nationality. The drive for conceptual order is one that is intrinsic to all nationalisms, perhaps the only constituting element common to all.<sup>18</sup>

Bauman advances a tripartite model of the 'friend', 'enemy' and 'stranger' to symbolise how the drive for hermeneutic certainty, and its collapse, has been manifest within the life-world. The 'friend' and 'enemy' correspond to the anthropological binary of self and other, the latter serving to define the identity of the former.<sup>19</sup> But the 'stranger' is one whose identity defies the classification upon which the social order depends. Bauman writes:

Some strangers are not, however, the *as-yet-undecided*; they are, in principle, *undecidables*. They are the premonition of that 'third element' which should not be. These are the true hybrids, the monsters- not just *unclassified*, but *unclassifiable*. They do not question just this one opposition here and now: they question oppositions as such, the very principle of the opposition, the plausibility of dichotomy it suggests and feasibility of separation it demands. They unmask the brittle artificiality of division.<sup>20</sup>

In the Prussian East, in a context infused with national ideology, it was the *transnational*, manifest either in ideology, symbolism or collective action, which performed the role of the 'stranger'; its processes and discourses were 'abnormal' and 'anomalous', its traces oblique. National categories were 'normal' and predominant and corresponded to the 'friend' and 'enemy'.

The experience of transnationalism in the Eastern Marches is explored in this study through the research of four main facets of the German-Polish relationship: language and semantics, regional politics, marriage and sex, and cultural institutions.<sup>21</sup> The

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<sup>18</sup> For the reason that despite the wide qualitative differences between individual cases of nationalism, nationalism is first and foremost a sectarian doctrine; without a principle of inclusion/exclusion nationalism cannot exist and this purpose necessitates a degree of conceptual order. Z. Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (New York, 1991), pp. 2-3, 53-61.

<sup>19</sup> The concept of self-definition in relation to the other is in fact well established across many disciplines. For instance, models of identity construction of this kind are found in the historical scholarship of *Feindschaft* images. See M. Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1792-1918* (Stuttgart, 1992) and K. v. See, *Freiheit und Gemeinschaft: völkisch-nationales Denken in Deutschland zwischen Französischer Revolution und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Heidelberg, 2001). The concept has been a common one in continental philosophy, notably in the work of Hegel, Sartre, and Levinas.

<sup>20</sup> Bauman, *Modernity*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>21</sup> The terms 'Ostmark' and 'Ostmarken' (Eastern Marches) were used in Imperial Germany to refer collectively to the Prussian provinces of Posen, West Prussia, Silesia, East Prussia, and eastern

research is empirically based upon the adjoining provinces of Posen and West Prussia between 1871 and 1914. This period begins with the founding of the German Empire, the beginnings of the *Kulturkampf*, and the introduction of major policies of Germanization against the Polish minority; it ends with the outbreak of war, the juncture that ultimately led to the collapse of German hegemony in the region and the creation of a Polish state. The historical narrative of the interim years was predominantly determined by the seemingly insuperable contradiction between national interests. Posen and West Prussia were the most contested of the mixed-nationality provinces in the East; both had been part of the Polish Commonwealth, and consequently had large Polish minority populations. For this reason the two provinces were the central focus of Germanization policy. Being at the centre of the national conflict, the changes in the German-Polish relationship that occurred here, both quantitative and qualitative, were of the greatest political significance. The temporal range of this study enables the elucidation of both the short- and long-term significance of these processes.

The interpretation of border territories and ‘regions’, particularly those located in Eastern Europe, has emerged as an important area of research in the study of nationalism. This has been symptomatic of a more general re-evaluation of the nation-state as a normative unit for historical analysis in contemporary scholarship. The paradox of this re-evaluation has been that two apparently opposite tendencies have developed. On the one hand, a disparate field of research has focused upon supra-national (or ‘transnational’) structures and processes, inspired, at least in part, by the advancement of political, economic and cultural processes of integration in contemporary Europe and the wider world.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, scholars have taken

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Pomerania. The term ‘Eastern Marches’ is used in this study in reference to Posen and West Prussia specifically.

<sup>22</sup> The terms ‘world’, ‘global’, and ‘international’ history designate similar approaches. Included in the category of ‘transnational history’ is the research of globalization, migration, and post-colonial studies. Older areas of ‘transnational’ research have included Jewish history, intellectual history, economic and financial history, imperialism, workers’ history and the history of consumption. For an overview of recent examples of research in the field of transnational history see the following anthologies: S. Conrad and J. Osterhammel (eds.), *Das Kaiserreich transnational: Deutschland in der Welt, 1871-1914* (Göttingen, 2004) and G. Budde *et al.* (eds.), *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien* (Göttingen, 2006). There have also been attempts at writing specifically ‘European’ histories.

microhistorical approaches, focusing upon 'sub-national' entities such as regions and localities, as well as the history of everyday life (*Alltagsgeschichte*). These have represented in part a reaction to the macroscopic practices which have become established in social history.<sup>23</sup> In the research of border regions three major tendencies are discernable. First, there is scholarship which critiques the discursive hegemony of the nation-state concept; secondly, there is research which analyses the processes of nation-building and demarcation at a border; and thirdly, there are studies which interpret the specific interactions between national entities.

The first of these tendencies, involving critiques of the nation-state concept, typically seeks to revise the politico-cultural status historically conferred upon border territories. In a Europe of ascendant nationalisms and emerging nation-states during the course of the nineteenth century, border regions, with their objective features such as dialects, became viewed as inferior spaces. This was a consequence of the way in which 'nationalisation' conventionally became equated with 'modernisation'. Such a perspective grew out of the doctrines of nineteenth-century economic liberalism, according to which entities such as border regions and small nations would become assimilated by the larger, economically superior nation-states. This perspective had profound cultural underpinnings. As Stuart Woolf has written:

The enlightenment confidence in the passage from primitive tribes via feudalism to contemporary civilisation led to the...conclusion, common to all nineteenth century western intellectuals, from John Stuart Mill to Friedrich Engels, that size was an indication of human progress and a pre-condition of the nation state. The more advanced civilisation of the greater nations was beneficial to the smaller, more backward peoples, who would only gain from their incorporation within the state frontiers of the former.<sup>24</sup>

Border territories became places where nations contested their national rights with other nations. In this way, the denigration and neglect of transitional regions led to the denigration of the identities found within them. Nevertheless, their inevitable function

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For example, see M. Fulbrook (ed.), *National Histories and European History* (London, 1993); S. Woolf, *Europe and the Nation-State* (Florence, 1991); N. Davies, *Europe: a History* (Oxford, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> D. Blackbourn, 'Das Kaiserreich transnational. Eine Skizze', in Conrad and Osterhammel (eds.), *Das Kaiserreich transnational: Deutschland in der Welt, 1871-1914* (Göttingen, 2004), pp. 302-324 (pp. 302-3).

<sup>24</sup> S. Woolf, *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the present* (London, 1996), p. 9.

as economic and cultural crossing-points had conferred considerable importance upon border territories.<sup>25</sup>

An example of research which critiques the hegemony of the nation-state concept is Philipp Ther's study of the Silesian borderland, which examines the extent to which identities forged in border regions were rivalrous or supplementary to national identities, creating political programmes and mass movements of their own. Ther's approach has been to consider the viability of regionally-defined political identities.<sup>26</sup> In a similar vein, linguists have studied the border-regions of Eastern Europe and have characterised their mixed dialects as foci for identity-formation, rather than as necessary, but provisional, means of communication.<sup>27</sup>

The second area of research, of investigating the processes of nation-building and demarcation at a border, is the most extensive. Important areas of interest have included: the structure and growth of national identities and movements at the border;<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> C. Applegate, 'A Europe of Regions', *American Historical Review*, 104 (1999), 1157-1182; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780; Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 31-39; S. Berger, *The Search for Normality: national identity and historical consciousness in Germany since 1800* (Oxford, 1997). Significantly, the notion of progress could also be connected to ethnic distinctions. As Stefan Berger has argued, most nineteenth-century liberals believed in progress 'and this was linked fatally to the idea of ethnicity in that it allowed [Theodor] Mommsen and others to create a hierarchy of peoples and nations according to the degree of progress they had already achieved. There were higher cultures and higher peoples (to whom Germany, of course, belonged) and there were primitive nations (like the Slav, and in particular the Russian ones) who were mentally and physically inferior.' (pp. 24-25).

<sup>26</sup> P. Ther and H. Sundhaussen (eds.), *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismus in europäischen Zwischenräumen seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Marburg, 2003), pp. XIV-XV; P. Ther, 'Die Grenzen des Nationalismus: Der Wandel von Identitäten in Oberschlesien von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1939', in Hirschhausen and Leonhard (eds.), *Nationalismen in Europa: West- und Osteuropa im Vergleich* (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 322-346. In Posen and West Prussia, substantive political movements for regional autonomy, or of cultural particularism, were absent in the period under consideration. In this respect, the provinces of Posen and West Prussia differed from Upper Silesia where an autonomous regional movement did develop. Nevertheless, the ideas of 'Wielkopolska' (Great Poland) and 'Altpreussen' (East Prussia) are identifiable as cases of regional identities applicable during this period.

<sup>27</sup> K. Hannan, *Borders of Language and Identity in Teschen Silesia* (New York, 1996). Other works of sociodialectology have investigated how political borders can influence the formation and reformation of dialects and their interrelationships. See, for example, J. Kallen, (ed.) *Dialect Convergence and Divergence across European Borders* (Berlin, 2000).

<sup>28</sup> M. Müller and R. Petri (eds.), *Die Nationalisierung von Grenzen: zur Konstruktion nationaler Identität in sprachlich gemischten Grenzregionen* (Marburg, 2002); R. Schattkowsky and M. Müller (eds.), *Identitätenwandel und nationale Mobilisierung in Regionen ethnischer Diversität: ein regionaler Vergleich zwischen Westpreussen und Galizien am Ende des 19. und Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Marburg, 2004); L. Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland. Nationale Identität der deutsch sprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols 1860-1914* (Frankfurt, 2000); R. Schattkowsky, 'Nationalismus und Konfliktgestaltung. Westpreussen zwischen Reichsgründung und Erstem Weltkrieg', in Müller and Petri



the relationships between regional and national identities;<sup>29</sup> and state policies vis-à-vis border-territories and national minorities. A major aspect of the last of these has been the politics of language in nationally contested regions. For instance, several monographs relating to German-Polish history have illuminated in detail the *Polenpolitik*, especially language policy, of Prussian governments.<sup>30</sup>

The treatment of the German-Polish borderland in this study belongs to the third historiographical tendency identified; that is, research concerning the socio-political interaction between nationalities in Eastern Europe. Other works belonging to this genus have been previously discussed in the classification of paradigms above. The concept of interaction is logically dependent upon a principle of demarcation; in other words, the establishment of a binary relationship. Similarly, the concept of transnationalism has no reality without the establishment of the demarcation which its phenomena transgress. Consequently, the methodology of this research as it proceeds in the following chapters is to juxtapose the structure of the binary relationship with the formation of those transnational ideas and social structures which transgressed it. Therefore, Part I of the thesis examines how the national divide was structured in the

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(eds.), *Die Nationalisierung von Grenzen* (Marburg, 2002), pp. 35-79; S. Wierzbowski, *Polski ruch narodowy w Prusach Zachodnich w latach 1860-1914* (Wrocław, 1980); T. Serrier, *Provinz Posen, Ostmark, Wielkopolska. Eine Grenzregion zwischen Deutschen und Polen 1848-1914* (Marburg, 2005).  
<sup>29</sup> A. Ara and E. Kolb (eds.), *Grenzregionen im Zeitalter der Nationalismen: Elsass-Lothringen/Trient-Triest, 1870-1914* (Berlin, 1998); F-D. Grimm (ed.), *Regionen an deutschen Grenzen: Strukturwandel an der ehemaligen innerdeutschen Grenze und an der deutschen Ostgrenze* (Leipzig, 1995); H. Knippenberg and J. Marcusse (eds.), *Nationalising and Denationalising European Border Regions 1800-2000. Views from Geography and History* (Dordrecht, 1999). These works are part of a broader field concerning the relationship between regional and national identities. For instance, M. Klein, *Zwischen Reich und Region. Identitätsstrukturen im Deutschen Kaiserreich (1871-1918)* (Stuttgart, 2005); C. Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: the German Idea of Heimat* (Oxford, 1990); A. Green, *Fatherlands: state-building and nationhood in nineteenth-century Germany* (Cambridge, 2001); A. Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (London, 1997); H-G. Haupt, M. Müller, S. Woolf (eds.), *Regional and National Identities in the XIXth and XXth Centuries* (The Hague, 1998).

<sup>30</sup> M. Niendorf, *Minderheiten an der Grenze. Deutsche und Polen in den Kreisen Flatow und Zempelburg 1900-1939* (Wiesbaden, 1997); R. Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire (1871-1900)* (New York, 1981); J. Kulczycki, *School Strikes in Prussian Poland, 1901-1907: The Struggle over Bilingual Education* (New York, 1981); R. Marti (ed.), *Sprachenpolitik in Grenzregionen* (Saarbrücken, 1996); M. Wojciechowski and R. Schattkowsky (eds.), *Historische Grenzlandschaften Ostmitteleuropas im 16.-20. Jh: Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft, Politik* (Toruń, 1996); H. Henning Hahn and P. Kunze (eds.), *Nationale Minderheiten und staatliche Minderheitenpolitik in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1999); R. Stauber, *Der Zentralstaat an seinen Grenzen: Administrative Integration, Herrschaftswechsel und politische Kultur im südlichen Alpenraum 1750-1820* (Göttingen, 2001).

provinces of Posen and West Prussia, and in doing so, serves as a foil for the analyses of transnational phenomena which follow in Part II and III.

In chapter one the aim is to explain the logic of nationalism in the German-Polish border provinces; in other words, to analyse how the national divide between Germans and Poles was constructed. With the termination of Polish statehood following the dismemberment of the Polish Commonwealth by the partitioning states of Prussia, Austria, and Russia between 1773 and 1795, the demarcation between German and Polish nationalisms in the borderland was no longer viable on the principle of state membership. Moreover, the ethnic heterogeneity, so characteristic of the lands of the multinational Commonwealth now possessed by Prussia, excluded territorial demarcations. The reality of mixed and irregular settlement rendered the concept of a 'border', with its territorial connotations, untenable. Instead there was only an ideologically grounded 'interface'. It is to be argued that the interface was predicated fundamentally upon linguistic difference, and that its changing contours after 1871 were at the root of the national conflict in the Prussian East. Chapter two extends further the analysis of nation-building and demarcation initiated in chapter one. It argues that cultural institutions were of prime importance in structuring the national divide, performing a leading role in sustaining 'national culture' in provinces of mixed settlement. Three types of institution receive particular attention: theatres, libraries, and *Hochschule*.

The subject of Part II (chapters 3 and 4), entitled 'The Cultures of Transnationalism', concerns the socio-cultural manifestations of transnationalism. The theme of chapter three is the 'language and semantics of transnationalism'. The argument is advanced that language not only structured the interface between German and Polish nationalisms; it also subverted it. Linguistic and semantic categories existed which transgressed the national divide, and in doing so were foundational for the formation of transnational social structures. This occurred in two principal ways: first, through the condition of bilingualism, and secondly, by the coming into existence of a semantic conflation of nationality and religious denomination. This conflation semantically underpinned the formation of a 'Catholic-Polish axis', bringing Poles and

German Catholics into spiritual and material communion. Moreover, it is argued that some German Catholic communities possessed substantive 'transnational cultures'.<sup>31</sup>

Chapter four examines the practices of marriage and social contact between Germans and Poles in the Prussian East. In marriage and sex, the paradigm of synthesis found its profoundest expression. For these events brought not only changes of consciousness and behaviour, but also of 'racial' identity. Before the 1890s, mixed marriage was most contentious in its religious implications, particularly during the *Kulturkampf*, but in the Wilhelmine period, *Mischehe* increasingly took on connotations of national and racial mixing. Accordingly, sex between the nationalities was widely perceived by contemporaries as producing cases of 'racial hybridity'.

Chapters five and six form the third part of the thesis and consider the specifically political facets of the German-Polish relationship. The aim in each is to identify how, and with what consequence, political doctrines and movements mediated the formation of transnational institutions and other forms of transnational identity and behaviour. In chapter five the focus is upon the politics of Catholicism; in chapter six, the focus is socialist politics. It was upon the basis of these doctrines and their respective movements that integrative processes were most significant.

Despite the apparent polarisation of the political spectrum by the end of Bülow's chancellorship between 'German national' elements and the representatives of Polish nationalism, transnational forms of consciousness and behaviour had been developing between Germans and Poles in party and associational life. Within Catholic milieus, the principal phenomenon of this kind was the way in which confessional allegiance led German Catholics to support Polish candidates electorally. This political phenomenon was a corollary of the general semantic conflation of religious and national identities existing in the Prussian borderland. Politically, the main points of reference for a 'Catholic-Polish axis', which transcended the national divide, had been established during the 1870s, when the *Kulturkampf* strengthened the popular association of Catholicism with the Polish national cause.

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<sup>31</sup> The term culture is used broadly to refer to collective beliefs, values, ideas and symbolisms, as well as behaviours and material artefacts; in other words, the total social heritage of a community.

Socialism had first emerged weakly in Posen and West Prussia during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Its most important representatives had been the German Social Democrats (SPD) and, after 1892, the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). Chapter six examines the juncture between nationalism and transnationalism within the regional Social Democratic movement. It is argued that, at grass-roots level, transnational organisational structures and behaviours came into existence in the Eastern Marches. These had both ideological and practical causes. However, the evidence available points most strongly to the conclusion that they were primarily the consequence of an 'internationalist' ideology. The chapter therefore begins with an examination of the ideological premises existent within the Social Democratic movement that had a bearing upon the national question in the Prussian East, before progressing in its second section to an examination of the grass-roots experience in the region.

## Part I

### Nationalism

## Chapter 1

### The Logic of Nationalism in the Prussian East

#### (i) Origins of the Interface

The meaning of transnationalism in Posen and West Prussia was dependent upon the conception of national difference. Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is to elucidate the logic of national difference between Germans and Poles. It is to be argued that the national divide in the Prussian East was predicated fundamentally upon linguistic difference after 1871. This ideological perspective was predominant and was sanctioned by the state.

The same conception of nationality underlay the means of rationalising and *quantifying* national difference: statistical science. Without statistical analysis the two 'imagined communities' would have remained without quantification and spatially undefined. In expansive, ethnically-complex territories such as Posen and West Prussia, the only means by which the national relationship could be quantified was by statistical analysis. Similarly, it is only upon the basis of statistics that the present-day observer can understand the pattern of settlement in the nationally-mixed provinces.

The national conflict which developed in Posen and West Prussia after 1871, hinged on statistical interpretation, and was sparked by the state's efforts to redress the demographic advances of the Polish nationality in the border provinces. In this sense, statistics were the cause of the national conflict, and during its course, discourse and political activism on both sides of the national divide referred to statistical interpretation as their frame of reference. It is to be argued in the second section of this chapter that the rationalisation of nationality through statistical analysis was a fundamental precondition for the national conflict as it ensued. Conflict was a logical consequence of the binary construct itself. The national conflict was the predominant factor in the social and political contexts of the region after 1871. However, as it will be shown in the following chapters, the binary construct was not only the precondition of 'national conflict', but also of 'synthesis': the ideological and behavioural transgressions of the logic of national difference.

The conception of nationality as predicated upon language received one of its most authoritative and widely influential treatments in the work of the eminent Prussian statistician Richard Böckh. Böckh was a latter-day representative of the Herderian conception of nationality. He propounded a doctrine of the primacy of language and it was symbolic that his seminal book of 1869, *Der Deutschen Volkszahl und Sprachgebiet*, was dedicated to the memory of Ernst Moritz Arndt. Böckh's published treatises dating from the late 1860s provide important insights into how nationality was popularly understood in the latter decades of the nineteenth century in Prussia. Böckh propagated a philosophy of nationality as based upon language. Language was the direct expression and symbol of the *Volksgeist*; of the 'Gemeinschaft des Logos'. Adherence to this *Nationalitätsprinzip* would lead to the fulfilment of the national 'spirit' (*Geist*), and this principle was in the interests of all peoples.<sup>32</sup>

The primary basis for a nationality was the community of descent or the community of birth inside of the individual nation; language was the principle for the determination of descent. An important distinction was made between the mixing of two nationalities and the individual who was descended from two different nations. Two *Volkstämme* which had become mixed together over centuries and thus 'deformed', could fuse to create a new *Volk*; conversely, two halves of a *Volkstamm* which had become separated over time could develop gradually into two new ones. In contrast, the individual could only belong to one or the other nation, whilst equal identification with both was regarded as impossible.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, Böckh argued:

The indication of two languages in statistics for an inhabitant is inadmissible...With the individual the category of bilingualism is to be excluded absolutely. The individual can change his language, but not belong to two at the same time, as the equality of both, which does not exist in nature, should also not be accepted in statistics.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Böckh's most influential works were: *Die statistische Bedeutung der Volkssprache als Kennzeichen der Nationalität* (Berlin, 1866) and *Der Deutschen Volkszahl und Sprachgebiet in den europäischen Staaten* (Berlin, 1869). Böckh had also written a history of the official statistics in the Prussian state on behalf of the Royal Statistical Bureau: R. Böckh, *Die Geschichtliche Entwicklung der Amtlichen Statistik des Preussischen Staates* (Berlin, 1863). T. Schieder, *Das deutsche Kaiserreich von 1871 als Nationalstaat* (Göttingen, 1992), p. 27. Hans Rickert explored the 'double' role of language: as a mediator in the formation of collective identity and community, and also as the product or expression of a pre-existing collective identity. H. Richert, 'Das Nationalgefühl als psychologisches Phänomen', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 108 (1902), 193-231 (p. 199).

<sup>33</sup> R. Böckh, *Der Deutschen Volkszahl und Sprachgebiet in den europäischen Staaten* (Berlin, 1869), pp. 1-4.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

Significantly, he implicitly accepted the idea that an individual could change his nationality, which, for him, was synonymous with language.

Böckh recognised the statistical survey as being the key to establishing nationality, and specifically the sections therein concerning *Volkssprache*. He advocated the definition of language as being the language used within the household. The category of *Zweisprachigkeit* in surveys (used in four Prussian administrative districts) was regarded as false and put down to a theoretically flawed decision in Prussian legislation for the Grand Duchy of Posen, based on the belief that some individuals could be equally competent in German and Polish. Böckh denied this, maintaining that the true existence of this category ‘still has not been proved with the example of any individual’.<sup>35</sup>

Of profound significance for the future of German national-political development, particularly in respect of the *Sprachpolitik* of the 1870s, was Böckh’s distinction between *Volkssprache* (‘popular language’) and *Staatssprache* (‘language of state’). The former was defined as ‘that which men use in the most intimate spheres of the family and in the wider realms of local and regional social intercourse; it is their means of common understanding, their spiritual heritage.’ In comparison, the ‘higher prestige of a *Staatssprache* is needed only for those matters whose nature means that they can not be dealt with on the local level’. As this characterisation suggests, it was assumed that both languages could coexist.<sup>36</sup>

Richard Böckh’s emphasis upon language as the prime criterion of national identity was representative of his time. Other prominent writers concerned subsequently with the Eastern Marches expressed the same view. For instance, the liberal journalist Käthe Schirmacher, in a lecture delivered in Culm in West Prussia contended that ‘national’

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-26.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Schieder, *Das deutsche Kaiserreich*, p. 28. Comparable processes were underway across Europe at this time. Jim Bjork has written that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ‘marked a decisive period for many of the hundreds of languages spoken across the European continent, a time when they were either legitimised as languages of administration, high culture and mass education or were consigned to the ranks of “fallen dialects”, forms of speech appropriate only for popular songs and neighbourhood banter and, it was widely assumed, slated for eventual extinction’. Languages in this category included those of the Basques, Welsh, Sorbians, Slovenes, Bretons, and Flemings. J. Bjork, ‘Everything Depends on the Priest: Religious Education and Linguistic Change in Upper Silesia’, in Struve and Ther (eds.), *Die Grenzen der Nationen: Identitätenwandel in Oberschlesien in der Neuzeit* (Marburg, 2002), pp. 71-101 (p. 71).



was near in meaning to 'völkisch'. But whereas 'Volk' implied a people or body of men, the word 'national' implied much more the sense of 'the innateness given by birth, the inborn nature, spirit, and stock'. The nation came into existence 'through the unity of birth, which is dependent upon unity or similarity of environment, habitat, development, history, and expressed above all through unity of language'.<sup>37</sup>

In a similar vein, the prominent Hakatist, Leo Wegener, explained the meaning of 'nation' for the Germans in an article in *Die Ostmark* as being 'the unity of a people which feels bound together through the consciousness of a common language, a common tradition in which customs and mores coincide, and a homeland.' Austria and Switzerland were not regarded as nations, because of their many languages, nor were the gypsies, who possessed no land, or the Jews, who only possessed a tradition. For Wegener, a state was not a prerequisite for the existence of a nation.<sup>38</sup> In a similar work of German propaganda, addressed to the German population of the East, the economist Wilhelm Wendorff proposed: 'as the mark of nationality applies language, mother-tongue, national language [*Volkssprache*]. A people of mixed descent must therefore logically have also more than one national language ...but a people can not lastingly remain bilingual and so the language of the dominant people will finally become the national language.'<sup>39</sup>

The ethno-linguistic conception of the German nation was propagated in Imperial Germany more widely by conservative nationalistic writers such as Heinrich von Treitschke and Paul de Lagarde, both of whom argued that ethnic homogeneity was a necessity for the German national state. Treitschke propagated his ideas through his highly influential Berlin Lectures, in which he sought to legitimise the state's strivings to create a nationally homogenous state. He had argued that 'when several nations are

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<sup>37</sup> Käthe Schirmacher was a prominent feminist and champion of women's rights in Germany. Schirmacher was a supporter of the Eastern Marches Association and frequently lectured on the Polish question in the border provinces. She strongly opposed Polish separatism. K. Schirmacher, *Was ist national? Vortrag geh. in Culm W.-Pr 1911* (Posen, 1912), p. 3; R. Tims, *Germanizing Prussian Poland: the HKT Society and the Struggle for the Eastern Marches in the German Empire 1894-1919* (New York, 1941), p. 252.

<sup>38</sup> Wegener had belonged to the Eastern Marches Association (*Ostmarkenverein*), which was founded in 1894 as a propaganda organisation that aimed to promote Germanization in the Eastern Marches. Members of the association were commonly called 'Hakatisten', the name being derived from the initials of the association's three founders, Hansemann, Kennemann, and Tiedemann. L. Wegener, 'Die Nationalitäten in der Provinz Posen von 1871 bis 1895', *Die Ostmark*, 6 (1901), 47-48.

<sup>39</sup> W. Wendorff, *Der Kampf der Deutschen und Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1904), p. 14.

united under one state, the simplest relationship is that the one which wields the authority should also be the superior in civilisation. Matters can then develop comparatively peacefully, and when the blending is complete it is felt to have been inevitable, although it can never be accomplished without endless misery for the subjugated race.'<sup>40</sup>

Ethno-linguistic definitions of the nation were also becoming increasingly prominent in Polish intellectual discourse during this period, following the failed insurrection of 1863. Andrzej Walicki has argued that in its aftermath, 'the liquidation of the last remnants of the autonomy of the Kingdom of Poland, as well as its very name, put "Polishness" on the defensive and, of course, favored the transition to the narrow, ethno-linguistic definition of the nation.'<sup>41</sup> Added to this was the increasing social prominence of Jews and Germans resulting from rapid industrialisation, in relation to whom, Poles were mainly subordinate. To these factors was added the rising national consciousness of the emancipated Polish peasantry in Russian Poland. Out of this period emerged ideologies and movements such as National Democracy, bearing ethnocentric tendencies and, in particular, which emphasised the political importance of the ethnic 'nation of the peasantry' as opposed to the historical 'political nation' of the gentry.<sup>42</sup>

The fundamentality of language in underpinning and structuring nationalism in the border provinces, was underscored by the great lengths the state went to during the 1870s and in the decades thereafter to forcefully assimilate the Polish population to the greatest degree by suppressing the use of Polish in public life. The so-called

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<sup>40</sup> H. v. Treitschke, *Politics*, ed. by Hans Kohn (New York, 1963), p. 129. In specific consideration of the Poles, Treitschke expanded with the following: 'Even where the intermixture under these conditions is not completely successful, an alien nationality may still be entrusted with certain rights of its own, if it deserves them. We pursued this policy with Posen, when it was made into a Grand-Duchy and received a banner of its own. But how were we repaid? By continual fresh treasons on the part of the Poles; by constantly recurring revolts.' For discussion of the thought of Paul de Lagarde concerning the German nation, see F. Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: a Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 51-70.

<sup>41</sup> A. Walicki, *Poland between East and West: the controversies over self-definition and modernization in partitioned Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), p. 37.

<sup>42</sup> Among the most seminal formulations in this development were Jan Popławski's article 'Two Civilizations' (published in *Przegląd Głos*) and Bolesław Wysłouch's article 'The Programmatic Sketches' (published in *Przegląd Społeczny*), both of which appeared in 1886. Both authors argued that the gentry was becoming increasingly irrelevant and emphasized the role of the peasantry as the only viable basis for Polish national and social regeneration. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-39. See also W. Reddaway, *et al.* (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Poland*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1941-1950), II, 396-404.

Germanization Laws, passed between 1872 and 1876, introduced the substitution of German for Polish for teaching in all elementary and secondary schools in the province of Posen. Another important piece of legislation was the Official Language Law (28 August 1876), by which German was declared the official language (*Staatssprache*) in regions of Prussia where the use of minority languages had formerly received some official recognition. Among the consequences of this law, was the removal of bilingual signs in eastern towns and cities, and the end of the use of Polish by the state bureaucracy and state institutions such as the courts.<sup>43</sup>

In an interpellation submitted in the Landtag by the Polish faction in January 1878, it was asserted that 'in the preceding years a few hundred names of old, historic Polish villages and towns in West Prussia and Posen, and namely in the districts of the Bromberg regency, were changed to German sounding names.'<sup>44</sup> The salience of language was endorsed by the leadership of the Eastern Marches Association. Its co-founder, Heinrich von Tiedemann, had declared to Silesian members in Breslau that 'nationality follows language', arguing that progress in the national question would only be made when every Pole had learned German. This proposition suggests the weight German nationalism attached to the language principle. The Association had called for the end to teaching of Polish in schools.<sup>45</sup>

It was significant that whilst nationality was predicated upon the criterion of language, the same was not true of citizenship in the Reich. Before 1913, German citizenship law had been inconsistent, based upon a mixture of territorial and ethno-cultural criteria. Bismarck's unification of Germany, as a *Kleindeutsches Reich*, did not bring with it a unified German citizenship. Instead there was *Reichsangehörigkeit* (citizenship of the Empire), derived from *Landesangehörigkeit* (citizenship of the constituent states), and which held little political meaning. For the purposes of acquisition, citizenship was granted according to the principle of descent, although the retention of citizenship depended upon prescribed terms of residence on German soil:

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<sup>43</sup> R. Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire 1871-1900* (New York, 1981), pp. 23-24; W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews; the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 129-133, 272. The constitution of 1871 did not guarantee the national rights of non-German nationalities within the Reich.

<sup>44</sup> *Orędownik*, 1878, No. 10, quoted in W. Jakóbczyk (ed.), *Wielkopolska 1851-1914: wybór źródeł* (Wrocław, 1954), pp. 150-151.

<sup>45</sup> Tims, *Germanizing Prussian Poland*, pp. 81-82, 133ff.

citizenship was forfeited after ten years' residence abroad. The historically predominant ethno-cultural conception of citizenship in Germany was legally confirmed finally in 1913, when German citizenship became based more consistently upon the principle of descent (*jus sanguinis*) as opposed to territory (*jus soli*).<sup>46</sup>

Part of the complexity of citizenship in Germany was that German nationality and German citizenship did not necessarily coincide; the indigenous Poles were German citizens despite not being German nationals. Moreover, Rogers Brubaker has noted 'the ambiguity of such terms as "national" and "German" in Imperial Germany, which sometimes referred to the state and its citizenry as a whole, sometimes to ethnocultural Germandom alone.' The law of 1913 went some way to reducing this ambiguity, its form having been heavily influenced by the aspiration to homogenise the German nation-state.<sup>47</sup> The Polish question, particularly the issue of immigration, in the Prussian East was a decisive factor in the formulation of the 1913 law. Scepticism against the possibility of integrating eastern immigrants and those of Danish nationality was a critical factor in the decision against a territorial principle of citizenship. Hence, elements of *jus soli* were shunned by the government as well as by conservative and *völkisch* parties. The connection between immigration and naturalisation stemmed from the simple proposition that the prevention of naturalisation was essential in order to prevent the permanent settlement of non-German nationals within the borders of the Reich. The effects of the new law were especially critical because it was introduced at a time when immigration into the Reich was beginning to exceed emigration.<sup>48</sup>

Ever since the beginning of the nineteenth century, Prussian statisticians had used linguistic status as the determinant of nationality. The binary construct became theoretically formalised by the research of the Royal Prussian Statistical Bureau which

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<sup>46</sup> R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge Mass., 1992), pp. 12-17, 115. What Rogers Brubaker identifies as the long-standing tension between 'statist' (connected with the absolutist territorial state) and 'ethnocultural' (connected with the emergence of the nation-state) elements in the German tradition of nationhood, became particularly manifest in respect of the Polish question, by which the disjuncture was shown clearly to still exist between 'Reichsnational' and German 'Volksnational' identities, as the latter became defined against Polish ethnocultural identity, and institutions of state came to discriminate against the Polish minority. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*, p. 13.

<sup>47</sup> Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*, pp. 114-137, (p. 127).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 116, 134-135; D. Gosewinkel, *Einbürgern und Ausschiessen: die Nationalisierung der Staatsangehörigkeit vom Deutschen Bund bis zur Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Göttingen, 2001), p. 294.

had been founded in Berlin in 1805 under the direction of Leopold Krug. It is important to examine the methodologies employed by the Bureau's statisticians so as to understand the principles which underlay the quantification of national difference in Posen and West Prussia.<sup>49</sup>

The main task of the Bureau was to develop statistical research as an academic subject and to disseminate its work through publications. Before this time, population counts had been carried out most often by school teachers and priests, with such surveys being favoured by the authorities for their bureaucratic advantages, especially the effective raising of taxes.<sup>50</sup> At around the same time as the founding of the Bureau, important ideological developments in official Prussian policy towards minorities were occurring which would have a direct bearing upon the interpretation of nationality. Theodor Schieder has described this formative period as follows: 'out of the genesis of a supranational Prussian conception of empire developed a hard, extremely effective principle of state, which disregarded nationality as a corollary of democracy and supported itself upon the socially and nationally assimilating forces of the army and bureaucracy.'<sup>51</sup>

One such development within the bureaucracy was Minister Friedrich Leopold von Schrötter's decision in 1802 to undertake the task of formulating the basis of Prussian policy towards non-German-speaking subjects. In a paper sent to Minister Julius von Massow entitled *Wegen Ausrottung der litauischen Sprache*, Schrötter outlined his policy against the linguistic minorities in Prussia. The publication by the *Rat des Oberschulkollegiums*, Johann Friedrich Zöllner, who had travelled with Massow

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<sup>49</sup> Despite the efforts made by government statisticians to rationalise nationality, recent research has indicated the degree to which national identities during the first half of the nineteenth century were fluid. Michael Müller has suggested in his research of German-speakers in Posen and West Prussia before 1848 that national identity at that time was often indeterminate. M. Müller, 'Zur Identitätsgeschichte deutschsprachiger Gruppen in Grosspolen/Provinz Posen und dem Königlichen Preussen/Westpreussen vor 1848', in Müller and Petri (eds.), *Die Nationalisierung von Grenzen* (Marburg, 2002), pp. 1-11.

<sup>50</sup> According to the director of the Royal Prussian Statistical Bureau, Ernst Engel, the purpose of statistics was twofold: to serve the purposes of scholarship and those of government. According to Engel, more often than not statistical research was dependent upon the needs of government, and this was so at the time of writing in 1861. But Engel looked forward to the time when statistics would become an autonomous science, with academic goals and purposes: 'The work of statistics moves unmistakably, if involuntarily, in a direction whose end goal is a physics of society'. E. Engel, *Die Statistik im Dienste der Verwaltung mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der im preussischen Staate bestehenden Einrichtungen* (Berlin, 1863), pp. 1-2. For the early history of statistics in Prussia, see Böckh, *Die Geschichtliche Entwicklung*, p. 3 ff.

<sup>51</sup> Schieder, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich*, p. 23.

through Prussian-Lithuania in 1802, entitled *Ideen über National-Erziehung* (1804) was an important influence on Prussian language policy in the East, and also influenced the thought of later politicians and historians. The perspectives of Schrötter and Zöllner represent the consolidation of an ethno-linguistic conception of the nation which would be perpetuated in political action through subsequent decades.<sup>52</sup>

Nationality statistics, based upon the criterion of language, were collected by the state in the provinces of the East regularly and uniformly from 1831 onwards (every three or four years). The state authorities wanted to establish an indication of the number of people who carried out their official affairs and church activities in the German language. The methodologies used to ascertain nationality, however, varied during the subsequent decades, and this had a direct and critical bearing upon the results achieved. For the 1831 survey, individuals became counted as German 'who used the German language in public affairs and could understand German church services'. But these criteria were put in doubt by the director of the Bureau at this time, J.G. Hoffmann, owing to the inability of the census to account for bilingual inhabitants. He sought to attain more reliable data through the analysis of confessional status.<sup>53</sup>

Estimations of nationality from 1843 onwards were preferably based upon mother-tongue; authorities in the eastern provinces were instructed at this time to insert a column on census papers with the heading 'Muttersprache'. At the same time, the authorities in the regencies of Posen and Danzig also inserted the additional category of 'German and Polish Speaking' which was used in these districts until 1861.<sup>54</sup> Following Ernst Engel's rise to the directorship of the Bureau in 1860, the first general language survey for the Prussian state took place in 1861, which formed part of the population survey and was organised according to Engel's methodological principles. For this survey, the language statistics were based upon 'Familiensprache' (rather than mother-

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<sup>52</sup> M. Niedzielska, 'Die deutsche Identität in Westpreussen im 19. Jahrhundert', *Nordost-Archiv*, VI (1997), 659-686 (pp. 663-664).

<sup>53</sup> The first language census in Prussia took place in Gumbinnen in East Prussia in 1817. The authorities of the district of Oppeln in Upper Silesia followed in 1828. E. v. Bergmann, *Zur Geschichte der Entwicklung deutscher, polnischer und jüdischer Bevölkerung in der Provinz Posen seit 1824* (Tübingen, 1883), pp. 29-30; L. Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten im preussischen Staat 1815-1914* (Marburg, 1998), pp. 7-9.

<sup>54</sup> Bergmann, *Zur Geschichte der Entwicklung*, pp. 29-31.

tongue). When the results of the 1861 census were published, the figures for bilinguals were omitted.<sup>55</sup>

A general language survey had been attempted in 1867, but this essentially failed because of a ban which had been imposed on holding a count in the province of Posen, and restrictions which were also made on counts in the province of Prussia (East and West Prussia) and the regency of Oppeln in Upper Silesia. A further count in 1871 similarly failed because of objections from above.<sup>56</sup> A general Prussian language survey did not take place again until 1890, by which time statistical methods and procedures had advanced significantly. Individuals were now asked uniformly for indications of their 'mother-tongue', and the published statistics for the censuses of 1890, 1900, 1905 and 1910 consistently provided data of bilinguals. Beginning in 1886 and lasting till 1911, language surveys of school children were also carried out by the authorities every five years.<sup>57</sup>

## (ii) The National Conflict

The national conflict which existed throughout the nineteenth century, and which escalated during its last quarter, was a logical, but not inevitable, outcome of the binary relationship, as established by German statistical science. In order to defend the life of the nation it became imperative to sustain, if not increase, the numerical presence of the linguistic community and its control of the land. The inevitable circumstance that one nationality increased its number at the expense of the other became increasingly problematic during the course of the nineteenth century.

By the 1880s statistical analysis had led to the realisation that the demographic presence of Germans in the East was diminishing in relation to the Poles; the interface was unstable and shifting. Awareness of the realities of the demographic question in the East began to attain greater prominence in public consciousness during the 1880s. This

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<sup>55</sup> Bilinguals were frequently assigned to the category of 'German-speaking'. Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>56</sup> R. Böckh, 'Die Verschiebung der Sprachverhältnisse in Posen und Westpreussen', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 77 (1894), 424-436 (p. 424).

<sup>57</sup> Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten*, pp. 7-12.

process was promoted through important academic assessments such as Friedrich Naumann's study 'Germanisierung oder Polonisierung' (1883) and Eduard von Hartmann's influential 'Der Rückgang des Deutschtums' (1885).<sup>58</sup> The insights provided by these studies attained ever wider currency in the regional and national press over the following two decades. The demographic struggle between the nationalities was at the heart of the national conflict in Imperial Germany, a conflict which resulted, before all else, from the apparent 'retreat' of the German nationality and the Prussian state's efforts to remedy this. As the conservative historian Otto Hoetzsch would later put it: 'first and foremost must the decisive question today be of who, or rather which nationality, possesses and cultivates the land, the clod of soil, of the Prussian East.'<sup>59</sup>

The national relationship in the Prussian East was one of the most critical, and at the same time intractable, issues in the politics of Imperial Germany. This judgement was widely held among Germany's leading politicians and commentators as the discourse crescendoed sharply during the 1890s. Bismarck in 1897 had asserted that 'upon the correct or incorrect handling of the Polish question depends above all the development not only of our domestic, but also our foreign politics'.<sup>60</sup> Bernhard von Bülow, who had inherited the mantle of Chancellor in 1900, was no more modest in his terms, describing the Polish question as 'not only one of the most important questions of life, it is today the most important for the Prussian state, and consequently for the whole of Germany'.<sup>61</sup>

The reason why the struggle over the land was judged to be so critical was that the eastern provinces were of combined national, political, economic and strategic importance to the Prussian monarchy and Germany at large. The loss of the so-called Eastern Marches would have meant the loss of the province of Posen (28,951 square kilometers), jeopardizing the viability of West and East Prussia, the German capital, given its proximity to the border, and ultimately the political existence of the Prussian

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<sup>58</sup> F. Naumann, 'Germanisierung oder Polonisierung', *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, N.F. 7 (1883), 457-463; E. v. Hartmann, 'Der Rückgang des Deutschtums' *Die Gegenwart*, 27 (1885), 1-3, 19-22.

<sup>59</sup> O. Hoetzsch, *Die dringendste Aufgabe der Polenpolitik* (München, 1907), p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in F. Winterstein, *Die Polenfrage* (Gautzsch bei Leipzig, 1908), p. 16.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16. See also B. v. Bülow, *Deutsche Politik*, ed. by Peter Winzen (Bonn, 1992), p. 345.



monarchy; consequently, a major blow to Germany's international power. Bismarck had encapsulated the strategic importance of the Eastern Marches with the following words: 'The year 1815 gave to the Prussian state a border behind which it can retreat under no circumstances; it needs this border for the unity of its provinces, for the connection between Breslau and Königsberg, for its communications, as well as for its defence and security.'<sup>62</sup> Concern over the possibility of losing the Eastern Marches was fueled by the demographic and territorial encroachments made by Poles in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

This fear was compounded by the spectre of war with Russia. In particular, German strategists had foreseen the possibility of a two-front war against Russia and France. The Polish question was an unavoidable factor in any strategic calculation. During Leo von Caprivi's chancellorship, the prospect of war became heightened in view of the diplomatic and military entente sealed between France and Russia, prefiguring Germany's 'encirclement' in World War I. Bismarck's alliance with Austria in 1879, German hostility to Russian objectives in the Balkans, and Russo-German commercial competition appeared to increase the possibility of conflict. Caprivi's strategic response, as part of his *Neuer Kurs*, involved the establishment of closer ties with England, the passing of the army expansion bill in the Reichstag in 1893, and the approval of the Schlieffen plan. Caprivi also used trade treaties to bolster the position of Germany in central and south-eastern Europe. Caprivi, foreseeing the strategic importance of Poland in a war with Russia, elected to make concessions to the Poles. The Polish response was the politics of 'loyalism'.<sup>63</sup> The prospect of war with Russia

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<sup>62</sup> Speech of 28 January 1886, Landtag, HdA.

<sup>63</sup> The politics of loyalism began during the late 1880s and marked the beginning of the so-called *Versöhnungsära*. On Caprivi's part, domestic and foreign events made it sagacious to adopt a more conciliatory policy towards the Polish minority. In the event of a two-front war against both Russia and France, Polish support would be critical. As a response, Leo von Caprivi (Chancellor 1890-1894) and his government made some limited concessions to the Poles, all of which appeared between mid-1890 and late-1891. These included the admission once again of Polish agricultural labourers from Russia and Austria into Germany for seasonal work; *Rentengut* legislation was introduced which helped Poles acquire farms; permission was granted for public schools to be used for Polish-language instruction in after-school classes; the Polish priest, Florian Stablewski, was made archbishop of Gnesen-Posen in 1891, replacing the German, Julius Dinder, in this important see; and finally, government supervision of the accounts and activities of the 'organic work' cooperatives was lifted. The most immediate cause of loyalism had been the harsh anti-Polish offensive instigated by Bismarck in 1886. This package of policies was a hammer-blow against the Polish population which its leaders had difficulty in countering. At the same time, this leadership, still dominated by the nobility, faced serious 'internal' challenges to its

receded following Caprivi's Russo-German trade agreement in 1894, although the critical strategic importance of the Polish question remained undiminished in the two decades following his exit from office. The chancellorships following Caprivi's heralded the beginning of a shift away his conciliatory policy and an overall escalation of the national conflict within Prussia's borders.<sup>64</sup>

The Polish question was not simply confined to the German Empire. The idea of the Polish nation (*Polenthum*) in the minds of contemporaries, referred not merely to those counted as being of Polish tongue living within the empire, but designated a much larger and interconnected entity which transcended state borders. As well as almost three million Poles in Germany in December 1890 (approximately ten percent of Prussia's population), there were also over 6.5 million Poles in Russia and 3.5 million in Austria-Hungary. The figure for Germany included over 22,000 Poles who had migrated to Saxony, and well over 30,000 who were resident in Berlin and Germany's industrial West, raising the menacing prospect of Polish 'reverse colonisation'. By December 1890, of all the 549 districts in Prussia, there were no less than 61 (11%) in which Poles were a majority. Moreover, between 1890 and 1910 the Polish population in the frontier provinces of Posen and West Prussia increased significantly by 22 percent to 1,862,254; in comparison, the German population increased by only 17 percent during this twenty-year period. This was the true scale of the Polish question. The Austrian and Russian Poles were ultimately part of the same question; Polish affairs in one state invariably impacted on those in others, and it was reasonable to

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position, namely the political consequences of social change. These factors produced a perilous situation for the Polish leadership in Prussian Poland, in which loyalism seemed the best solution, particularly for the more conservative leaders. R. Blanke, 'The Development of Loyalism in Prussian Poland 1886-1890', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 129 (1974), 548-565.

<sup>64</sup> The Franco-Russian Military Convention (17 August 1892) was followed by the sealing of a formal alliance between these countries five months later. Britain was subsequently brought into alliance with Russia with the Anglo-Russian entente (31 August 1907). Germany was allied with Italy and Austro-Hungary by the Triple Alliance (1882). O. Kurth, *Die Ostmark Posen und ihre Bedeutung für Preussen-Deutschland: Eine historische-statistische Studie zur Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1903), pp. 1-32; V. Berghahn, *Imperial Germany, 1871-1914: economy, society, culture and politics* (New York, 2005), pp. 254-263; H-U. Wehler, *The German Empire 1871-1918* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 184-192; G. Craig, *Germany 1866-1945* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 237-239; Blanke, *Prussian Poland*, pp. 121-123, 148; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 169, 171; F. Fischer, *Krieg der Illusionen: die deutsche Politik von 1911 bis 1914* (Düsseldorf, 1969), pp. 91-92.

assume that a reconstituted Polish nation-state would incorporate all those of Polish tongue and tradition.<sup>65</sup>

The following calculations made by the statistician Richard Böckh provide a comparative guide to the distribution of the national and confessional groups within the four regencies of Posen and West Prussia before and after German unification.<sup>66</sup> (see also map A2).<sup>67</sup>

*Table I: Populations of the Regencies of Posen and West Prussia by Nationality and Confession in 1861*

	Danzig	%	Marien- werder	%	Bromberg	%	Posen	%
German:								
Protestant	250,464	52.7	347,118	48.7	215,292	41.2	260,578	27.1
Catholic	84,840	17.8	79,238	11.1	40,743	7.8	88,592	9.2
Jewish	6,765	1.4	20,049	2.8	24,287	4.7	50,092	5.2
German total:	342,069	71.9	446,405	62.6	280,322	53.7	399,262	41.5
Polish:								
Protestant	973	0.2	4,868	0.7	876	0.2	14,796	1.5
Catholic	132,528	27.9	261,565	36.7	240,911	46.1	549,383	57.0
Jewish	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polish total:	133,501	28.1	266,433	37.4	241,787	46.3	564,179	58.5
Total:	475,570	100	712,838	100	522,109	100	963,441	100

Source: Richard Böckh, 'Die Verschiebung der Sprachverhältnisse in Posen und Westpreussen', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 77 (1894), pp. 428-430.

<sup>65</sup> C. Fink, *Der Kampf um die Ostmark. Ein Beitrag zur Beurteilung der Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1897), pp. 9, 13; A. v. Fircks, 'Die preussische Bevölkerung nach ihrer Muttersprache und Abstammung', *Zeitschrift des Königlich-Preussischen Statistischen Bureaus*, III (1893), 189-296 (p. 242). See also table VI. The Polish question was sometimes treated in contemporary discourse as part of a Slavic question. For example, G. Cleinow, 'Das allslavische Problem und der deutsche Nationalstaat', *Die Grenzboten*, 1 (1909), 523-530.

<sup>66</sup> For a recent and comprehensive analysis of the population according to individual districts, see Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten*.

<sup>67</sup> This map is based upon the results of the census of 31 December 1910.

Table II: Populations of the Regencies of Posen and West Prussia by Nationality and Confession on 1 December 1890

	<i>Danzig</i>	%	<i>Marienwerder</i>	%	<i>Bromberg</i>	%	<i>Posen</i>	%
German:								
Protestant	302,450	51.4	385,015	45.6	253,842	40.8	272,641	24.2
Catholic	116,467	19.8	114,134	13.5	41,926	6.5	84,856	7.5
Jewish	5,822	0.99	15,688	1.85	15,812	2.5	28,209	2.5
German total:	424,739	72.19	514,837	60.95	311,580	49.9	385,706	34.2
Polish:								
Protestant	1,176	0.2	5,398	0.64	1,035	0.2	15,479	1.4
Catholic	162,786	27.6	323,971	38.4	312,133	49.9	724,942	64.39
Jewish	96	0.01	131	0.01	90	0.01	198	0.01
Polish total:	164,058	27.81	329,500	39.05	313,258	50.1	740,619	65.8
Total:	588,797	100	844,337	100	624,838	100	1,126,325	100

Source: Richard Böckh, 'Die Verschiebung der Sprachverhältnisse in Posen und Westpreussen', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 77 (1894), pp. 428-430.

These tables demonstrate, based upon a comparison between the years 1861 and 1890, the demographic feature which was of such critical significance to the national question in the Prussian East after 1871: the overall numerical decrease in the populations of Germans relative to Poles. In the Regencies of Marienwerder, Bromberg and Posen, the German nationality decreased relatively between 1861 and 1890; only Danzig saw a slight relative increase in the German population. According to Böckh's calculations, the German nationality had decreased relatively in Posen and West Prussia between 1861 and 1890 from 54.9 percent (1,468,058) to 51.4 percent (1,636,862), while the Polish population had increased relatively from 45.1 percent (1,205,900) to 48.6 percent (1,547,435). It was this demographic change that was at the heart of the national conflict.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> There were also several other ethnic minorities which inhabited the Prussian East, including Masurians in East Prussia and Slowincians in Pomerania. Among the most significant numerically were the Kashubians who inhabited the eastern part of Pomerania (Pommerellen) in the districts west and north-west of Danzig. These districts included Danzig, Danzig Heights, Putzig, Neustadt, Karthaus, Berent, Konitz, Schlochau. The Kashubians were the descendants of Pomeranian Slavs and spoke in a dialect

The changes in the numerical relationship between Germans and Poles witnessed in the years after unification were caused primarily by economic factors. The changes occurring in the demographic relationship between the two linguistically-defined nationalities were bound up with broader socio-economic transformations in the region. The populations of Posen and West Prussia had traditionally been agrarian and among the poorest in Prussia. Large-scale industry tended to be concerned with the processing of agricultural products (e.g. wood, wool, and spirits), and was usually situated in the countryside. The cities of Posen and West Prussia were, on the whole, small and somnolent, serving as regional centres for trade and administration. Table III (below) shows occupational change in Posen, West Prussia, and the Prussian state between 1882 and 1907.

*Table III: Principal Employment in Posen, West Prussia, and the Prussian State, 1882-1907\**

	<i>Prussian State</i>		<i>West Prussia</i>		<i>Posen</i>	
	1882	1907	1882	1907	1882	1907
Agriculture, Gardening, Animal Breeding, Forestry, etc.	4,692,348 (43%)	5,876,841 (33%)	294,723 (58%)	378,020 (51%)	395,392 (64%)	501,712 (57%)
Industry, incl. Mining, Crafts, Building trades.	3,650,626 (34%)	6,688,381 (37%)	98,952 (19%)	151,042 (20%)	104,162 (17%)	163,567 (18%)
Trade and Commerce.	911,706 (8%)	2,056,173 (11%)	33,931 (7%)	58,674 (8%)	33,597 (5%)	62,479 (7%)

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closely related to Polish; they were also Catholic like their Polish relations. The Kashubians traditionally lived as peasants, fishermen and labourers. Kashubian identity was only of peripheral importance to the politics of nationality in the Eastern Marches until the end of the nineteenth century. According to the Prussian statistician, Arthur von Fircks, there were 55,539 Kashubians in Prussia in 1890. Kashubians were often counted as Poles in statistical analyses. Jews were also significant in the Eastern Marches, construed as both a religious group and a separate nationality. Jews were predominantly German-speaking (see tables I and II) and were typically counted in censuses, because of their tongue, as belonging to the German nationality. In 1890, Jews accounted for 2.53% of the population of Posen and 1.51% of the population of West Prussia. Jews mainly lived in urban areas and were employed in industry and commerce (see table IV). F. Tetzner, *Die Slawen in Deutschland: Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Preussen, Litauer und Letten, der Masuren und Philipponen, der Tschechen, Mährer und Sorben, Polaben und Slowinzen, Kaschuben und Polen* (Braunschweig, 1902), pp. 441-445; v. Fircks, 'Die Preussische Bevölkerung', 189-296 (p. 242).

Domestic/ Occasional Labour.	278,923 (3%)	322,338 (2%)	17,379 (3%)	14,301 (2%)	18,849 (3%)	12,060 (1%)
Military, clergy, Court, Civil service, (5%) Free Professions.	587,210	1,027,012 (6%)	27,455 (6%)	53,939 (7%)	30,486 (5%)	51,323 (6%)
Unemployed	705,495 (7%)	2,067,644 (11%)	35,057 (7%)	90,894 (12%)	34,259 (6%)	93,887 (11%)
Total:	10,826,308 (100%)	18,038,389 (100%)	507,497 (100%)	746,870 (100%)	616,745 (100%)	885,028 (100%)

\*excluding those without a main occupation.

Source: *Statistisches Jahrbuch für den Preussischen Staat*, 9 (1912), pp. 49-51.

A substantial percentage decline in the level of employment in agriculture (as shown in table III) was characteristic of Posen and West Prussia between the years 1882 and 1907. In Posen, employment in this sector fell from 64 to 57 percent of the workforce; in West Prussia, it decreased from 58 to 51 percent. Although a comparable decline in agriculture was characteristic of Prussia as a whole, agriculture remained the major sector of employment in Posen and West Prussia, whereas in Prussia as a whole, only 33 percent of the workforce still earned their living in agriculture. This statistic underlines the strongly agrarian nature of the economy in the East. In comparison, the numbers of those employed in the sectors of trade and industry are shown to have increased marginally in Posen and West Prussia during the same period. The decline of employment in agriculture had been evident for some decades before the 1880s, and its consequence was that the regional economy was not able to sustain the growing population. This resulted in rural overpopulation and emigration. Despite above-average birth rates, emigration was the prime cause of the slower population growth seen in Posen and West Prussia relative to Prussia as a whole. The population of Prussia grew by 45.2 percent between 1867 and 1900, but that of Ostelbia increased by only 21.5 percent during the same period.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Blanke, *Prussian Poland*, pp. 39-45.

Under-industrialisation was a critical factor for the relatively low rate of population growth overall in the East. An important exception had been Upper Silesia, where intense industrialisation had sustained population growth. The problem was that the industrialisation of the East threatened the interests of the large estate owners, and this made its advancement politically problematic. A drive to expand the industrialisation of the eastern provinces would have necessitated opening Prussia's borders to Russian grain in exchange for reciprocal access for Prussia's manufactured goods. Generally shunning this option, Prussian governments preferred instead to strengthen the region's traditional agrarian economy with tariffs and fiscal policies which benefited the interests of the landowners. Moreover, the region's economic dependency on agriculture made it vulnerable in the event of a market slump. This occurred in the decade after 1876 when farm prices fell by 20 percent. This agricultural slump resulted in many of the major landowners opting to hire cheaper foreign labour from across the border in Russia, compounding the problem of unemployment. These migrant workers were usually of Polish nationality.<sup>70</sup>

While Slavic immigration into the Eastern Marches was generated by the requirement of the Junkers for cheap labour, the prospect of more favourable economic conditions elsewhere in the empire, as well as the competition from foreign labour, caused the migration of indigenous inhabitants away from the region. Both Germans and Poles migrated away from the East, although the majority of emigrants were German, consequently worsening the German demographic position in the East. Some went to work in industry, particularly in the industrial heartlands of western Germany; others found work in agriculture; some migrated abroad.<sup>71</sup>

The demographic expansion of the Polish nationality in Posen and West Prussia was not only attributed to the exodus of Germans and Jews from the East, but also to the Poles' higher fertility rate. Their higher fertility rate corresponded to the higher fertility rate of Catholics in Prussia. The average birth-rate in Prussia for the years

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 132-133. The numbers of *Gastarbeiter* who entered Germany are uncertain. One commentator, writing in 1905, estimated the number of foreign seasonal workers in Germany at 500,000 (400,000 Slavs from Russia and Galicia and 100,000 Ruthenians, Czechs and Italians. J. Rosenberg, *Endlich gelöst!: Die Ostmarkenfrage, die Landarbeiterfrage* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 21.

<sup>71</sup> Those who sought employment in agriculture typically went to work in the sugar-beet fields of Saxony, from where the generic term *Sachsengänger* (for seasonal agricultural workers) is derived.

1875-1900 was 39.16 per thousand, but in the districts with predominantly Polish populations in the four eastern provinces, this increased to 46.8 per thousand, while in those with predominantly German populations, it fell to 36.9 per thousand. The relatively high Polish birth-rate was explicable not only by the rate of marriage, but also the early age at which marriages occurred. It was the case that the greater the proportion of Poles in an area, the higher the level of fertility within marriage, and the smaller the number of children born outside of marriage. On average, in Prussia's eastern provinces in 1900, almost one child more was born to every ten fertile married Polish women than to women of German descent in the same circumstances. In the same year, the rate of legitimate births for Poles was 34.5 per 1000, 25.0 for Germans; the rate of illegitimate births for Poles, 18 per thousand, 35 for Germans.<sup>72</sup>

An important feature of the regional economy was the redistribution of land through parcellation. Parcellation resulted from the demands for land of peasant farmers and the need of large estate owners to liquidate part of their assets in order to alleviate debts, or to sell their holdings in order to buy smaller, yet more economically viable, estates. The price of real estate soared during the 1890s as peasants, speculators, parcellation banks, and the Colonization Commission (established in 1886 to purchase Polish land) competed for land.<sup>73</sup> A network of private Polish parcellation societies had come into

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<sup>72</sup> R. Thurnwald, 'Die Ausbreitung der Polen in Preussen', *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie einschliesslich Rassen- und Gesellschaftshygiene*, 6 (1904), 940-942. In addition to these birth-rates, the rates of mortality also had a bearing upon Polish population growth. In regard to the mortality-rates of adult men, per 100,000 deaths, the number of those living beyond 60 in Posen, West Prussia and Pomerania surpassed the state average in 1890/91, while in Silesia and East Prussia, the proportion was below average, especially in predominantly Polish districts. On the whole, the districts in Prussia with higher birth-rates coincided approximately with those with higher birth-surpluses, and this tendency was characteristic of Poles in the areas they inhabited. The regencies with the high percentages of Poles showed, between 1896-1900, the highest birth-surpluses: Posen 23.6 per 1000, Bromberg 23.1, Oppeln 22.2, Marienwerder 21.9, Danzig 21.0. These figures were well above the state-average of 17.6.

<sup>73</sup> See J. Buzek, *Historia polityki narodowościowej Rządu Pruskiego wobec Polaków od traktatów wiedeńskich do ustaw wyjątkowych z r. 1908* (Lwów, 1909), p. 319; O. Münsterberg, *Die wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse des Ostens* (Berlin, 1912), pp. 18-20. Not only was national competition responsible for driving up land prices, but also the generally increased productivity of the land brought by improved services and communications such as the expansion of the railway network in the East. With Caprivi having been removed from office, *Polenpolitik* increased in severity between 1895 and 1900 during the chancellorship of Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst. In respect of settlement, Polish applicants were barred from the settlement and 'Rentengüter' parcellation programmes. Caprivi's government had allowed Poles to participate in the estate parcellation and peasant colonization programs established under the Prussian 'Rentengüter' legislation of 1890-91. This had resulted in the paradox of Polish land settlement being aided by the state at the same time that the Colonization Commission strove to dispossess Polish landowners. An amendment to the Colonization Law, introduced in 1904, had specified



existence by the 1890s in order to counter the Colonization Commission's discrimination against the Polish nationality. The land held by peasant farmers (those with 100 hectares or less) had been increasing since 1880 at the cost of the large estate owners. Between 1882 and 1907, the percentage of arable land in Posen occupied by estates greater than 100 hectares fell to 46 percent, representing a decrease of 12.5 percent. And in Posen, the number of peasant farmers who owned farms of five to twenty hectares increased in the same period by 39.5 percent. Many of these holdings were very small; by 1907, farmsteads of less than two hectares accounted for over half of all farms in Prussian Poland.<sup>74</sup>

The process of parcellation was advanced in particular by Polish parcellation societies and cooperatives. Adverse economic conditions provided the market with both German and Polish land as large estate owners were forced to sell up. The significance of this trend for the national question was that each transfer of land brought the risk of passing into Polish hands. Polish credit and parcellation cooperatives had come into existence to satisfy the land requirements of Polish peasant farmers. These served also as effective resistance against the programme of the Colonization Commission. Between 1887 and 1907, no less than 85 Polish credit cooperatives were founded in the East. In sum, the peasant farming sector of the economy had expanded by 1907 in relation to the large estates.<sup>75</sup>

By 1907, the majority of the populace in Posen and West Prussia still worked in agriculture, and most workers in this sector were, according to official sources, of Polish nationality. As tables IV and V indicate (below), in 1882 and 1907 around three-quarters of the agrarian working-class in Posen, and almost two-thirds in West Prussia, were Polish. The self-employed in the same sector were approximately two-thirds Polish in Posen, while the figure stood at just over 50 percent in West Prussia. Taken as

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that landowners could now only sell their land to the Colonization Commission and not to the Polish parcellation banks. But because these banks had been buying since the late 1890s mainly German property, this law did nothing to increase the supply of Polish land. Poles were also prevented from creating new small-holdings through parcellation. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 176-177, 186; Buzek, *Historya*, pp. 288-90.

<sup>74</sup> J. Kulczycki, *School Strikes in Prussian Poland 1901-1907: the Struggle over Bilingual Education*, (New York, 1981), pp. 39-40.

<sup>75</sup> H.-U. Wehler, *Krisenherde des Kaiserreich 1871-1918* (Göttingen, 1970), p. 189.

a whole, the national interface consisted of a marked economic gradient between the nationalities; so much so that the national divide was secondarily economic.

*Table IV: Distribution of Nationalities among Principal Occupational Groups in Posen, 1882-1907 (%)*\*

<i>Occupational Group</i>	<i>Self-Employed</i>			<i>Wage and Salary Earners</i>		
	<i>Germans</i>	<i>Poles</i>	<i>Jews</i>	<i>Germans</i>	<i>Poles</i>	<i>Jews</i>
<b>Agriculture</b>						
1882:	37.60	62.23	0.17[=100%]	23.12	76.85	0.03[=100%]
1907:	37.27	62.67	0.05	26.63	73.35	0.02
<b>Industry</b>						
1882:	41.89	49.75	8.36	43.82	53.49	2.69
1907:	38.29	58.52	3.19	34.61	64.33	1.06
<b>Trade/Commerce</b>						
1882:	28.56	30.38	41.06	48.08	35.47	16.45
1907:	35.60	44.01	20.39	49.33	43.62	7.05
<b>Domestic Servants/ Occasional Labourers</b>						
1882:	----	-----	----	28.89	70.07	1.02
1907:	----	-----	----	30.44	69.13	0.41
<b>Public Officials/ Free Professionals</b>						
1882:	55.61	41.71	2.68	----	-----	----
1907:	67.17	31.25	1.58	----	-----	----

\* Based upon persons in full-time employment.

*Sources:* 'Die Ergebnisse der Berufszählung vom 5. Juni 1882 im preussischen Staate', *Preussische Statistik*, vol. 76, III, (1885), pp. 240, 242; 'Berufs- und Betriebszählung vom 12. Juni 1907', *Statistik des Deutschen Reiches*, vol. 206 (1910), pp. 222-231.

*Table V: Distribution of Nationalities among Principal Occupational Groups in West Prussia, 1882-1907 (%)\**

<i>Occupational Group</i>	<i>Self-Employed</i>			<i>Wage and Salary Earners</i>		
	<i>Germans</i>	<i>Poles</i>	<i>Jews</i>	<i>Germans</i>	<i>Poles</i>	<i>Jews</i>
<i>Agriculture</i>						
1882:	49.55	50.33	0.12[=100%]	39.44	60.54	0.02[=100%]
1907:	46.24	53.72	0.04	38.66	61.31	0.03
<i>Industry</i>						
1882:	62.54	34.23	3.23	62.52	36.53	0.95
1907:	57.27	40.94	1.79	55.14	44.47	0.39
<i>Trade/Commerce</i>						
1882:	52.22	21.99	25.79	59.14	32.28	8.58
1907:	56.00	30.00	14.00	60.73	35.39	3.88
<i>Domestic Servants/ Occasional Labourers</i>						
1882:	----	-----	----	49.24	50.15	0.61
1907:	----	-----	----	49.09	50.84	0.07
<i>Public Officials/ Free Professionals</i>						
1882:	68.11	30.59	1.30	----	-----	----
1907:	71.03	28.23	0.74	----	-----	----

\* Based upon persons in full-time employment.

*Sources:* 'Die Ergebnisse der Berufszählung vom 5. Juni 1882 im preussischen Staate', *Preussische Statistik*, vol. 76, III, (1885), pp. 240, 242; 'Berufs- und Betriebszählung vom 12. Juni 1907', *Statistik des Deutschen Reiches*, vol. 206 (1910), pp. 222-231.

The rising proportion of the working population employed in industry, commerce and the trades between 1882 and 1907 caused the populations of the towns and cities to expand. The urban populations of the regencies of Posen, Bromberg, Danzig, and Marienwerder had increased from 28 to 34 percent, 25 to 34 percent, 30 to 43 percent and 21 to 29 percent respectively between 1871 and 1910. Urban growth (and industrial development) was hastened by the demands of a more advanced capitalist economy for more extensive goods and services, such as credit facilities, for the processing of products of a prospering agricultural economy, the expansion of the state bureaucracy in the region, and the building trade. Most importantly, the region's industrial development was closely dependent upon the agricultural sector, which required and

supplied goods to and from industry. Industries which prospered included machine-manufacturing, sugar-refining, liquor production, grain milling and the production of fertilisers. Heavy industry, including coal-mining and iron production, was generally absent from the provinces of Posen and West Prussia.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, there was a significant iron industry in and around Danzig.<sup>77</sup>

The regional economy prospered during the 1890s, as the German economy began to recover from the long depression which had ensued since the early 1870s. A phase of exceptional growth lasted up until the First World War. The mainstay of this prosperity was estate agriculture which once again became profitable, in part thanks to processes of technological rationalisation to which it had been subjected from the 1880s. Profits increased as farm commodity prices gradually increased, reaching their peak in the decade before the war thanks to export subsidies, the Bülow tariff of 1902, and rapidly increasing demand from the empire's expanding population. Rye, timber, vodka, sugar, and tobacco (especially from West Prussia), were among the most important exports to the west. West Prussia and Posen also accounted for around 20 percent of all rape produced in the German Empire. Grain, timber and sugar were major exports from the ports of Memel, Königsberg, and Danzig on the Baltic coast.<sup>78</sup>

Demographic change involved important shifts in the distribution of the nationalities among the principal occupational sectors. One of the most striking demographic changes was the sharp decline in the number of Jews inhabiting the Eastern Marches. This process had a direct effect upon the economic structure of the towns and cities. Between 1882 and 1907 there was a sharp decrease in the presence of

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<sup>76</sup> H. Rogmann, *Die Bevölkerungsentwicklung im preussischen Osten in den letzten hundert Jahren* (Berlin, 1937), pp. 191-194; Münsterberg, *Die wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse*, p. 7; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, p. 211. The principal industrial centres in East Prussia were the cities: Königsberg, Tilsit, and Memel; of West Prussia: Danzig, Elbing, Graudenz and Thorn; and of Posen: Posen, Bromberg and Hohensalza. Notable urban industries included ship-building in Danzig and Elbing, the amber industry in Danzig, porcelain production in Kolmar, and liquor production in all major towns.

<sup>77</sup> O. Münsterberg, *Der Handel Danzigs: ein Versuch zur Darstellung der Entwicklung einer deutschen Seestadt des Osten* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 48-51. Industry intensified in Danzig, West Prussia's principal city, during the 1860s, and again in 1898, following the initiation of *Hebungspolitik*, a policy of elevating the economic and cultural life of the Eastern Marches. Ship-building and the crafts and trades were the major industries in the city. In 1866 there were 80 iron-works in Danzig, Oliva and Zoppot. The iron industry gradually became superseded by production in western Germany, and by the early 1900s only the largest of the iron-works were still in business.

<sup>78</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 208-209; Münsterberg, *Die wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse*, pp. 14-15.

Jews in industry and commerce and a concomitant increase in the numbers of Poles employed in these sectors in Posen and West Prussia (as shown by tables IV and V). For instance, Jews, as a percentage of those self-employed in commerce, had decreased in Posen from 43.4 percent in 1882 to 21.3 percent in 1907. For Jewish wage and salary earners in the same sector, the decline was even more startling: 30.0 percent to 12.3 percent. Similar drops are identified in industry, the other principal sector of employment for Jews. This demographic change, which centred on the towns where many industries and trades were situated, constituted one of the main topics of concern in period accounts of the Polish question; namely, the increasing admittance of Poles into the middle-class occupation groups and the socio-political consequences of this.

The Jewish population had been declining in the Eastern Marches since the 1840s. In 1840, Jews made up roughly 21 percent of the population of the city of Posen, but in 1905 this had fallen to 4 percent. The greatest falls were among Jewish labourers and craftsmen whose jobs went to the Poles. The Jews, however, maintained their prominence in trade, and because of their tax contributions, their municipal political influence. Jews of this milieu were usually of progressive or liberal persuasion, and led the way in civic reform. But this picture began to alter in the mid-1880s when Jewish participation in business began to decline. Between 1885 and 1905 the Jewish population fell in the regencies of Marienwerder from 14,600 to 9,200, in Bromberg from 16,500 to 10,500, and in Posen from 31,000 to 18,500. During the same period, the Protestant populations in these three regencies increased by 32 percent and the Catholic populations by 47 percent. According to the economist, Ludwig Bernhard, economic life became coloured by anti-Semitism which was promoted by Polish cooperatives and newspapers. In particular, the boycotting of Jewish credit and trade was encouraged, and the rise of Polish nationalism increased the competition from Polish social and economic institutions. At the same time the services provided to Jews by Polish banks and cooperatives were reduced. In sum, economic conditions worsened

for Jews in the Polish territories during this period, which did nothing to help retain their presence in the region.<sup>79</sup>

Jews found themselves squeezed between the growing forces of German and Polish nationalism, and caught within the conflict between them. The Eastern Marches gradually became a less hospitable place to live. As Jews and Germans left, they made way for the expansion of the Polish bourgeoisie. The Prussian education system and Polish educational organisations like the Marcinowski Association had each played a long-standing role in preparing Poles for entry into the professions and business.<sup>80</sup> The fruits of their labours had become manifest by the fin de siècle. Poles in the professions, such as doctors and lawyers played a crucial role in supporting the Polish national movement. The Poles who entered these professions were usually the sons of estate-owners or scholars of the Marcinowski Association. In 1899, 166 (32 percent) of the 517 doctors in the province of Posen were Polish. In the city of Posen, 33 of the 115 doctors were Polish, and in Bromberg, five from a total of 45. At the same date, approximately 26 percent of lawyers in Posen were listed as Polish (44 of 171); in the regency of Posen, 30 out of 93 pharmacists (32 percent) were Polish, and in the regency of Bromberg, the figure stood at 10 out of 44 (23 percent).<sup>81</sup>

The Polish stake in the professional and mercantile sectors of the economy was supported by a myriad of social and economic associations. By 1908 there were over one hundred Polish banks in the whole of Prussia, and approximately one hundred industrial and economic cooperatives. There were eleven parcellation banks and cooperatives in Posen alone. Cooperatives and trade associations supported the needs of farmers and craftsmen. By 1911 there were 373 agricultural cooperatives for farmers in

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<sup>79</sup> F. Zitzlaff, *Preussische Städte im Gebiete des polnischen Nationalitätenkampfes* (Leipzig, 1909), pp. IX-XLVI; Münsterberg, *Die wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse*, p. 23. The combined Jewish population of Posen and West Prussia stood at 97,974 in 1858; 88,069 in 1871; 75,520 in 1885; and 46,572 in 1905.

<sup>80</sup> The Society for Academic Aid to the Youth of the Grand Duchy of Posen had been founded in 1841 by a physician from Posen, named Karol Marcinkowski, for the purpose of providing support for young Polish students to attend secondary school and Prussian universities.

<sup>81</sup> L. Wegener, *Der wirtschaftliche Kampf der Deutschen mit den Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1903), pp. 205-208. The economic ascendancy of the Polish middle class is evidenced by its increasing financial strength. The business taxes contributed by this milieu increased between 1895 and 1910 from 18 percent to 25 percent of the total collected in the towns of the province of Posen (excluding the city of Posen). Jews still retained, however, their economic prominence in the towns and cities of the East, namely in the professions and commerce despite their dwindling population overall. For instance, in the city of Posen after 1900, Jews represented only four percent of the population and yet paid a quarter of the city's income taxes. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 223-224, 362.

the province of Posen and 132 trade associations by 1918.<sup>82</sup> By 1910 the entire Polish cooperative movement, consisting of 265 cooperatives, had in total capital of 240 million marks at its disposal.<sup>83</sup>

The importance of the Polish middle class to the Polish question was evident by the attention it received from contemporaries. By 1901, the police president in Posen could report that 'the commercial and financial life of Poznań is slowly being conquered by Poles. Polish small business finds very suitable ground here for its development. Its clientele is composed of Polish villagers and also Germans, particularly members of the German bureaucratic class and officer corps. Such Germans, in comparison with the Poles, do not care about supporting, in the first instance, German businesses.'<sup>84</sup> The mayor of Posen, Richard Witting, described shortly after the turn of the century how in

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<sup>82</sup> The range of Polish associations in Posen is revealed by the surveillance reports made by the police. For instance, the police recorded in February 1910 that there were (excluding Polish trade and economic cooperatives) 259 Polish associations in the regency of Bromberg, with a total of 14,327 members between them. Among these were: Straz-Verein, Sokol-Verein, Association of Young Hand-workers, Polish Electoral Association, Polish Singing Association, Polish Women's Reading Association, Electoral Association of Polish Socialists, Polish Businessmen's Association, Catholic Journeymen's Association, Catholic Priest's Association 'Unitas', and the 'Kolka Rolnicze' Agricultural Association. Ralph Schattkowsky has argued that the intensification of Polish mass nationalism in West Prussia occurred later than in Posen, and that it was still relatively embryonic as late as the 1880s. Certainly, Posen was always the main centre of the national movement. The city was centre of the church's administration and benefited from being geographically at the centre of the Prussian partition. The headquarters of most Polish economic and political institutions and major publications were situated in the city. Precise quantification of the national movement is problematic owing to the inconsistency of historical data. But approximate figures do suggest its scale. Marian Seyda, editor of the *Kurier Poznański*, estimated in 1910 that approximately 140,000 people in Posen participated in the Polish national movement. Between 1906 and 1907, approximately 70,000 young children participated in school strikes in the Prussian East, and William Hagen has suggested that the number of persons involved in Organic Work institutions stood at 82,000 in Posen (one quarter of the province's adult Polish-speaking population) by 1914. Moreover, the combined circulation of the Polish press by 1914 had reached over 100,000. R. Schattkowsky, 'Nationalismus und Konfliktgestaltung: Westpreussen zwischen Reichsgründung und Erstem Weltkrieg', in Müller and Petri (eds.), *Die Nationalisierung von Grenzen: zur Konstruktion nationaler Identität in sprachlich gemischten Grenzregionen* (Marburg, 2002), pp. 35-79; S. Wierzechowski, *Polski ruch narodowy w Prusach Zachodnich w latach 1860-1914* (Wrocław, 1980), pp. 225-232; W. Molik, 'Entwicklungsbedingungen und -mechanismen der polnischen Nationalbewegung im Grossherzogthum Posen', *Berliner Jahrbuch für Osteuropäische Geschichte*, 2 (1995), 17-34 (pp. 30-31); Winterstein, *Die Polenfrage*, pp. 10-11; W. Molik, 'The Poles in the Grand Duchy of Poznań 1850-1914', in Kappeler (ed.), *The Formation of National Elites* (Dartmouth, 1992), pp. 13-39 (p. 23); Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, p. 258; GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 728.

<sup>83</sup> G. v. Widdern, *Das 'Schlafende Heer' der Polen (leider kein Roman)* (Berlin, 1912), pp. 53-54. These included 185 credit banks, 19 parcellation banks, 50 import and export firms, and 11 others.

<sup>84</sup> *Memoriał prezydium policji w Poznaniu*, 6 Feb. 1901, quoted in Jakóbczyk, *Wielkopolska*, pp. 242-244. This report also remarked upon how 'German renegades represented a great part of Posen's business world. As a 'striking' example, was cited the Polish bazaar on New Street. Of ten shops in the bazaar, six bore German names, while their proprietors were 'declared Poles'.

the cities of the East 'the Polish nationality advances relentlessly, conquering step by step its position, ousting the German businessman, craftsman, shopkeeper, doctor, lawyer, to put itself in their place.'<sup>85</sup> For his part, the moderate Polish noble, Count Bogdan Hutten-Czapski, one of the few Poles to wield influence at the German court, had gone so far as to describe 'the economic and national strengthening of the Polish middle class which produced the "Polish community life in the Prussian state"' as the 'basic facts' of political life in the provinces of Posen and West Prussia.<sup>86</sup>

### (iii) Solutions of the Polish Question

In order to prevail in the national conflict, and according to the logic of nationalism in the eastern borderlands, it was the primary objective of successive German governments to increase the numerical presence of the German-speaking population in provinces of the Eastern Marches. The strategies employed fell into two main categories: assimilation and colonization. The first of these had been implemented sporadically since the time of the Germanization Laws in the early 1870s and aimed at the linguistic Germanization of as great a part of the Polish population as possible. Germanization by assimilation, however, had failed, as statistical analysis showed by the early 1880s. Wilhelm von Massow, the author of an influential study of the Polish question, and a supporter of government *Polenpolitik* with Hakatist sympathies had written: 'of the Poles we can be sure that we cannot make them good Germans by forcing the German language upon them. The goals of direct Germanization cannot be fulfilled through the imposition of language. It must occur differently.' For Massow, Germanization could only be achieved 'when we have given, through economic means, predominance to the German nationality'.<sup>87</sup> If the Poles could not be assimilated, then colonization, it was hoped, would displace them from the land.

Colonization began with the founding of the Royal Prussian Colonization Commission. Bismarck was successful in using his acquiescent majority in the Prussian

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<sup>85</sup> R. Witting, *Das Ostmarken-Problem* (Berlin, 1907), p. 24.

<sup>86</sup> B. v. Hutten-Czapski, *Sechzig Jahre Politik und Gesellschaft*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1936), I, 318.

<sup>87</sup> W. v. Massow, *Die Polen-Not im Deutschen Osten: Studien zur Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1903), p. 385.



parliament to introduce the *Law for the Promotion of German Settlements in the Provinces of West Prussia and Posen* on 26 April 1886, which led to the founding of the Commission in Posen by the end of the same year. The aim of the Commission was to bolster the German presence in Posen and West Prussia by buying up Polish land and settling German peasants and workers originating from other parts of Germany, and to improve the socio-cultural infrastructure of the region. The net result would, it was hoped, be the displacement of Polish inhabitants, or as the prominent Polish deputy, Kazimierz Kantak, sceptically asserted, 'to exterminate the Polish nationality'.<sup>88</sup>

The policy of colonization, like other aspects of *Polenpolitik*, had been formulated after unification by illiberal, conservative governments, supported in the Landtag from 1879, by the Conservatives, Free Conservatives, and National Liberals. These parties, together with the Progressives, were the core representatives of 'German national' politics in the Eastern Marches. After the Reichstag election in 1907, Bülow had used in the Reichstag the support of a heterogeneous majority of National Liberals, Conservatives and Progressives, known as the 'Bülow bloc', which lasted until 1909 and sealed Bülow's marginalization of the Catholic Centre. This was followed by Bethmann Hollweg's 'Blue-Black-bloc' of Conservatives and Catholic Centrists, and after 1912, his ad hoc coalitions known as the 'policy of diagonals'. However, throughout these different phases of collaboration and shifts of power, it was the interests of German Conservatives and Liberals which remained the predominant influences upon the course of *Polenpolitik*.<sup>89</sup>

The national interface in the region was structured politically through the interplay between the German parties, and the blocs they formed, and the various Polish parties, represented in parliament by a faction called *Kóło Polskie* (the 'Polish Circle'). The most powerful party in the Landtag from 1870 to 1880 was the National Liberal Party, and then from 1880, the German Conservatives. The principal anti-Polish parties, namely the Conservatives, Free Conservatives, and National Liberals, represented a

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<sup>88</sup> Speech of 23 Feb. 1886, Landtag, HdA. Bismarck had denied in the Herrenhaus that the purpose of colonization was extermination: 'This progressive cancerous Polonization of the German inhabitants of those provinces we hope, through this law, through the means we request, will be brought to a halt. But the intention is not to eradicate [ausrotten] the Polish population, but only to preserve the Germans.'

Speech of 15 April 1886, Landtag, Herrenhaus.

<sup>89</sup> Craig, *Germany 1866-1945*, pp. 290-93; Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews*, p. 131.

consistent majority in the Landtag after 1870, and numbered nearly two-thirds of the chamber between 1870 and 1873 and then again after 1886. The combined strength of the same anti-Polish parties in the Reichstag was less than in the Prussian parliament; they constituted an overall majority in the German parliament up till 1881 and then only again between 1887 and 1890. In the Reichstag constituencies of Posen and West Prussia, the Poles, the German Conservatives and Free Conservatives dominated. In 1871, 13 of the 28 seats in these two provinces were held by Poles; the figure stood at 14 in 1912. The liberal parties were generally best represented in the larger cities, particularly Danzig (see tables XIX-XXII and appendix).<sup>90</sup>

The colonization project was supported ideologically and most fervently by the National Liberals. The National Liberal slogan 'nationality follows language' epitomised the party's ethno-cultural bias, and it was foremost in championing the ethno-linguistic conception of nationality in the East.<sup>91</sup> The party's aims vis-à-vis the Polish question were stated in the 1907 party programme as being the 'defence of the German nationality against attacks of every kind; emphatic support of German compatriots in the Eastern Marches against the national-Polish danger.'<sup>92</sup> Unlike the Conservatives, the National Liberals did not have a particular vested interest in the landed properties of the eastern provinces. Instead, their interests concerned the 'Lebensinteressen' of the Prussian state and German Empire. The National Liberals criticised the agrarian self-interest of the conservatives, and against these, supported the industrialisation of the East, which it was expected would help sustain the German nationality. The National Liberal Party's complicity in Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* and subsequent *Polenpolitik* provoked sharp criticism from Polish liberals who saw German liberals as forsaking any commitment made since 1848 to Polish national rights.<sup>93</sup> As

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<sup>90</sup> Buzek, *Historya*, pp. 138-140.

<sup>91</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, p. 272.

<sup>92</sup> Quoted in H. v. Zitzewitz, *Das deutsche Polenbild in der Geschichte: Entstehung-Einflüsse-Auswirkungen* (Köln, 1991), pp. 196-201. A reference to the Polish question appeared for the first time in the National Liberal party programme in January 1907. Nor was the Polish question referred to directly in the conservative parties' joint party programme of 1870 nor in the Tivoli Programme in 1892. It may be surmised from this that the Polish question was not a pivotal political issue for these parties.

<sup>93</sup> Since September 1885 the National Liberals had campaigned for 'inner colonization', whereby German peasants would be settled by the state on the parcelled lands of ailing estates in the East. The Landtag deputies Sombart and Miquel were at the forefront of the campaign. The National Liberals, who had argued that 'large estates Polonize', viewed parcellation as a solution, not only to the national

the Polish deputy Wierzbinski declared to the Landtag: 'if they approve the war of extermination which is being conducted against us...if they make use of law and justice for their own benefit, but want to know nothing of the rights of other nationalities, then of course...we want nothing to do with such liberalism'.<sup>94</sup>

German liberalism's main constituencies in the Eastern Marches consisted of the German and Jewish bourgeoisie and members of the professional occupations, concentrated in the towns and cities. The National Liberals also drew major support from big business and had important links with the ultra-nationalist Eastern Marches Association (founded in 1894) and the Pan-German League.<sup>95</sup> National Liberal activity became more prominent in the Eastern Marches from 1907, particularly in the province of Posen, following the National Liberals' withdrawal from the German associations after the 1907 Reichstag election. In accordance with the party's priority of maintaining national integrity, it supported the promotion of German interests in the eastern provinces. To this end, measures including the provision of state credit for business and

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conflict, but also to the economic ills of the region, by helping to retain the population and thereby providing a basis for industrialisation. The settlement of German peasants would not only challenge the social hegemony of the great landowners, strengthening the former, but would also Germanize the region by increasing the size of the German population. The expansion of the peasantry would also act as a bulwark against Social Democratic agitation on the land. This overt challenge to traditional agrarian interests was accompanied by the criticisms of the Junkers from the Social Democrats and Progressives. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 132-144; B. Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik 1894-1908 und die Haltung der deutschen konservativen und liberalen Parteien: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Provinz Posen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), pp. 40-44.

<sup>94</sup> Speech of 9 May 1874, Landtag, HdA. At parliamentary level, political cooperation between German liberals and Poles had occurred frequently during the nineteenth century. Before 1848, many German liberals had been sympathetic towards Polish nationalism, even favouring the reconstitution of Poland, based upon the pre-1772 borders. This affinity, which had been established before 1848, was manifested politically between 1850 and 1866, and then again after 1879, when the Polish faction and German liberals frequently collaborated in elections to the Prussian parliament in order to defeat Conservative candidates. See D. Fricke (ed.), *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte: die bürgerlichen und kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland (1789-1945)*, 4 vols (Leipzig, 1983-1986), III, 258-267.

<sup>95</sup> Nine of the 30 Reichstag deputies who belonged to the Eastern Marches Society between 1894 and 1900 were members of the National Liberal Party. The *Ostmarkenverein* (Eastern Marches Association) had been founded specifically to promote German nationalism in the eastern provinces. Its aim was the 'increased and intensified Germanization in the Eastern Marches of the Empire, settled by Poles, through the elevation and maintenance of German-national consciousness, and also through the growth and economic fortification of the German population'. Among the most important strategies for achieving these goals was the recruitment of Germans to settle the towns and villages, in particular the expansion of the German middle-class in these settlements, through ensuring an adequate client base and supply of credit. The National Liberal party also had close connections with the Pan-German League. No less than 47 percent of the 60 deputies in the Reichstag who were members of the League between 1891 and 1914 were National Liberals. These included both the chairman and manager of the League, Ernst Hasse and Adolf Lehr respectively. Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, pp. 41-44; *Die Ostmark*, 1 (1901), quoted in Jakóbczyk, *Wielkopolska*, p. 158.

further industrialisation were favoured. The founding of Catholic German associations was also supported. On 23 January 1908, a 'Nationale Vereinigung' was founded in Posen by *Oberbürgermeister* Ernst Wilms and *Bürgermeister* Franz Künzer, and then in the following year, the 'Provinzial-Verband der Nationalliberalen Partei der Provinz Posen' was formed.<sup>96</sup>

Until the 1880s, German liberal and conservative politics in Posen and West Prussia had been centred on local German associations in individual towns, and on the electoral associations at election times. But in the aftermath of the Reich-level political crisis of 1878-9, this model was fractured as liberals who had formerly supported the National Liberals switched their allegiance to the Progressives, and hence, moved outside Bismarck's sphere of support. The foundation of a regional Progressive organisation ensued from this action.<sup>97</sup> In 1880, a provincial organisation of the *Deutsche Freisinnige Partei* was established by liberals in Posen.<sup>98</sup> In Posen and West Prussia, the party was best represented in urban areas and gained its first Reichstag seat in Posen in 1881 when it won in the constituency of Bromberg. The influence of the Progressives was predominant among the German bourgeoisie and Jews. Bismarck's tariffs had been in opposition to this constituency's interests in industrial development and free trade with Russia, rendering collaboration with Bismarck, as had been the case with the National Liberals, unattractive. In comparison, the Progressives promoted the urban bourgeoisie's economic interests and striving for self-government in the German and Prussian parliaments.<sup>99</sup>

In Posen the party was represented in the city assembly, and it also had its own newspaper, the *Posener Neuesten Nachrichten*, which was first published in 1899. In West Prussia, the party won its first seat at the 1884 election in Danzig which it held continually up to the war. By 1895/6, the *Freisinnige Volkspartei (FSVP)* which had been created in 1893, had 379 associations and was the second strongest party in

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<sup>96</sup> B. Grześ, *Niemcy w Poznanskiem wobec polityki germanizacyjnej 1815-1920* (Poznań, 1976), p. 293; Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, p. 42.

<sup>97</sup> The National Liberals split in 1880 over the introduction of the protective tariff (*Schutzzoll*) in 1879. Grzes, *Niemcy*, pp. 293, 302-3; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 153-4.

<sup>98</sup> The Progressives split in 1893 into the *Freisinnige Volkspartei (FSVP)* and the *Freisinnige Vereinigung (FSV)*.

<sup>99</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews*, pp. 288-9.

Berlin, Silesia, and East Prussia.<sup>100</sup> Two hundred and sixty-four delegates attended the congress of the *Freisinnige Volkspartei* held at Nuremberg in September 1897, of which three came from Posen, one from West Prussia, and 19 from Silesia.<sup>101</sup> By 1901, a *Freisinniger Verein* was established in the city of Posen, and there was also a *Wahlverein der deutsch-freisinnigen Partei* in Bromberg. Unlike the National Liberals, the two Progressive parties had opposed many of the fundamental principles of government *Polenpolitik*.<sup>102</sup>

The Progressives accepted the need for policies aimed at maintaining the integrity of the state in the East. As Heinrich Rickert, the Progressive deputy for Danzig, declared: 'we Germans from the border provinces do not want to be displaced by the Polish citizens; I believe that there is no question, least of all with us, who were born in that province, have grown up and lived there, that if it should come to it, all we Germans would unite.'<sup>103</sup> Both the Progressive People's Party and Progressive Union defended the status of the Eastern Marches as an integral part of Prussia and the German Empire at large, and had little sympathy for Polish irredentism.<sup>104</sup> But the stance of the Progressives towards the Polish question typically prioritised, in line with their core tenets, the values of political freedom and civil equality within a framework of national unity.<sup>105</sup>

Apart from the liberal parties, the conservative parties were a major political force in the Eastern Marches. In general, conservatism was embraced by the Junkers, the state bureaucracy and the Protestant clergy, as well as by large swathes of the

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<sup>100</sup> L. Lohaus, *Das Ergebniss der Wahlen für den Deutschen Reichstag von 1871 bis 1887* (Berlin, 1887).

<sup>101</sup> *Der dritte Parteitag der Freisinnigen Volkspartei* (Berlin, 1897), pp. 47-56.

<sup>102</sup> *Handbuch für die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1901), pp. 191, 207, 209; Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, pp. 47-52.

<sup>103</sup> Speech of 30 January 1886, Landtag, HdA.

<sup>104</sup> Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, pp. 127-133.

<sup>105</sup> At the third party conference of the Progressive People's Party in 1897, it was resolved that the party's campaign for the forthcoming Reichstag election should be fought on the basis of a programme for 'the establishment of the national unity of Germany, the promotion of political freedom, and the elevation of the well-being of the entire population.' This included 'imperial legal regulation of the laws of assembly and association, equality of all citizens before the law, equal rights for all confessions, protection for the freedom of expression in word and writing, the introduction of the right of appeal against judgements of courts, and compensation for the wrongly convicted and arrested.' As it will be shown, each of these policies, particularly of confessional rights and laws of assembly and association, were of considerable importance in the nationality conflict. *Der dritte Parteitag der Freisinnigen Volkspartei* (Berlin, 1897), pp. 38-39.

peasantry. The priorities of the conservative parties included the preservation of the monarchy and Junker privileges, resistance to electoral reform and industrialisation, protectionist tariffs, and the defence of the interests of the great east-Elbian estates. The German Conservative Party, founded in 1876, drew its core support from Prussia and particularly the regions east of the Elbe. Among its most important bases of support were the major landowners and state officials; the former dominated its leadership. The party's supporters dominated the first and second classes of the electoral system. Electoral support was also gained in the third class from the peasantry who were usually conservative and politically dependent. Like the National Liberals, the German Conservative Party had close links with the Eastern Marches Association, which two of its members, Heinrich von Tiedemann and Hermann Kennemann, had founded. Moreover, eight of the 30 Reichstag deputies who belonged to the Association between 1894 and 1908 were members of the German Conservative Party. This connection confirmed the place of this party with the National Liberals within the 'German national' fold.<sup>106</sup>

The Free Conservatives (known as the 'Reichspartei' after the *Reichsgründung*) were also a significant force in the frontier provinces. They drew their support from the more minor estate owners and industrialists, located in the Prussian East mainly in Silesia. This party was an important element in the political affairs of the Eastern Marches. Some of its most prominent members participated in the founding of the Pan-German League as well as the 'Reichsverband gegen die Sozialdemokratie'. The Free Conservatives backed the agitation of the Eastern Marches Association, and one of its founding members, Heinrich von Tiedemann, had been a member of the party. Nevertheless, the Free Conservatives developed slowly before 1906 and were mainly a campaigning force. The Free Conservatives and German Conservative Party collaborated in their work in the East; in the province of Posen they worked together in an alliance called the 'Zentralverein der vereinigten Konservativen der Provinz Posen' (Conservative Union), which was founded in 1884, uniting agrarian, business and bureaucratic interests. This association's purpose was stated as being: 'always to represent the national element, to bring to complete fulfilment conservative interests

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<sup>106</sup> Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, p. 35.

within the nation'. Local conservative associations were listed as existing in the towns of Inowrazlaw and Bromberg by 1901.<sup>107</sup>

Following the founding of the 'Provinzial-Verband der Nationalliberalen Partei der Provinz Posen' in 1909, the conservative parties created in 1910 a local 'Verein der vereinigten Konservativen' for the city of Posen and the rural districts of Posen East and West. At the top of this association's hierarchy sat many of the region's top officials, including the province's president, the police president, the regency presidents of Posen and Bromberg, as well as the president of the Colonization Commission, the leader of the 'Bund der Landwirte', and the Hakatists, Tiedemann and Kennemann. Many other lesser state officials and large estate-owners also featured strongly in the Association's membership lists.<sup>108</sup> Important organs of the conservative press in Posen included the *Posener Tageblatt* and *Bromberger Tageblatt*.

Following the passing of the Colonization Law, the Prussian government had made a fund of one hundred million marks available to the new Colonization Commission for a twenty year period for the 'strengthening of the German element in the provinces of West Prussia and Posen against Polonization through the settlement of German farmers and workers.'<sup>109</sup> The Commission bought up Polish estates and then redistributed them to German peasant colonists. By the end of 1906, after 20 years of work, it had acquired 3,260 square kilometres of land and had settled 12,357 families; it had built 315 new villages and bolstered the German nationality in 138 existing rural settlements, in the hope of creating majority-German populations. As well as buying plots of land, the Commission met the initial costs of settlement and of running new communities, in particular their churches and schools.<sup>110</sup> Colonization also required the settlement of officials and key professionals such as teachers to support the German population. New army garrisons were also established. In the region's garrisons there were 26,130

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 36; Grześ, *Niemcy*, p. 294; *Handbuch für die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1901), pp. 191, 207, 209.

<sup>108</sup> Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, pp. 35-40.

<sup>109</sup> H. Sohnrey, *Eine Wanderfahrt durch die deutschen Ansiedlungsgebiete in Posen und Westpreussen* (Berlin, 1897), pp. 1-11; V. Schoultz (ed.), *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Ostmarkenvereins* (Berlin, 1908), pp. 89-95. A detailed description is given here of the process of preparing a new German settlement on land bought by the Settlement Commission. Amendments to the Colonization Law were made on 20 April 1898 and 1 July 1902 which increased the fund by a further 100 million and 150 million marks respectively.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

soldiers stationed on 1 December 1910. And officials, troops, and their families, totalled around 161,000 in Posen in 1907 (8 percent of the province's inhabitants). The locations of the new settlements established by the Commission are shown in map A2.<sup>111</sup>

The project of colonization in the eastern provinces was supported through the availability of bank capital for German merchants, manufacturers and artisans. Among the most important institutions for this purpose were the *Ostbank für Handel und Gewerbe* in Posen, and the *Kreditanstalt für Städtische Hausbesitzer der Provinz Posen und Westpreussen* which was set up by the provincial authorities in 1910 as an accredited source of credit for German proprietors in the towns and cities; the state gave 3,000,000 marks as founding capital which was eventually raised to 6,000,000 marks. As well as providing loans, the first of these institutions also bought out failing German businesses so as to prevent them from falling into Polish hands.<sup>112</sup> There was also a network of Raiffeisen cooperative societies which provided credit to colonists as well as indigenous German farmers. This network was set up and directed from Posen by Alfred Hugenberg between 1900 and 1903.<sup>113</sup>

Despite the best efforts of German governments and their allies to colonize, the continual migration of Germans away from the East cancelled out the benefits of colonization. By the 1890s, the deleterious exodus of Germans from the East, lured by the prospect of economic rewards and better cultural conditions, was recognised by the authorities and prompted a new package of policies aimed at retaining Germans, known as *Hebungspolitik*. This was targeted primarily at the infrastructure of the towns and the needs of middle-class Germans. The local state bureaucracy was itself a major element within the German bourgeoisie, the very constituency which required bolstering in the face of this social stratum's increasing infiltration by Poles. State officials were intimately involved in the colonization project, for instance involving themselves in the establishment of private businesses to counter the Polish cooperatives. As a result, a

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<sup>111</sup> Grześ, *Niemcy*, pp. 248-249.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 262-263.

<sup>113</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, p. 184.



large proportion of agricultural cooperatives were affiliated to the Colonization Commission.<sup>114</sup>

Despite the efforts of the Colonization Commission and its collaborators in the colonization project, the German state was losing the struggle for the land. Polish ownership of land in Posen and West Prussia in fact had increased at German expense between 1882 and 1907 by 52,000 hectares.<sup>115</sup> One of the most influential criticisms of colonization came from the conservative publicist Hans Delbrück, editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*. He argued that if the pace of settlement continued at the rate for 1892-3 (of 511 settlers with families), which, minus the hitherto proportion of native settlers from within the provinces at 38 percent, would amount to approximately 1000 persons annually, the government would have settled merely 100,000 Germans among 1.5 million Poles after 100 years. Delbrück concluded consequently that the entire project of settlement in the Eastern Marches was 'worthless'.<sup>116</sup>

The Progressives were also among the most vocal critics of colonization policy in the Landtag. They voted against the colonization bill because it contravened the principle of equality before the law. It discriminated against a particular section of the population whose taxes contributed towards funding the colonization project, but who were barred from its activities. Rudolf Virchow had argued in the Landtag that the bill was fundamentally contrary to the constitution, namely article four, according to which all Prussians were equal before the law. The *FSVP*, although broadly supportive of Germanization, argued that such oppressive policies were in fact detrimental to the interests of Germans.<sup>117</sup>

Colonization ultimately failed to fulfill its objectives. Even the controversial Expropriation Law, finally approved by the Landtag on 3 March 1908, did not succeed

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<sup>114</sup> Bernhard, 'Die Fehlerquellen', pp. XXII-XXVI.

<sup>115</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, p. 185.

<sup>116</sup> H. Delbrück, *Die Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 6-7, 20, 25-26, 34-35. Delbrück, who was hostile to Polish nationalism, also criticised the government's language policy. He cited the example of Ireland, where, since the Irish language had entirely died out, 'knowledge of language has no bearing upon nationality'. Moreover, the politics of Germanization had been counterproductive in turning the Polish population against the Prussian state and aiding the cause of Polish agitation. Delbrück argued that the state should stay neutral and, above all, cease to force the German language on the Poles; the economic and social advantages were sufficient to motivate Poles to learn German.

<sup>117</sup> Speech of 7 April 1886, Landtag, HdA.

in reversing German fortunes in the struggle for the land.<sup>118</sup> Between 1886 and 1918, the Colonization Commission had purchased 466,750 hectares of land, approximately 8.5 percent of all the land in Posen and West Prussia. A total of 21,886 homesteads were created for settlers at a cost of 734 million Marks, as well as a further 57,481 hectares acquired under the *Rentengut* laws, which provided land for a further 5,858 homesteads. But it was the case that 71.5 percent of this land had been owned by Germans prior to its acquisition by the Colonization Commission; after 1908, as before, the Commission settled its colonists primarily on lands acquired from Germans. Between 1861 and 1886, the year of the Commission's foundation, the Polish nationality had lost 195,000 hectares, with another 50,000 hectares being lost in the following ten years. But this trend was reversed in the period 1896-1914 when the Polish nationality gained 181,437 hectares of land.<sup>119</sup> Between 1890 and 1910, the German population in Posen had, according to official sources, fallen from 39.54 percent to 38.46 percent of the total population, and in West Prussia, it had fallen from 64.89 percent to 64.49 percent. Although these were small decreases relative to the Polish population, they seem hardly to vindicate the enormous efforts made by the Prussian state since 1871 to expand the German population in these two frontier provinces.<sup>120</sup>

#### (iv) Conclusion

Linguistic identity was the foundation of nationality in the border provinces of Posen and West Prussia. In an ethnically-mixed borderland, linguistic identity was primary in

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<sup>118</sup> Powers of expropriation were granted to the Colonization Commission as a provision of the Prussian Colonization Law submitted to the Landtag at the end of 1907. The new law authorized the Colonization Commission to expropriate a maximum of 70,000 hectares in Posen and West Prussia. Despite the radical potential of the Expropriation Act, Bülow hesitated to use the new powers, and they were first applied in 1912 during Bethmann Hollweg's chancellorship, and then only on a small scale. Bethmann's dependence upon Catholic and Conservative votes (the 'blue-black-bloc') had the effect of tempering his policies towards the Poles; he ran the risk of losing the support of the Catholics in Reich-level politics as a consequence of his anti-Polish politics in the Prussian East. Bethmann and his minister for agriculture, Clemens von Schorlemer finally agreeing to seize four Polish estates totaling 1,700 hectares in 1912. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 194-202.

<sup>119</sup> The effects of both German and Polish parcellation were considerable also; the number of large estates (500 hectares or more) fell by 24%, while the number of farms of 5-100 hectares rose by 32%. Blanke, *Prussian Poland*, pp. 191-192.

<sup>120</sup> Based on the data in table VI.

structuring the two 'imagined communities'; it was also critical in determining their limits, a procedure which took its most rational form in German statistical science. It was the realisation, first having attained widespread public recognition during the 1880s, that the demographic presence of Germans in the East was diminishing in relation to the Poles that sparked the most substantive assaults by the state upon the Polish nationality after 1871. The Polish resistance, featuring a higher Polish birth-rate and ascendant middle class, turned this assault into a dynamic conflict. The strategies employed by the state in order to fight Polish nationalism fell into two main categories: assimilation and colonization. These strategies aimed at increasing the numerical presence of the German-speaking population in the provinces of the Eastern Marches. Both, however, proved ineffective ultimately; between 1890 and 1910 the German nationality in both Posen and West Prussia was set on a course of relative decline.

## Chapter 2

### The Nationalization of Culture

#### (i) *Kultur* and the State

At the German-Polish interface, the reverberations of the national conflict came to permeate the cultural practices of the region markedly after 1871. In the maelstrom of national competition and shifting identities, cultural institutions were among the most stable reference points of national life for both peoples. This role became heightened by the progressive nationalization of culture in the region after this date, which was a direct consequence of the politicisation caused by the national conflict. Such processes centred on cultural institutions as the most tangible modes of cultural expression. Of these, the theatres, libraries, and *Hochschulen* are selected here for discussion as being among the most representative cases. It will be argued that these institutions consolidated the linguistic premises of nationalism in the region and, hence, performed a leading role in sustaining 'national culture' in provinces of mixed settlement.

The provinces of Posen and West Prussia had been commonly viewed by German commentators as culturally backward, in need of the benefits of German 'cultural work' and the 'German mission in the East'. For instance, the Pan-German leader and theorist, Ernst Hasse, had remarked upon the lack of folk identity among the German inhabitants of Posen and West Prussia:

It is the case that there is almost no common folk identity [*Landsmannschaften*] among the Poseners and West Prussians at all. The East Prussian calls himself an East Prussian with pride, and the Silesian, a Silesian. And both are recognisable as such. But who can recognise a Posener or West Prussian by dialect and character? Distinct features hardly exist.<sup>121</sup>

German *Kultur*, in this opinion, had not established strong roots in these lands. The historian of West Prussia, F.W.F Schmitt, agreed. He lamented the poor cultural level of his province, notably the low level of national-historical consciousness among Germans, which was, in his view, directly related to the level of educational and cultural provision available. He wrote:

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<sup>121</sup> E. Hasse, *Deutsche Politik* (München, 1905), p. 130.

The local native German, whose ancestors centuries ago settled on the same clod of earth, possesses not the least tradition from the past; barely even that of his father. The entire past is for him a Polish 'Tohuwa bohu' [Heb. 'chaos'], which one must forget if one should know it by chance. ... The *Heimatskunde* which is provided for elementary schoolchildren usually refers to East Prussia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, but not to West Prussia. Everything which concerns West Prussia particularly is skirted around. The result is that the teacher himself has very little knowledge.<sup>122</sup>

Schmitt reported the same conditions as existing in the grammar schools, and also further afield in the Prussian universities, where West Prussian history was neglected.<sup>123</sup> Educational provision was also lacking in other ways. Conditions in the elementary schools were worse in Prussian Poland than most other parts of Prussia. For instance, the province of Posen had the highest level of children excluded from elementary school because of overcrowding in Prussia. In 1891 this figure stood at 2,431 (of 3,239 for the entire state of Prussia). In 1906, this figure stood at 306 (of 919 for the state). As for higher education, neither West Prussia nor Posen possessed universities by 1871, unlike each of the other eastern Prussian provinces; Silesia, Pomerania and East Prussia had universities in Breslau, Greifswald, and Königsberg respectively. Life in the nationally-mixed provinces was neither an attractive proposition for Prussian bureaucrats, for whom a tour of duty in this region was invariably unappealing owing to the hostility of much of the population to Prussian governance, and because of the inadequacies of the socio-cultural infrastructure.<sup>124</sup>

Rectification of the economic and cultural deficiencies of the Eastern Marches became, during the 1890s, the target of the most comprehensive package of government action of its type yet seen. It resulted from the realisation that in order to sustain, and consequently to retain, the numerical presence of the German nationality in these contested provinces, it was necessary to substantially improve their socio-economic infrastructure. The expectation was that this could halt the exodus of Germans, attracted by the economic boom and perceived higher standards of living in central and western

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<sup>122</sup> F.W.F. Schmitt, *Die Provinz Westpreussen, wie sie entstanden und wie sie gegenwärtig beschaffen ist* (Thorn, 1879), pp. 70-71.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> But while Posen may have had the worst overcrowding, between 1861 and 1906 only this province showed signs of improvement in terms of the ratio of schools per 10,000 of the population, although this applied only to Protestant schools (from 17.77 to 19.31 schools). In almost all other provinces this ratio worsened for pupils of both Catholic and Protestant faith. 'Das gesammte niedere Schulwesen im Preussischen Staate im Jahre 1906', *Preussische Statistik*, 209 (1908), pp. 28, 58, 157.

Germany. Cultural provision was an integral part of this project, as this was needed to provide the resources expected by the economically critical German middle class. The programme of material support which ensued, initiated by Caprivi's successors, and made explicit in the budget of 1898, became known as *Hebungspolitik*.

The strengthening of German cultural life was persistently advocated by commentators in discussions of the Polish question, but the economic strengthening of the German nationality was the precondition for all else. The necessary inextricability of *Kultur* and *Politik* in the Eastern Marches was acknowledged by Chancellor Bülow in a letter to the first rector of the Royal Academy in Posen, founded in 1903:

*Kultur* and *Politik* coexist not, as it is frequently held among intellectual circles, as strangers, or even as inimical forces. On the contrary, all politics must have cultural goals and every culture shows repeatedly the tendency to be realised within the nation-state. Moreover, our *Ostmarkenpolitik* would be in vain if the attractive power of our national culture were not to stand behind it.<sup>125</sup>

The development programme involved the costly building of libraries, theatres, operas, and new railways. Its prime beneficiaries were intended to be the German middle class and civil bureaucracy. It was financially supported by a 'disposition fund' which amounted to 400,000 marks annually. This fund had been approved by the Landtag and was to be used at the discretion of the provincial presidents of Posen and West Prussia. The practices of *Hebungspolitik* had been endorsed by the National Liberals; Johannes Miquel, as Prussian minister of finance (1891-1901), had played a key role in gaining approval after 1894 for direct material support for Germans in the East. But these measures of material support were opposed by some conservatives, who preferred instead the strategy of direct oppression of Polish nationalism together with support of the interests of the Junkers.<sup>126</sup>

In accordance with the aims of the programme, Germanization initiatives were targeted mainly at the towns and cities of the Eastern Marches, with the most elaborate projects situated in the city of Posen. A *Gesellschaft für Kunst und Wissenschaft* was founded in 1901, followed by the *Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek* (1902), the *Königliche Academie* (1903), the *Kaiser Friedrich-Museum* (1904), and the *Stadttheater* (1910).

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<sup>125</sup> G. Richter, *Ein deutsches Nationaltheater für Posen; eine Denkschrift von Gustaf Richter* (Posen, 1909), p. 2.

<sup>126</sup> W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews; the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914*, (Chicago, 1980), pp. 178-79.

The government had also established a hygiene institute in Posen in 1899, and had made two major financial awards in 1901 for the erection of a city theatre and the restoration of the town hall. Contemporaneous with the programme of development in Posen, similar works appeared in other towns. A new society was founded in Thorn for the purpose of founding German folk libraries in the villages and towns of Posen and West Prussia, and in 1904, a grant was made to the town theatre in Thorn of 150,000 marks. In 1903, an 'Agriculture Institute' was founded in Bromberg, whose purpose the minister of finance, Georg von Rheinbaben, appropriately characterised in his budget speech of 1903: 'the establishment of the Institute for Agricultural Research belonged to the package of measures, designed by the government, for culturally and economically elevating the eastern provinces and to boost Germanization in the formerly Polish parts of the country.' During the following year a technical high school was opened in Danzig to fulfil similar purposes.<sup>127</sup>

This new German cultural project of the fin de siècle was promoted among the region's burghers by the monthly journal *Aus dem Posener Lande*. The journal stated its purpose as being 'the publicity of the German Society for Art and Science in Posen, its departments and branches, the Royal Academy, the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Library, and the Royal Colonization Commission for West Prussia and Posen'. It typically carried reports, reviews and commentary about the activities of these institutions, and is highly suggestive of the cultural ambience which *Hebungspolitik* promoted in the provincial capital. During the 1890s and 1900s the burghers of Posen were brought plays by classical and modern German authors, operas, and exhibitions of antiquities and art, including an exhibition of modern Dutch art held in Bromberg in 1913 which included works by artists of the De Stijl movement including Mondrian.<sup>128</sup> The first rector of the Posen Academy, Eugen Kühnemann, had recalled how the Jews had made a considerable contribution to the cultural life of

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<sup>127</sup> J. Buzek, *Historia polityki narodowosciowej Rządu Pruskiego wobec Polaków od traktatów wiedeńskich do ustaw wyjątkowych z r. 1908* (Lwow, 1909), pp. 382-407; G. Rhode, *Geschichte der Stadt Posen* (Neuendettelsau, 1953), p. 151.

<sup>128</sup> *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 9 (1914).

Posen: 'the theatre, the concert, the art exhibitions, the lectures were dependant upon Jewish support and Jewish intellectual participation to a considerable degree.'<sup>129</sup>

The nationalization of culture also took other forms in this period. Histories and topographical studies were disseminated in the drive to raise German national consciousness among the literate public in the eastern borderlands. Such discourses were invariably based upon myths of national continuity, which they served to perpetuate. They suggested the existence of perennial nations possessing historical continuity. For example, the work of late nineteenth-century German and Polish scholars, particularly in their research on medieval and early-modern settlements, had the effect of promoting the idea of two discrete national groups since time immemorial.<sup>130</sup>

A notable case was the Bromberg historian, Erich Schmidt, who described his *Geschichte des Deutschtums im Lande Posen* as having a 'national purpose'. It was addressed to all Germans within and without the province and aimed 'to make them conscious that they stand in the lands between the Vistula and the Oder on old German land, and that everything of cultural worth in the Eastern Marches, has been created by the German spirit'.<sup>131</sup> Emphasis on the great German colonization of the Teutonic Knights in the thirteenth century was typical of such work. The politicization of historical writing is suggested further by the fact that many works of this kind were authored by parliamentary deputies and government officials, including school teachers and sub-prefects.<sup>132</sup>

The importance of historical research for creating and sustaining German national consciousness in the Eastern Marches is suggested by the numerous historical

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<sup>129</sup> E. Kühnemann, *Mit unbefangener Stirn. Mein Lebensbuch* (Heilbronn, 1937), p. 130.

<sup>130</sup> For instance, R. Martiny, 'Die Formen der ländlichen Siedlungen in der Provinz Posen', *Zeitschrift der Historischen Gesellschaft für die Provinz Posen*, 1 (1913), 23-42; C. Krollmann, 'Zur Besiedlungsgeschichte und Nationalitätenmischung in den Komtureien Christburg, Osterode und Elbing', *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins*, 64 (1923); T. Stäsche, 'Namen polnischer Herkunft aus Klein-Elguth bei Oels', *Mitteilungen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde*, XIV (1905), 77-85.

<sup>131</sup> E. Schmidt, *Geschichte des Deutschtums im Lande Posen unter polnischer Herrschaft* (Bromberg, 1904), p. III. Another typical example of nationalist historiography was Max Bär's *Westpreussen unter Friedrich dem Grossen*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1909). For a period assessment of historiography in Posen, see A. Warschauer, *Die deutsche Geschichtsschreibung in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1911).

<sup>132</sup> For instance, O. Steinmann, *Der Kreis Thorn. Statistische Beschreibung* (Thorn, 1866); J. Pawlowski, *Populäre Landeskunde oder Handbuch der Geographie und Geschichte der Provinz Westpreussen* (Berlin, 1881); G. Gerlich, *Statistische Beschreibung des Schwetzer Kreises* (Schwetz, 1878).



associations that existed in the region. The most important of these in Posen were the *Historische Gesellschaft für die Provinz Posen* which published its own journal, and the *Historische Gesellschaft für den Netzedistrikt in Bromberg*. The centre for regional history in West Prussia had been the 'West Prussian History Association' founded in 1879, under the leadership of the school inspector Dr Damus. The tasks of the association were the holding of lectures and the publication of documents and articles, either individually or in the association's *Journal of the West Prussian History Association* which first appeared in 1880.<sup>133</sup>

The built environment was also used to stamp a German identity upon the Eastern Marches, as well as in other frontier regions like Alsace-Lorraine. Research of architecture in Alsace-Lorraine and East Upper Silesia has shown that in regions with mixed-nationality populations, architectural style became employed as an instrument of Germanization. In major urban areas such as the city of Kattowitz in Upper Silesia, the *Kulturmission* in the East led to the construction of new public buildings including hospitals, schools and libraries. The use of the neo-Romanesque style for Churches was characteristic of the period.<sup>134</sup>

In addition to the immense provision made for the support of cultural and academic institutions, the government invested in improving land and water communications (needed for the transportation of merchandise and people). Between 1880 and 1900, 19 new railway lines were built in the province of Posen and 21 lines in West Prussia. This

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<sup>133</sup> Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Die deutsche Ostmark* (Lissa, 1913), pp. 532-3. Historical associations in the larger towns tended to be concerned with pre-historic fields of research or they pursued more general research such as the 'Kopernikus-Verein für Kunst und Wissenschaft' in Thorn (founded 1854). In Thorn, there was also a Polish scholarly association, the 'Towarzystwo naukowe w Toruniu' which published contributions to the history of the land during the period of Polish rule.

<sup>134</sup> Architecture became used by the 'Preservation Movement' in Imperial Germany in its endeavors to ground the German state in a more emotionally resonant way than had been achieved through Bismarckian politics, by initiatives including the increased protection of historic buildings and monuments. This was part of a broader drive to promote 'historical culture', with other manifestations being found in literature, folklore, the Heimat Movement, songs, and museology. Each of these means functioned to construct national identity. According to Rudy Koshar, the 'preservation movement' in the late imperial period came to influence national identity by using material culture of the past and its potential symbolism as an 'intervention in the present and future'. S. Muthesius, 'Welche Rolle können Architekturstile in Grenzgebieten spielen? Elsass-Lothringen und Ost-Oberschlesien 1871-1939', *Berichte und Beiträge des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas*, 2 (2003), 7-31; R. Koshar, 'The Shape of the Nation: Old Buildings and Social Narratives in the German Kaiserreich', in Haupt, *et al.* (eds.), *Regional and National Identities in Europe in the XIXth and XXth Centuries* (The Hague, 1998), pp. 343-378. See also M. Jefferies, *Imperial Culture in Germany, 1871-1918* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 95-99.

programme of railway building was continued throughout the following years. In the budget of 1902, 20,708,118 marks were allocated for the development of the railway network in Posen and West Prussia, particularly the connection of rural communities. The expenditure for the entire state had been 108,286,329 marks. Further measures intended for the promotion of German socio-economic existence were the removal of the old town fortifications in Posen and the granting of bonuses to attract officials to work in the Eastern Marches. The cost of *Hebungspolitik* to the government was high, which was indicative of the decisiveness of the Polish question in Wilhelmine Germany. In the years from 1897 to 1908 the Prussian government spent 29,240,000 marks alone on Posen's *Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek*, the *Königliche Academie*, the *Kaiser Friedrich-Museum*, the town theatre, the Hygiene Institute, the royal residence, and the removal of the old fortifications.<sup>135</sup>

#### (ii) Institutions of Higher Learning

The programme of *Hebungspolitik* represented the most concerted and comprehensive drive to nationalize the culture of Posen and West Prussia up to that time. One of its main foci had been the development of academia in the East. Before the initiatives of *Hebungspolitik*, institutions of higher learning in Posen and West Prussia had not been overtly sectarian. Academic life had also lacked firm institutional bases throughout most of the nineteenth century. In Posen, the two most important institutions of higher learning, the Lubrański Academy, founded in 1519 by Archbishop Jan Lubrański, and the Jesuit College, founded in 1573, were both dissolved by the Polish authorities in 1773. The Lubrański Academy, despite its one-time scholarly activities, had declined by the seventeenth century to the status of a school, and was finally closed down by the National Education Commission. The Jesuit College had conferred academic degrees and carried out extensive publishing, but this was also closed in the same year following 'the annulment of the Jesuit order'.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Buzek, *Historia*, pp. 387-390.

<sup>136</sup> B. Miśkiewicz, *Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza: 1919-1989* (Poznań, 1989), pp. 9-15; A. Wrzosek, 'Szkolnictwo akademickie w Poznaniu', in Zaleski (ed.), *Księga pamiątkowa miasta poznań* (Poznań, 1929), pp. 355-363.

The most prevalent centres of higher learning throughout the nineteenth century were undoubtedly the elite *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen*, which remained inaccessible to all but a very small minority. For instance, in the winter semester 1900/01, there were in total 7,693 pupils enrolled in West Prussia at *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen*; that was merely 49 for every 10,000 inhabitants of the province. In Posen, this figure stood at 6,854, or 36 per 10,000 inhabitants. These figures were below average for the Prussian state as a whole, where 54 per 10,000 of the population were matriculated at a *Gymnasium* or *Realschule*.<sup>137</sup>

Within Posen and West Prussia, as well as the state at large, there are indications to suggest that the two confessions were not given complete equality of status within the education system. State subsidies to Protestant high schools (including *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen*) in East and West Prussia were published in 1865 as amounting to 46,411 thalers annually, in comparison to 9,124 thalers directed towards Catholic high schools. This was disproportionate, even considering that the province possessed 26 Protestant high school institutions against 6 Catholic (and one mixed high school in Kulm). Moreover, there were 78,753 Protestants for every Protestant high school; in comparison, there were 127,769 Catholics for every Catholic high school.<sup>138</sup>

According to the *Katholisches Kirchenblatt*, this inequality was attributable to bias within the Prussian authorities towards Protestant schools. But this charge was countered by the argument that wealth in the towns and cities tended to be in the hands of Protestants, who possessed the greater means for the establishment and maintenance of high schools.<sup>139</sup> Questions had also been raised over the disproportionate number of Protestant staff. It was contended in the city of Posen that by 1910 Catholic teachers and rectors were still underrepresented within the elementary and middle schools. In these schools, 74 percent of all children were Catholic, but only 45 percent of teachers were Catholic too.<sup>140</sup> All of this suggests systemic discrimination existed against the interests of Catholics, and consequently of the Polish population. Nevertheless, the yearbooks of the region's grammar schools show that boys from Polish and Jewish

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<sup>137</sup> *Statistisches Handbuch für den Preussischen Staat*, IV (1903), pp. 481-2.

<sup>138</sup> 'Das höhere Schulwesen in der Provinz Preussen', *Katholisches Kirchenblatt*, 14 Oct. 1865, 348-349.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> 'Schulparität in der Stadt Posen', *Westpreussisches Volksblatt*, 10 March 1910; APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, p. 582.

middle-class backgrounds were consistently represented on school rolls, albeit as a small minority. And some of the grammar schools, such as the *Königliches Friedrich Wilhelms-Gymnasium* and *Königliches Marien-Gymnasium* in Posen, included the teaching of Polish on their curricula. Optional classes in Polish also took place at grammar schools throughout Posen and West Prussia, and some schools even possessed special libraries for Polish pupils.<sup>141</sup>

For the literate public at large, the principal modes of existence for artistic and scholarly endeavour in Posen and West Prussia were voluntary associations. These included in Posen several singing associations, an art association (1884), the Historical Society for the Province of Posen (1885), an association for political economy (1887), a philharmonic association founded in the 1890s, a photographic association (1895), the Historical Society for the Netze District (1880), and the Posen Bach Association (1910). Most of these associations were based in the provincial capital. Among the most important Polish cultural institutions in Posen was the Society for the Friends of Scholarship which had been founded in 1857 as a centre for the research of the region. It published its own yearbook and also incorporated a museum called the Mielzyński Museum. This museum held collections of antiquities, coins, paintings, and prints and a library of 140,000 volumes. In the West Prussian capital, Danzig, there were two important and long-established scholarly organisations: the Natural Science Society which had been founded in 1742 as a centre for the study of natural history, and its

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<sup>141</sup> *Königliches Auguste Viktoria-Gymnasium in Posen. Jahresbericht über das Schuljahr 1911/1912* (Posen, 1912); *Jahresbericht des Königlichen Friedrich Wilhelms-Gymnasiums zu Posen* (Posen, 1912); *Jahresbericht des Königlichen Marien-Gymnasiums zu Posen für das Schuljahr 1911/12* (Posen, 1912); *Königliche Realschule i E. zu Pleschen* (Pleschen, 1912). The Polish presence in the secondary schools had nevertheless been progressively undermined since 1871. Signs of this erosion were the diminishing place of Polish on curricula and the transfer of Polish teachers to other parts of Prussia. For instance, the number of Polish-speaking teachers in the province of Posen decreased from 1854 in 1872-3 (versus 4715 Germans) to 1310 in 1881-2. And at the Mary Gymnasium in the city of Posen, the number of Polish teachers fell from 23 (out of 28) in 1872-3 to five in 1884. The reduction in the number of Polish teachers through transfers was acknowledged by the Prussian Culture Minister, Adalbert Falk, as being official policy. Falk had even claimed that these teachers were being transferred to better jobs, in preferable locations and at better rates of pay. A fall in the proportion of Polish pupils attending the secondary schools had also ensued; their number decreased from 28 percent in 1872/3 to 20 percent in 1881/2. R. Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire (1871-1900)* (New York, 1981), pp. 22-23. For a detailed discussion of the language policy vis-à-vis secondary education, see Buzek, *Historya*, pp. 485-488. According to the Eastern Marches Association there were grammar schools which taught Polish in the Poznanian towns of Ostrowo, Krotoschin, Lissa, Posen, Gnesen, Rogasen, Wongrowitz, and Inowrazlaw; and in West Prussia, at Kulm, Strasburg, and Neustadt. 'Polnischer Sprachunterricht an Gymnasien', *Die Ostmark*, 12 (1899).

subsidiary, the West Prussian Botanical-Zoological Association founded in 1878, which pursued exclusively the research of the plant and animal world of West Prussia through lectures and excursions.<sup>142</sup>

Attempts had been made during the nineteenth century towards the goal of establishing a new university or comparable institution of higher learning, but these were persistently hindered by the Prussian authorities. Nevertheless, in the 1870s, August Cieszkowski, a philosopher, natural scientist and politician, managed to establish in Żabikowo, near Posen, an agricultural college, named the Institute of Higher Learning, which operated between 1870 and 1876 and concentrated on vocational training.<sup>143</sup> But the institute suffered a lack of funding and was closed under pressure from the authorities in view of its prospects for further development. In the absence of a university, public libraries were pivotal in maintaining intellectual life in the province. In addition to their usual library tasks, they also undertook publishing tasks and various educational activities. The Raczyński Library, opened in 1829 in Posen, was one of the most eminent examples of this type.<sup>144</sup>

By 1871 the only public scholarly institute in Posen was the Royal State Archive (1869), which housed the archives of the city of Posen and was a centre of research for regional history. West Prussia did not possess any universities or academies. There were some associations with academic concerns such as the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Kunst und Wissenschaft* (including its historical section, the *Historische Gesellschaft*

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<sup>142</sup> Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Ostmark*, pp. 517-521, 535; Miśkiewicz, *Uniwersytet*, pp. 9-15.

<sup>143</sup> Its founding was supported by a group of eminent Poles belonging to the *Centralnego Towarzystwa Gospodarczego* (Central Economic Society). Miśkiewicz, *Uniwersytet*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>144</sup> The Raczyński Library was founded by Count Eduard Raczyński with the intention of providing a library accessible to the general public, something that was lacking in the city at the date of opening on 5 May 1829. According to the original statutes of the library, its purpose was 'to allow every man, without discrimination, the use of books in the respective reading rooms on the designated days and hours'. But there was an important bias towards the acquisition of Polish books; in paragraph 41 of the statutes, it was laid down that for the yearly acquisition of books, preference was to be given to those books 'which for the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Posen have a national interest, but in general to those works which relate to ethics, history, technology, and classics, before works of entertainment and pamphlets.' The statutes were ratified by the crown on 24 January 1830 with a 'Confirmation of Statutes' document issued by Friedrich Wilhelm and ministers Altenstein and Schuckmann. According to this document, the new library was given official recognition and privileges, including tax exemptions and the benefit that copies of all works published in the Grand Duchy were to be given to the library. This privilege was transferred from the University of Breslau which had held the right since 1824, and was to be held by the *Raczyński Library* until a university should be founded in the Grand Duchy. M. Sosnowski, *Katalog der Raczyński'schen Bibliothek in Posen*, 3 vols (Posen, 1885), I, 25-30, 35, 38-39.

für die Provinz Posen) and the *Copernicus Verein für Wissenschaft und Kunst zu Thorn*, but these were private associations which did not provide formal courses of education or confer degrees.<sup>145</sup>

It was not until the phase of *Hebungspolitik* that higher education in Posen and West Prussia progressed to altogether new levels of development. This policy aimed specifically to promote higher education in the region, and in 1903 a new 'Royal Academy' was opened in Posen, followed by a polytechnic in Danzig in 1904. These institutions were founded in response to the empire's urgent need to expand its technical and educational base in order to support its industrial growth. Wilhelm II was personally concerned to promote technical education in the empire, and articulated his aspirations in his speech at the opening of the Danzig polytechnic on 6 October 1904 with the following words:

From the recognition that with the competition of the nations in cultural development, technology has decisive tasks, and its performance for the future well-being of the fatherland and the maintenance and development of its power are of the greatest significance, I regard it as one of my foremost obligations to stand up for the expansion and deepening of technical research and to effect an increase in the number of technical high schools.<sup>146</sup>

The polytechnic in Danzig and Royal Academy in Posen were also conceived of as a means to the promotion of national culture in the frontier provinces. For instance, national objectives came to expression in the statutes of the Royal Academy, namely, 'to promote the German intellectual life in the Eastern Marches through its teaching and its research activities. The teaching consists principally in the holding of lectures and demonstrations as well as in the provision and organisation of courses of further education for various professional purposes'. Subjects taught at the academy included: law, economics, medicine, philosophy, history, literature and linguistics, art history, music, mathematics, science, and geography. Specialist courses were provided for the

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<sup>145</sup> Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Ostmark*, p. 521.

<sup>146</sup> The polytechnics, including at Danzig, performed an increasingly important role in the system of state-run education during the course of the nineteenth century as the demand for technical research and teaching expanded, particularly with the rapid industrialisation of the 1880s and 1890s. The agricultural crisis of the 1870s in Germany, together with the greater politicization of industrial interests all contributed to this demand. Consequently, the polytechnics increased in political significance. Gesellschaft der Freunde der Technischen Hochschule Danzig, *Beiträge und Dokumente zur Geschichte der Technischen Hochschule Danzig 1904-1945* (Hannover, 1979), p. 19; H-U. Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, 4 vols (München, 1987-), III (1995), 414-17, 1224-28.

regional intelligentsia, including members of the bureaucracy, teachers and lawyers, as well as farmers and industrialists. In this way, the Academy advanced the project of supporting the vital economic role of the German bourgeoisie in the national conflict. The *raison d'être* of the Academy was first and foremost one of Germanization.<sup>147</sup>

Plans for the founding of a new 'national' institution of higher learning had stopped short of the creation of a university. The idea of a new university in Posen had been discussed lively in the German press from 1901, with Bromberg having been considered a possible alternative location for the new institution.<sup>148</sup> A new college was needed in particular to address the lack of local educational provision for the province's students. Without a university in the province, home students had no option but to study at universities in other provinces of the German Empire. It was a priority to counter this aspect of the East-to-West migration of the German middle classes. But the possibility of creating a new centre for Polish student life was feared by the government and the 'Hakatists', and for this reason a 'Royal Academy' was planned, rather than an institution with full university status.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> W. Könnemann, *Was bietet Posen, insbesondere die Königliche Akademie, zur Vorbereitung für die Prüfung der Mittelschullehrer, Rektoren und Oberlehrerinnen und welche Neueinführungen hierfür sind wünschenswert?* (Halle, 1907), pp. 7-8; W. Pniewski, *Akademja Poznańska. Szkic historyczny* (Poznań, 1919), pp. 19-23; Königliche Akademie zu Posen, *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen für das Sommersemester 1905* (Posen, 1905), p. 20. Almost all teachers from West Prussia and Posen participated in the courses for elementary school teachers. At the general meeting in 1907 of the Provincial Teachers' Association in Posen, in an address made by Prof. Wilhelm Könnemann, he had told them all about the benefits of the Academy's training courses. Later, the Bromberg Russian Seminary merged with the Academy, and then in 1911, so did the Posen College of Civil Servants. The academy also had the duty to provide professional support for the provincial activities of the *Gesellschaft für Kunst und Wissenschaft in Posen*.

<sup>148</sup> A. Knobloch, 'Denkschrift über die Errichtung einer Universität zu Bromberg', *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 2 (1913), 49-62; Buzek, *Historya*, pp. 386-387. A petition had been submitted in 1900 by the Oberbürgermeister Alfred Knobloch to Chancellor Bülow, arguing for the founding of a new university for the Eastern Marches situated in Bromberg. It was argued that Bromberg belonged economically in many respects to West Prussia, but was politically and ecclesiastically connected to Posen. It had good railways connections and was equidistant between the two provincial capitals. It was superior as a choice to Danzig because this town already had the Technical High School, and also to Posen because of the latter's status as the seat of the Polish archbishop and its large Polish population. In comparison, Bromberg had a strong German population and a university would support the local German middle-class, particularly the German officials and townspeople.

<sup>149</sup> Even during the years after the opening of the Academy, calls were still being made, expressed particularly in the local journal *Aus dem Posener Lande*, for the founding of a full university in the province. The central argument for a university was the necessity of better educational provision locally, particularly to support the educational needs of the middle classes and for the economic benefit of the region. To counter the fear of aiding Polish nationalism, the chief burgomaster of Posen, Dr. Ernst Wilms, projected in a pamphlet entitled *Akademie oder Universität Posen?* (1912) that a future university in Posen would have 467 German and 195 Polish students (70.54 percent and 29.46 percent respectively) or with the omission of the medics, 81.2 percent and 18.8 percent. This was calculated on the basis of

The German national stamp of the Academy was evident from the strong ideological and organisational ties it had to the German establishment from the outset. Prominent members of the bureaucracy and regional government played a key role in the efforts made to found the Academy. A union of scholarly societies was established by the president of the regency, Hugo von Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, in 1898. This was merged with the *Komitee zur Veranstaltung wissenschaftlicher Vorträge*, which had been founded by the mayor of Posen, Richard Witting. Then in 1901 the provincial president von Bitter founded its successor, the *Gesellschaft für Kunst und Wissenschaft in Posen*, which received a state subsidy from its inception. With the initiative of Friedrich Althoff at the Prussian Culture Ministry, the academy was opened on 4 November 1903.<sup>150</sup>

Faculty members at the Academy were exclusively German and its curator was the president of Posen von Waldow, while the chancellor Bülow no less was its 'honorary member'. The content of the Academy's curriculum was also centrally controlled. According to the statutes the curriculum for each semester was to be presented to the Culture Minister for approval. Semester programmes listed lectures for the faculties of law, economics, medicine, philosophy, history, literature (including courses on Victor Hugo, Lord Byron, Klopstock, Schiller and Herder), art history, music, geography, and mathematics and natural science. History lectures during the summer semester of 1905 included the 'History of the city of Posen and its historical monuments since the end of

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figures in the Polish press given of the numbers of Polish students and from the statistics of the Prussian universities. These calculations were intended to demonstrate that in the scenario of the establishment of a full university, German students would form the majority, and so to undermine the fear that this institution would become predominately Polish in character and a 'stronghold of Polenthum'. Wilms advocated a step-by-step conversion to university status, initially through the creation of a law and philosophy faculty. Such arguments met with severe criticism in some sections of the German press, where it was claimed that they were based on vested interests. But this argument was contested. The historian of Posen, Manfred Laubert, did not believe that the upgrading of the Academy would lead, in itself, to Posen becoming a centre of Polish national opposition. He cited the case of the high school in Danzig to support his argument. There, Poles, and particularly foreigners, were officially restricted and only modestly represented among the student population. Rather, he suggested that Poles were apt to travel to study in all of the major university towns of Germany. Certainly this debate over the life of the Eastern Marches was typical in its level of national anxiety and its dependence upon conjectural arguments. 'Die Zukunft der Akademie Posen', *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 10 (1911), 490-496 (p. 491); M. Laubert, 'Akademie oder Universität Posen?', *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 8 (1912), 342-345.

<sup>150</sup> Pniewski, *Akademja*, pp. 19-23; Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Ostmark*, p. 515. The 'Deutsche Gesellschaft für Kunst und Wissenschaft in Posen' had local branches in other smaller towns in the province. The city of Bromberg had its own similar, but independent, society.



the Middle Ages', 'German history at the time of the Reformation', as well as lectures on palaeography. The local historians and archivists Adolf Warschauer and Rodgero Prümers contributed to these lecture series.<sup>151</sup> So did the strident Pan-Germanist Otto Hoetzsch, who had lectured on such topics as the 'Colonization and Germanization of the Prussian East' and 'History of the German Economy, Society, and Constitution until 1650'.<sup>152</sup>

It is difficult to ascertain the national profile of the Posen Academy's students because its archive was destroyed during the Second World War. But it is possible to infer from confessional statistics an approximation of the proportion of Polish students matriculated. During the academic year of 1904, there were 1158 students, of which 608 (52.5 percent) were Protestant, 192 (16.6 percent) were Catholic, 276 (23.8 percent) were Jewish, and 82 (7.08 percent) without an indicated religion. It is at once noticeable that the share of both Catholic and Jewish students did not match their respective denominations' share of the overall population. While the share of Jewish students was significantly higher than the Jewish share of the provincial population (1.5 percent), the exact opposite held true for the Catholic students. While Catholics formed 68 percent of the provincial population in 1905 (30 percent were Protestant), less than 17 percent of the Academy's students were Catholic. These figures suggest educational inequality or a policy of systematic discrimination against Catholics, and Poles, who were, of course, the majority of Catholics. According to the Polish historian of the Academy, Władysław Pniewski, only a small number of Poles ever attended it.<sup>153</sup>

One year after the opening of the Royal Academy, a polytechnic opened in Danzig, officially named the 'Royal Technical High School of Danzig'. As with the former establishment, the nationalistic agenda which the polytechnic was intended to advance was made explicit from the outset. For instance, a 'Memorandum Concerning the Founding of a Technical College in Danzig' of 1899 proposed:

The establishment of a technical college in Danzig will be appropriate to strengthen German interests in the province of West Prussia. It ought to be expected that the presence within it of a large number of

<sup>151</sup> Königliche Akademie zu Posen, *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen für das Sommersemester 1905* (Posen, 1905).

<sup>152</sup> GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, II, No. 2469.

<sup>153</sup> *Statistisches Jahrbuch für den Preussischen Staat*, II (1904), p. 147; Pniewski, *Akademja*, pp. 19-23; M. Broesike, *Deutsche und Polen der Provinz Posen im Lichte der Statistik* (Berlin, 1913), pp. 2-3.

eminent figures who have been educated in German institutions will, in view of the college's purpose of improving economic life, effectively promote the close connection between the inhabitants of the province and the rest of Germany...<sup>154</sup>

As with the Academy, the location of the new polytechnic had been viewed as critically important so as to maximise its national advantage. The Landtag had initially demanded that the new college be situated in Breslau in Silesia, owing to the province's status as the most industrialised in Prussia after the Rhineland. Other towns including Thorn, Bromberg, Königsberg, Stettin, and Elbing had also competed for the new college. But the government favoured Danzig and in a Landtag session on 16 March 1898, the education minister Robert Bosse cited the need for a decisive German cultural centre for the recently created province of West Prussia as the reason for this choice. The choice was endorsed by the Kaiser.<sup>155</sup> The Prussian parliament ratified the decision and granted six million marks for the project. According to an act of 1 October 1904, the polytechnic was placed directly under the authority of the president of West Prussia. The organisational structure of the new college was academically similar to that of the Technical University in Aachen which had opened in 1875; there were six faculties: architecture, civil engineering, mechanical and electrical engineering, ship building and ship engines, chemistry, and general sciences (especially mathematics and natural sciences). Initially there were 61 members of staff, including 28 professors, 1 honorary professor, 12 docents, 17 assistants, and 3 lecturers.<sup>156</sup>

Given the founding purpose of the high school as a fixture of German nationalism in the East, it was natural that the authorities should wish to restrict the numbers of Polish and foreign nationals in attendance. From its foundation, foreigners were able to study only when they had attained the consent of the ministry. Moreover, their number could not exceed ten percent of the total number of students. Poles living in the territories of the German Empire were not considered as foreigners, although Germans from the partitions of Poland belonging to Austria and Russia were treated as such. Annual reports were routinely sent by the college to the police president in Danzig listing the numbers of Polish and foreign students matriculated at the college. These

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<sup>154</sup> Quoted in Gesellschaft der Freunde der Technischen Hochschule Danzig, *Beiträge*, p. 31.

<sup>155</sup> Buzek, *Historya*, pp. 388-390.

<sup>156</sup> S. Mikos, *Polacy na politechnice w Gdańsku w latach 1904-1939* (Warszawa, 1987), pp. 17-30, 218-243.

show that in the winter semester of 1905/6 there were eight native Polish students and twelve Russian Poles; in 1908/9 there were approximately 11 Polish students; in 1909/10, there were 14 Poles and 20 students from Russia (including Jews). In 1910/11, there were 15 Poles and 17 students from Russia and in 1911/12, 17 Poles in total, seven of whom came from West Prussia, as well as 19 students from Russia. The number of Polish students who attended the polytechnic before the First World War was apparently very small in relation to the total numbers of students. In the winter semester of 1904/05 there were in total 246 students enrolled at the college; this had gradually risen to 724 by the winter semester of 1913/14.<sup>157</sup>

Despite the strongly Germanic ethos of the polytechnic, a small and unnamed Polish student society did exist before the war. In 1908, a Polish student named Alfons Hoffmann founded a singing society called *Lutnia* ('Flute') which operated under the aegis of the Polish student association, and then in spring 1913 a new academic association was founded by Poles called the 'Union of Danzig Academic Students'. This society was organised secretly and was not registered at the polytechnic, or with the town authorities or police. It had an official statute, badge, and a library (located in a public house). According to the society's statutes, any Polish student could join with the exception of 'national traitors', which included those who sold their land to Germans. The society had been founded around the time of the celebrations of the Constitution of 3 May. Its first official meeting took place on 24 May 1913 and was attended by eleven students. Until the outbreak of war, the society was in the care of a lawyer named Dr Mieczysław Marchlewski; its agenda was to fight for the liberation of Poland and, in particular, to resist the denationalisation of Polish youth in the vicinity of Danzig. Open Polish student societies were not formed until after the war.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> APG. Polizeipräsidium-Danzig, No. 14/6951, pp. 1-3, 5, 10-13, 24-25; *Fünf und Zwanzig Jahre-Technische Hochschule Danzig 1904-1929* (Danzig, 1929), (appendix: 1b).

<sup>158</sup> Mikos, *Polacy*, pp. 17-30, 218-243.

### (iii) Libraries

Library culture in the nationally-mixed provinces represented an extension of the binary linguistic relationship which fundamentally structured the national interface. A number of library movements existed in Posen and West Prussia which tended to cater exclusively for the needs of one or the other linguistic group. Accordingly, library networks sustained and consolidated the cultural coherence of the two national communities, and in doing so, buttressed the linguistic structure of the interface. But until the programme of *Hebungspolitik*, library provision in Posen and West Prussia remained fragmentary and uneven. The new politicisation of library culture began in June 1898 when the government initiated an appeal in Posen for the collection of books for the new city library. It was expected that this facility, which would bear the name of the Kaiser, would become a major centre of German intellectual life in the Eastern Marches and an integral element in the nationalization of the Eastern Marches. The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Bibliothek opened in Posen in 1902 and would spearhead the nationalization of the provincial library network.<sup>159</sup>

Before the founding of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Bibliothek the developments of the German and Polish library networks were inconsistent, but nevertheless always of political significance because they served to sustain national *consciousness*. Polish lending libraries had existed in some rural areas since the 1840s, although their development had been broken and marked by struggles over their ideological leadership. One such case was Archbishop Ledóchowski's decree in 1867 that libraries should only stock books explicitly approved by the Catholic Church. An important development was the establishment in 1872 of a 'Society for Peasant Education' by a group of Polish intellectuals and landowners, which including the editor of the *Dziennik Poznański* newspaper, the main voice of the liberal and nationalist Polish gentry in Prussia. But this society, which aimed to elevate the educational level of the Polish masses by opening libraries and nurseries, met with resistance from the authorities who proscribed the involvement of school teachers in any Polish organisation. In 1878,

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<sup>159</sup> There were three major libraries in the city by this date: the Raczyński Library, the library of the Polish 'Society of the Friends of Scholarship', and the library of the German Scholarship Society (also known as the 'National Museum'). Buzek, *Historia*, pp. 382-407.

Ledóchowski, who had previously forbidden the cooperation of the clergy, agreed to clerical support of the society's activities. By 1879, the year in which the authorities found legal grounds for the society's dissolution, it had managed to establish at least 63 new libraries in West Prussia, 50 in Posen, three in East Prussia and one in Pomerania.<sup>160</sup>

The aims of the Society for Peasant Education were inherited by the Society for Folk Reading Rooms (*Towarzystwo Czytelni Ludowych*), founded in 1880. The Society for Folk Reading Rooms, as in the tradition of 'organic work', relied financially upon the support of the gentry.<sup>161</sup> Members of the Polish professional middle class and the Catholic clergy also participated in the society's ranks. As the government tightened its grip on the education system and increasingly used it as an instrument of its *Polenpolitik*, the leaders of Polish nationalism could use the folk libraries as a means to influence the education of Poles. For this reason, the Polish library network was seen by the Prussian authorities as undermining the attempts made through the schools to Germanize Polish children.<sup>162</sup>

Culture Minister von Gossler made a speech in this vein at a session of the Bundesrat on 8 June 1886, when he spoke about the danger posed by the anti-German tendencies shown by the Society for Folk Reading Rooms. He declared: 'The agitation of the Society for Folk Reading Rooms is so much more dangerous, as it adopts more and more the strategy of practising its pernicious influence on the young, who because of their limited powers of judgement, are so much more susceptible to the fanatical

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<sup>160</sup> J. Kulczycki, *School Strikes in Prussian Poland 1901-1907: the Struggle over Bilingual Education* (New York, 1981), pp. 22-23.

<sup>161</sup> The term 'organic work' (*praca organiczna*) was established by the 1840s and referred to a network of social and economic associations organised by members of the Polish gentry, intelligentsia, and clergy. The movement's leaders stood in opposition to the Polish nationalist strategy of insurrection, one which failed in 1830, 1848, and then again in 1863, and advocated a strategy of moderation towards the governments of the partitioning states. This, it was hoped, might achieve some system of autonomy such as had been sanctioned by the Congress of Vienna prior to 1830. The possibility was also entertained that a general European war might lead to the restoration of a Polish state. The movement aimed to elevate the educational, economic, and cultural level of the Polish nation. This meant, in part, the creation of a Polish middle class. The movement was also intended to help sustain the economic position of the Polish gentry. One of the most important organisations in the movement was Karol Marcinowski's 'Society for Academic Aid to the Youth of the Grand Duchy of Poznań'. R. Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire (1871-1900)* (New York, 1981), p. 5; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 75-6.

<sup>162</sup> APG. Kgl. Preuss. Regierung zu Danzig, No. 9/2686, p. 271.

hatred against the Germans'.<sup>163</sup> The stocks of the folk libraries were usually marked by a predominance of books containing religious and moralistic content and those which promoted Polish national themes. In 1907, the TCL operated 716 libraries in Posen, 204 in Silesia, 266 in West Prussia, 40 in Masuria and Ermland, and 197 in the so-called 'emigration territories' in western Germany.<sup>164</sup>

The means employed towards the goal of raising Polish national consciousness were broadened at a general meeting of the Society for Folk Reading Rooms. At Luisenhain, on 3 March 1909, its committee indicated its wish to make structural changes to the society and to alter its statutes. The purposes of the association were to be widened; in addition to its existing activities, it should hold lectures and similar educational events for the promotion of the people's education. New statutes were accepted, with the purpose of the society now being defined as 'the enlightenment of the people through the distribution of educative books and those suitable for the promotion of the religious feeling of the people, through the founding of free folk libraries, the arrangement of popular lectures, and other appropriate means.'<sup>165</sup>

The Society was in fact one of the most important organisations in the Polish national movement. In 1906 its total income was 36,700 marks, and its yearly expenditure was second only to the Marcinkowski Association which spent up to 100,000 marks annually for its purposes of providing financial support to young Polish students. The society's general assembly held on 26 March 1908 estimated its total stock of books at 250,000 volumes. At the assembly of 21 March 1907 it was reported that the membership favoured novels and books of religious content, while there was negligible demand for scholarly works. Complete membership figures for the Society are not available because such data was not routinely collected.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> O. Hermens, *Die gemeinsame Gefahr der evangelischen Kirche und der deutschen Nationalität in der Diaspora der deutschen Grenzmarken* (Leipzig, 1895), p. 57.

<sup>164</sup> GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep.30, I, No. 893 (vol. 2); Kulczycki, *School Strikes*, pp. 22-23; W. Jakóbczyk, *Towarzystwo Czytelni Ludowych: 1880-1939* (Poznań, 1982), p. 10. The 'Polish Folk Libraries Association' was another organisation which worked to promote education among the Polish masses. It stated its objectives as being: 'the distribution of useful and educative Polish books which will raise the religious feeling of the nation, and the establishment of free folk libraries'.

<sup>165</sup> R. Focke, *Das Volksbibliothekswesen in der Provinz Posen* (Leipzig, 1909), pp. 1-15.

<sup>166</sup> There were other Polish organisations which operated libraries such as the *Verband polnisch-katholischer Arbeitervereine* which counted 205 parish organisations and a total of 29,100 members in 1909. The involvement of the clergy in the Society for Folk Reading Rooms (and other similar Polish

German nationalists were well aware of the politico-cultural significance of libraries and books for the national question in the East. In June 1912, the Eastern Marches Association prepared a report concerning the 'Polish and German libraries, particularly in West Prussia'. The report suggested that the Polish Society for Folk Reading Rooms operated approximately 2000 libraries in Posen and West Prussia, organised in parish or district associations, although the organisation was more fully developed in Posen than West Prussia. In West Prussia, it had by the beginning of 1911 libraries in 20 districts according to its organ *Przegląd Oświatowy* ('Educational Review'). On the German side, the *Society for the Promotion of Folk Education* had been active for many years in West Prussia and counted 476 corporate and 62 private members, and a tally of 25,721 volumes.<sup>167</sup> This society provided popular books for an annual charge which were dispensed from travelling libraries and permanent libraries known as 'Eigenbüchereien'. The stock of the travelling libraries was constantly changed throughout the year by the selection of new items from the society's catalogue.<sup>168</sup>

The Eastern Marches Association's report identified the problem that although the services of the German Society for the Promotion of Folk Education were used by several district authorities, some districts only had the benefit of one or two such

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organisations) was substantial. For instance, the committee of one of the Society's most active districts, Ostrowo, had 13 members, of which 10 were priests in 1908; in the district of Hohensalza in the same year, the committee had 10 members of which 6 were priests; and in the district of Schildburg, seven out of the twelve members of the committee were clergymen. Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/232, pp. 43-54; APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/230, pp. 613-656. In 1908 there were 205 German folk libraries recorded by the president of West Prussia in the Marienwerder regency and 234 in the Danzig regency.

<sup>168</sup> V. Boehmert, *Die Entstehung der Gesellschaft für Verbreitung von Volksbildung* (Berlin, 1907); *Jahresberichte der Gesellschaft für Verbreitung von Volksbildung*, 43 (1913), pp. 6-18; GStA PK, XVI, HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 893 (vol. 2). The 'Society for the Promotion of Folk Education' was based in Berlin and had 8764 members in Prussia at the end of 1913, of which 231 lived in Posen and 566 in West Prussia. Its purpose was the dissemination of educative material among the lower classes. A 'Provincial Verband für Ost- und Westpreussen' had been founded on 13 Jan. 1873; the 'Neumärkisch-Posener Verband' was founded on 12 Nov. 1876. The 'Christian Periodical Association' (based in Berlin) was another organisation whose presence was felt in the Eastern Marches. Its handbook read: 'The Christian Periodical Association, founded on 10 Nov. 1880, has set itself the task, free from political and confessional bias, to create through cheap journals, books, calendars, posters and brochures, particularly for the working-classes, a positive counterweight against Social Democracy in the press, to strengthen fear of god, family values, love of the Fatherland, and loyalty to the emperor and empire, and to promote respect for social harmony and the collaboration of the lower classes. [...] The association is absolutely independent and is not affiliated to any political or church party and, in accordance with its statutes, holds a distance from party purposes.'

libraries, which resulted in some regions remaining un-serviced. The costs of the service were paid for partly by the state, district subsidies, and also by various corporations. So, for instance, contributions were made by church councils, the *Evangelisch-kirchliche Hilfsvereine*, the *Frauenhilfe*, the *Gustav Adolf Diözesan Association*, school communities and savings banks. The Eastern Marches Association had collaborated with the Society for the Promotion of Folk Education for years and had established in West Prussia and the neighbouring Pomeranian border districts, 201 libraries with roughly 82,000 books. These libraries were often merged with others which, for instance, belonged to schools, or war veterans and Raiffeisen Associations, or attached as subsidiaries of neighbouring libraries. Hence, the town libraries of Dirschau and Neustadt each had 18 subsidiary branches.<sup>169</sup>

The Association's report showed the Polish and German library systems to have been comparable, if not numerically equal by 1912. The Association identified the problem, however, that German library provision in West Prussia suffered from its lack of unity and structural cohesion (in contrast to the effectiveness of Posen's and Düsseldorf's centralised systems), which resulted in a partial service. One of the main difficulties was the inequality of financial provision between districts. The aspiration of the Eastern Marches Association was for a centralised and state-supervised library system which would serve all social, confessional and educational groups and which would convey the image of a public institution. Its aims were encapsulated as follows:

A well run folk library promotes family values, the steadfastness on the land, and enriches it with spirit and soulful culture; it counters those attractions luring the people away from the land, it serves the state, nurtures youth and constitutes a major weapon of *Deutschtum*. But on the other hand, at least the opportunity must be given to subjects of Polish tongue to participate freely in German culture and spiritual life.<sup>170</sup>

These words convey the somewhat paradoxical objectives of the Hakatists' *völkisch* brand of nationalism; it was necessary for libraries to support the settlement of German peasants and workers, and burghers, in accordance with the requirements of the state and German nation. But while being a weapon of the German national interest, it was also one of integration, and hopefully, of assimilatory Germanization.

<sup>169</sup> APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/232, pp. 43-54.

<sup>170</sup> APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/232, pp. 43-54.



The state began to intervene in the promotion of German library culture in Posen during the 1890s. Its participation served to further the national-cultural dichotomisation of the region. The process of 'library-building' would become one of the prime means of nation-building: print-culture influenced *consciousness*, and more specifically, national consciousness. Folk libraries were not only viewed as a means of national 'defence'; they were also regarded by the government as a means of countering the threat of Social Democracy.<sup>171</sup> The most significant milestone in this process was the opening of the *Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek* in Posen in the autumn of 1902. This library was to be at the centre of the German library network through the work of one of its departments: the *Provincial-Wanderbibliothek* (Provincial Mobile Library). The purpose of the Provincial Mobile Library was to supply good quality stock for the state-funded provincial public libraries and to serve as a point of support and advice.

The German folk library system in Posen was fully centralised and state organised by autumn 1903. The system was based upon the concept of the *Wanderbibliothek* which was considered the most effective and economical means for the maximal distribution of reading materials. The system had two main components: the 'Provincial Mobile Library' and the 'District Mobile Library'. The Provincial Mobile Library was a unique umbrella organisation which distributed reading material to the numerous District Mobile Libraries, of which there was sometimes more than one in each district. But the latter were only administrative centres; books were loaned out to the public via issue stations which were spread numerous throughout each district.<sup>172</sup>

In a typical year the Provincial Mobile Library would send to each District Mobile Library (and also some independent libraries) one or more sets of books (on average 500 books). The latter would then distribute these books among the issue stations under its auspices. These books were retained for about nine months until being returned with a report on their use. Each District Mobile Library was then required to collate this data

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<sup>171</sup> GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 893 (vol. 2). In a memorandum sent by the Prussian ministry of the interior to the *Oberpräsident* of Posen (15 May 1894), von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, minister Eulenburg sought to encourage the establishment of public libraries in the province so that the control could be exerted over the public's reading material, rather than this being left to the Social Democrats.

<sup>172</sup> Focke, *Das Volksbibliothekswesen*, pp. 1-15.

and send a report to the Provincial Mobile Library.<sup>173</sup> The structure of the system resembled a unified 'organism' which could be supervised and controlled from above. The director of the *Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek* was empowered to intervene directly in the business of local libraries in order to improve their effectiveness and to enlarge them.<sup>174</sup>

The provincial libraries were operated and managed by unpaid or 'unofficially paid' staff. In the vast majority of cases, the issue stations were run by elementary school teachers, but sometimes also by priests and others. According to the Eastern Marches Association, Catholics were sometimes unwilling to be served in a local library by a Protestant priest. For this reason, schoolteachers were preferred as library administrators. School teachers had also been prominent in the administration of the politically sensitive population censuses, and were regarded as 'reliable' public servants. The director of the Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek was supported in his work by school inspectors, town mayors and councillors.<sup>175</sup>

In 1909/10 there were 50 District Mobile Libraries and other independent libraries in Posen, together with 727 issue stations, 31,206 readers and a total of 121,119 books between them (20,350 of which came from the Provincial Mobile Library).<sup>176</sup> The lion's share of funding for the library system was provided by the state. Between 1904 and 1909 this ranged from 10,000 to 17,000 marks for the Provincial Mobile Library

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<sup>173</sup> A decree of 3 March 1904 from the Oberpräsident in Posen set out the terms of the relationship between the various agencies in the library network. All libraries which received state funding or which operated under the auspices of the Provincial Mobile Library, had to submit an annual report, via their local Landrat, to the director of the Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek regarding what support they expect to need for the coming year, specifying the needs for: (1) the establishment of new central libraries, (2) the establishment of new issue stations, (3) the acquisition of new reading material, (4) the binding of existing material, (5) the replacement of worn-out books, (6) the establishment of public reading rooms, (7) other purposes. Yearly reports were also required over the general activity of each library. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>174</sup> Notwithstanding these administrative requirements, individual libraries were given a degree of freedom to operate as they saw fit, although most followed the official guidelines provided in the 'Instructions for the Running of District Mobile Libraries'.

<sup>175</sup> R. Focke, *Das staatlich organisierte Volksbibliothekswesen und die Zentralstelle für Volksunterhaltung in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1911), pp. 7-18; Focke, *Das Volksbibliothekswesen*, pp. 1-15; APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/232, pp. 43-54.

<sup>176</sup> Thirty-three districts had one mobile library and seven had two; there were also the town libraries of Lissa and Schneidemühl which were equipped with their own reading rooms, and the library of the Veterans Union in Bromberg. There was also another state organisation called the *Zentralstelle für Volksunterhaltung in der Provinz Posen*, which had been established on 15 November 1905 and was affiliated with the Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek. Its purpose was to collect and provide free of charge, entertainment materials for the use of associations and families. Focke, *Das staatlich*, pp. 10, 17-18.

and between 17,000 and 24,000 marks for the district libraries. Contributions were also made by town and district authorities and by associations and private individuals. These would usually amount to a few thousand marks. Funding was also provided by the investments of the 'Foundation for the Promotion of German Libraries in the Province of Posen' which had been founded by the provincial president on 28 November 1907. The Colonization Commission provided funds for the costs of establishing issue points in new settlement communities, while the Eastern Marches Association made appeals for donations of books through its organ *Die Ostmark*.<sup>177</sup>

There is also evidence to suggest that as part of the state's efforts to promote library culture in the Eastern Marches, it provided grants to the Association of German Catholics, an organisation widely suspected in the Polish press of being a 'Hakatistic' instrument of state-driven Germanization. One such incident was of a grant of 200 marks awarded in June 1905 by the president of West Prussia to the Association of German Catholics in Thorn for the benefit of its library. In its reply of thanks, the committee recognised clearly its political obligation in return, stating: 'that we also want to confirm that at the next Reichstag election we will strive with all efforts for the victory of the German candidate in our much contested constituency.' This was indicative of how tight the nexus between politics and culture had become.<sup>178</sup>

The folk libraries were used by people of all social groups, although the educated were over-represented. Officially collected data for the year 1909/10 showed the social background of the users of the folk library network in Posen to have been as follows: 9.7 percent students, artists, writers, teachers, military officers; 7.9 percent officials; 13.6 percent manufacturers, craftsmen, merchants, artisans and technicians; 25.7 percent farmers and gardeners; 0.4 percent military personnel; 11.9 percent workers, servants, waiters, coachmen; 6.1 percent pensioners and unemployed; 24.7 percent apprentices and school pupils. By far the greatest use was made by apprentices, school pupils, farmers and gardeners, who together accounted for half of all library usage. And almost three-quarters of readers were male. The same data also showed that 84 percent of books loaned out by the 'Provincial Mobile Library' and 'District Mobile Libraries'

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<sup>177</sup> 'Von den Volksbüchereien in den Ostmarken', *Die Ostmark*, 12 (1898), 136.

<sup>178</sup> APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/230, pp. 33-34.

in the same year were works of entertainment, 10 percent were educative, and 6 percent were of mixed content.<sup>179</sup> The director of the Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek, Rudolf Focke, described the patrons of the Poznanian library network as follows:

The readers are distributed across all the occupation and age groups of the urban and rural populations. The fact that persons of higher educational level use the libraries in the greatest numbers is evident in the composition of the libraries' stocks. When deciding upon the choice of books for the district mobile libraries and local libraries, the needs of people of all educational levels are taken into account and served proportionately, according to possibility and the proportion of the relationship, whilst the constant supplies from the provincial mobile library provides popular works of every kind, and many bulky and expensive entertainment and educative works, which otherwise would only be available to a few.<sup>180</sup>

In 1908, the German folk libraries in Posen had 28,300 registered readers, although the true number of readers was suggested as being as high as 90,000. If the latter figure is accurate then this represented roughly 12.5 percent of Posen's Germans or 4.3 percent of the province's entire population. The number of readers of Polish nationality was not known, although Rudolf Focke noted that Polish readers did use the libraries, but not in such great numbers. On this count at least, the nationalization of culture in the Eastern Marches instigated by *Hebungspolitik* cannot be considered absolute in its effects.<sup>181</sup>

#### (iv) Theatres

The theatres of the frontier provinces, like the libraries, served to define and sustain the cultural-linguistic identities of the two national communities and the divide between them. Both German and Polish theatre companies performed in the towns and rural communities of the region. Several of the major towns, namely Danzig, Thorn, Elbing, Bromberg and Posen, had theatres. Some of these possessed resident companies, whilst others depended upon the visits of travelling theatre companies which also performed

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<sup>179</sup> Focke, *Das staatlich*, pp. 11-13. According to the records of the Kaiser Wilhelm-Bibliothek, the most popular works of entertainment were by Freytag, Ganghofer, Gerstäcker, Wilhelm Jensen, Raabe, Rosegger, Hermann Theodor von Schmid, Sohnrey, and Spielhagen. The most popular educative works were in the categories of 'War and War Memoirs', 'History and Cultural History', and 'Land and Volkskunde and Travel'.

<sup>180</sup> Focke, *Das staatlich*, p. 9.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-18; Focke, *Das Volksbibliothekswesen*, pp. 1-15.

in smaller settlements.<sup>182</sup> The traces left by the activities of most of the dramatists and theatres in this period are fragmentary. The main categories of source material available for a reconstruction of their activities are the following: newspaper articles, theatre leaflets and notices, documents of the town and provincial authorities, diaries and memoirs. Research has also tended to produce works of ‘chronicle’ (rather than analytical) form which narrate the main milestones and work of key personalities, typically directors, in various periods.

Of the principal locations for which sources exist, theatrical life in the city of Posen is the most relevant to an analysis of bi-national interaction, because it was here that both Germans and Poles were numerically significant. In other major cities of the Eastern Marches where there were notable theatres such as in Danzig and Elbing on the Baltic coast, and Thorn near the border between Posen and West Prussia, the populations were predominantly German-speaking. Hence, Posen was a city where the intersections between national movements and cultural traditions were at their broadest.

In order to understand conditions as they existed in the imperial period, it is necessary to look back to the earlier development of theatre in the provincial capital. Until 1875, the national divide remained unobtrusive: German and Polish companies shared facilities at Posen’s city theatre. But in 1875 a new Polish national theatre was opened, and from then on the city possessed two theatres, together symbolising the ‘fixity’ of the national interface. The politicisation of the stages of the Eastern Marches gained new impetus during and after the 1890s. Indicative of this was Kaiser Wilhelm’s address to the members of the Royal Theatre Company in Berlin on 16 June 1898, in which he proclaimed that the theatre ‘should be a tool, like the school and university, which has the task to train and prepare the growing family for the work of maintaining the highest spiritual assets of our splendid German fatherland’.<sup>183</sup> It is to be argued therefore that the history of theatre in Posen and West Prussia was generally one of progressive nationalization.

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<sup>182</sup> *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 6/7 (1912), 278, 324. Some important towns such as Gnesen (in 1912) did not have a proper theatre, but relied upon various travelling ensembles such as the ‘Posener Provinzial Theater’.

<sup>183</sup> Quoted in G. Richter, *Ein deutsches Nationaltheater für Posen; Eine Denkschrift von Gustaf Richter* (Posen, 1909), p. 8. The imperial period saw a general growth in theatre production, involving greater audiences, more theatres buildings, and greater numbers of productions. Historical dramas and comedies featured particularly prominently in repertoires in this period. See Jefferies, *Imperial Culture*, pp. 107-10.

For most of the nineteenth century, the history of theatre in Posen was characterised by discontinuity and impermanence. According to Hans Knudsen, the modern history of the German theatre in Posen began in earnest from the time when Posen fell to Prussia as a result of the Second Partition in 1793. This was a period in which other cities including Gotha, Mannheim, Berlin, were attempting to create stable theatres and to end the so-called 'Bandenwesen' in theatrics. Before then, comedies had been performed in Posen at the Lubrański Gymnasium and at the Jesuit College. There had also been theatrical performances at the courts of the local nobility.<sup>184</sup>

In the winter of 1794, a company around Karl Kasimir Döbbelin started to perform in the city. Döbbelin managed the German Theatre until 1821 and played the key role in persuading the town authorities to provide financial support for the building of a new theatre building. He won their support, and they in turn appealed to Berlin, citing the benefits of the project for the Prussian administration's political agenda. The appeal read: 'We observe most respectfully that a good German playhouse moreover will also help to stimulate a love for learning the German language, and thus, to amalgamate more and more the mentalities of the two nations which live now in South Prussia; a consideration whose advantages are certainly not against Your Majesty.'<sup>185</sup> The arguments were apparently persuasive as theatre buildings were subsequently opened on 17 June 1804.

Despite these developments, the theatre in Posen had never been of any great significance for the development of stagecraft in Germany and its own condition had long been behind that of other towns. The old theatre building was closed down by the police in the early 1870s because of ill repair, with the Hildebrand Garden on Königplatz then being used as a temporary open air theatre until a new theatre building was opened in 1879 at the cost of 500,000 marks. To help finance this project Wilhelm I approved the donation of 90,000 marks from his disposition fund as a gift, and a

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<sup>184</sup> H. Knudsen, *Die Hauptepochen der Geschichte des deutschen Theaters in Posen* (Posen, 1912), pp. 1-18.

<sup>185</sup> Quoted in E. Połczyńska, *Im polnischen Wind* (Poznań, 1988), p. 13.

further 90,000 marks as a low-interest loan. The theatre then relocated again to new buildings in October 1910.<sup>186</sup>

Before the politicisation of culture which occurred in the imperial period, sectarian nationalist ideology did not pervade the theatrical world. In Posen, Polish and German theatre companies had frequently cooperated by sharing their material resources. During the 1830s and 1840s until 1848, visiting Polish theatre companies performed customarily in Posen's municipal theatre within a relatively liberal environment. For instance, in 1843, the director of the town theatre, Ernst Vogt, had agreed to incorporate a Polish company into his theatre. This Polish group was led by Zygmunt Anczyc and it produced shows in Polish from the middle of January until 29 August 1843. Vogt had in fact allowed Polish theatre societies to play under his direction since around 1838, and attempts were also made to stimulate the interest of Polish speakers in the theatre by performing Polish pieces in German translation. Accordingly, the memorial piece to Kosciuszko, 'Der alte Feldherr' by Carl von Holtei, was an established work in the repertoire up to the 1840s.<sup>187</sup>

Typically the director of a Polish company would take out a lease on the accommodation. According to the terms and conditions presented to the company director Julius Pfeiffer from Krakow in 1857, the host director maintained responsibility for the choice of material performed, particularly its political content; the manuscripts of performances were required to be submitted to the police authorities at least eight days prior to performance. This could result in a prohibition.<sup>188</sup> The records of the Police President in Posen show that theatrics in the provincial capital and in the province at large were routinely monitored and controlled no less vigorously in Imperial Germany. The main targets were Polish performances with nationalistic or anti-German themes. For instance, when the police banned a performance by the *Gembitz Industrial Workers Association* of a work entitled 'Ewa Miaskowski' in the summer of 1911, the director appealed, but the ban was subsequently upheld by the courts. The judgment read as follows:

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<sup>186</sup> H. Ehrenberg, *Geschichte des Theaters in Posen, besonders in südpreussischer Zeit* (Posen, 1889), pp. 3-5, 26-28; Knudsen, *Die Hauptepochen*, pp. 1-18.

<sup>187</sup> After 1848, the performances of Polish companies became more sporadic. Połczyńska, *Im polnischen Wind*, pp. 23-25, 31, 36-37. Ernst Vogt served as director between 1828 and 1852.

<sup>188</sup> H. Knudsen, *Deutsches Theater in Posen* (Bad Nauheim, 1961), pp. 53-56.

The recurring emphasis in this piece upon the Polish fatherland and the manifestation of Polish national feeling would strengthen the Polish national consciousness, and through this spiritual condition, would lead, as desired by Poznanian Polish agitators, to the reestablishment of the hopes of Poles for Polish national independence. Consequently, it would lead to behavior harmful to the security and constitution of the Prussian state.<sup>189</sup>

The performances of the *Krakow Ensemble* were important for strengthening Polish national sentiment among the city's Poles. The theatre provided one of the most important methods for the direct dissemination of nationalistic ideas and emotions (in so far as these managed to pass the censor); the subject-matter of the stage could rouse the more poetic conceptions of nationalism through literary works. Schiller, with his theme of national liberation was particularly favoured. Companies from the Polish theatre in Posen participated in other towns of the province to counterpoise the performances of wandering German theatre companies.<sup>190</sup>

In 1869 the Prussian regulations were changed allowing for the more effective operation of Polish theatrics in Posen. As a result, in the following years permanent companies were formed, funds collected, and a permanent theatre building built. In June 1866, the renowned Krakow theatre company performed, and its performances were repeated in the sessions of 1867-69 and 1872. As well as the *Krakow Ensemble*, there had been a Polish ensemble based in Posen since 1869, financed by a joint-stock company. A priority of this ensemble was to perform Polish works and especially historical pieces.<sup>191</sup>

A public appeal was initiated in 1869, supported by some of the town's most illustrious Polish citizens, for a new Polish theatre. A local notable named Count Potocki donated a plot of land by Königstrasse for the project. The theatre established on this plot was named 'The Polish Theatre in the Potocki Garden' and the site was also used for legal registrations. But this site was only provisional and with a fund of 292,000 marks, on 21 June 1875, a specifically Polish theatre building was opened.<sup>192</sup>

The Polish theatre held frequent performances of plays, comedies and operas. Police records show that the theatre's cosmopolitan repertoires included works by

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<sup>189</sup> GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 209, No.3.

<sup>190</sup> Knudsen, *Deutsches Theater*, pp. 53-56.

<sup>191</sup> A. Jakimiec, *Teatr Polski w Poznaniu 1875-1975* (Poznań, 1975), pp. 6-8.

<sup>192</sup> Ehrenberg, *Geschichte*, pp. 3-5, 26-28.



Tolstoy, Gorki, Adam Mickiewicz, Richard Strauss, Verdi, Schiller, Hauptmann, Ibsen, Bernard Shaw and Molière, among the most famous names. These works were usually performed in Polish translation. Polish works were routinely banned because of their nationalistic or subversive content. The theatre's success was such that by 1901, the police president had singled it out as facilitating 'the cultivation of the Polish movement'.<sup>193</sup>

By 1879, there were two permanent theatres in Posen: one German and one Polish. The cultural division symbolised by the existence of separate German and Polish theatres in Posen after 1875 was reinforced in most cases by the provincial press. Reports about theatre performances were more common in the daily press than for any other art form. Major papers such as the liberal German *Posener Zeitung* and conservative *Kurier Poznański* carried sporadic reviews of performances in their respective national theatres, as well as other items of cultural news. But in such cases references to the cultural production of the other nation were absent. It is significant that critics and editors either did not consider it necessary or desirable to furnish their readers with such information. At least in this case, transnational modes of cultural production appear to have been minimal. It might be conjectured that national-political agendas prohibited this.<sup>194</sup>

It would be misleading, however, to suggest that there was cultural segregation. Period reviews in the local press occasionally remarked upon how German- and Polish-speakers mixed freely in both theatres and German dramas were an established part of the Polish Theatre's repertoire. The theatre critic of the *Dziennik Poznański* had noted how a Polish performance of works by Shakespeare, Schiller, and Chęciński had 'lured on this occasion even many Jews and Germans.'<sup>195</sup> And according to the cultural historian of Posen, Edyta Połczyńska, 'the frequently bilingual, culture-hungry Polish and German inhabitants of the city certainly mingled in the theatre auditoria of both

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<sup>193</sup> GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 209, No. 3. *Memoriał prezydium policji w Poznaniu*, 6 Feb. 1901, quoted in W. Jakóbczyk (ed.), *Wielkopolska 1851-1914: wybór źródeł* (Wrocław, 1954), pp. 242-244.

<sup>194</sup> *Posener Zeitung*, 1875, 1900, 1901; *Kurier Poznański*, 1883, 1899; *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 1909-1912, 1914; *Dziennik Poznański*, 1869.

<sup>195</sup> *Dziennik Poznański*, 18 July 1869.

institutions'. But specific evidence for interaction of this kind is rare and remains a matter largely of conjecture.<sup>196</sup>

The national function of the German theatre in Posen, particularly in its purpose as a cultural support for German inhabitants, was mirrored by developments in West Prussia. In Danzig, the town theatre which had been built in 1801 was, by the turn of the century, inadequate for civic needs and the professional requirements of performers. By 1901 a pressure group, the 'Danziger Theatre-Aktien-Gesellschaft', which had been established to promote the interests of the town's theatre, was campaigning for a new building because the existing facility provided inadequate accommodation for patrons and performers alike.

As in Posen, support for the project of building a new theatre was called for on the basis that a new theatre would bolster 'Deutschtum' in West Prussia. In an application sent to the Königlische Staats-Ministerium in Berlin on 10 April 1901, the 'Danziger Theatre-Aktien-Gesellschaft' argued that the province had suffered the effects of centuries of Polish 'Unkultur' and was under increasing pressure from Polish and Kashubian political agitation. In particular, the building of a new theatre was envisaged as a form of cultural support for the students of the town's new polytechnic.<sup>197</sup>

In both the Danzig and Posen city theatres the bias was in favour of works of German literature, performed in the German language. For instance, the programme of the Danzig City Theatre for the season 15 September 1894-5 May 1895 advertised a range of tragedies, plays, comedies, farces, operas and ballets, all performed in German. These included works by such celebrated artists as Schiller, Wagner, Shakespeare, Dumas, Mozart and Verdi.<sup>198</sup> In Posen, the season from 19 September 1908 to 30 April 1909 included 70 different works: 48 were plays, 16 operas, and six operettas. Of the 48 plays performed, 36 were of German literature, four English, four

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<sup>196</sup> Polczyńska, *Im polnischen Wind*, p. 15.

<sup>197</sup> APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/228, pp. 31-34, 269. As well as the 'Danziger Theatre-Aktien-Gesellschaft', there was a similar organisation named the 'Theater-Verein zu Danzig'. Its statutes of 6 February 1900 set out the association's purpose as being: 'the raising of artistic interests in Danzig, principally through the founding and promotion of a society or foundation for the building of a theatre'.

<sup>198</sup> APG. Oberpräsidium der Provinz Westpreussen, No. 7/224.

Nordic, and four of French literature. There were no Polish or Russian pieces.<sup>199</sup>

Repertoires of a similar kind were found in Thorn; at the 'Town Theatre', the director E. Hannemann put on various performances of operettas, comedies, and romances between 1886 and 1887, all of which were German works, including pieces by Gotthold Lessing, Friedrich Schiller, and Wilhelm Busch. At all three theatres the bias in favour of German authors and renditions was glaring.<sup>200</sup>

#### (v) Conclusion

State patronage of culture in the provinces of Posen and West Prussia had been modest until the end of the nineteenth century. Institutions of higher learning and the arts had often languished, and had been primarily dependent upon voluntary organisations, often with the support of the clergy and municipal and noble patronage. The situation altered markedly at the end of the nineteenth century when the reverberations of the national conflict came to permeate the cultural practices of the region. In its struggle against Polish nationalism, the Prussian state initiated a programme of *Hebungspolitik*, begun in the late 1890s. This represented the most concerted and comprehensive drive to nationalize the culture of Posen and West Prussia up to that time. The government funded out of a disposition fund the founding, *inter alia*, of theatres, railways, libraries, and colleges. This programme of cultural elevation was primarily intended to support the interests of middle-class Germans and to further integrate the region into the German Empire.

*Hebungspolitik* was focused particularly on cultural institutions such as the theatres, libraries and educational institutions. *Hebungspolitik* had the effect of increasing the politicisation of culture in the Eastern Marches. Theatre, libraries and *Hochschulen* were used instrumentally by the Prussian government to Germanize the cultural infrastructure of the region. State funding effectively nationalised German theatres and the centralised library network in Posen. German and Polish institutions played a vital

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<sup>199</sup> G. Lauterbach, 'Die Spielzeit 1908/9 im Posener Stadttheater', *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 14 (1909), 282-285.

<sup>200</sup> APG. Stadttheater Elbing, No. 385/113.

role in structuring the national divide. German and Polish library networks were extensions of the linguistic binary which fundamentally structured the national interface. The theatres performed a similar role in supporting literary culture and the cultural-linguistic identities of the two nationalities, whilst the Posen Academy and Danzig polytechnic existed as outposts of German learning in the East as well as serving the empire's urgent need to expand its technical and educational base in order to support its industrial growth.

The progressive nationalization of cultural institutions which ensued after 1871 furthered the dichotomization of national identity in Posen and West Prussia, although not exclusively. Germans and Poles did attend the same theatres, as newspaper reports testify; German and Polish works of literature were performed at the Polish theatre in Posen; German libraries are recorded as having had Polish readers; and Polish students were admitted to institutions of higher learning such as the Posen Academy and Danzig polytechnic, albeit on restrictive terms. Although the national paradigm pervaded, these institutions therefore were not exclusionary on the basis of nationality, and did, to some degree, mediate processes of social and cultural integration between the nationalities.

## Part II

### The Cultures of Transnationalism

## Chapter 3

### The Language and Semantics of Transnationalism

#### (i) Bilingualism

The meaning of bilingualism is the membership of an individual to two linguistic communities to such a degree that doubt exists concerning to which community his relationship is closest, which should be regarded as the mother-tongue, which is used with the greatest ease, or in which one thinks.

(Eduard Blocher, 1909)<sup>201</sup>

Language not only structured the interface between German and Polish nationalisms; it also subverted it. Linguistic and semantic categories existed which transgressed the national divide, and in doing so were foundational for the formation of transnational social structures. It will be shown in this chapter that the national divide was transgressed in two main ways. Firstly, the condition of bilingualism represented a contravention, ideologically and socially, of the binary construct of nationalism in the East. Secondly, the existence of a semantic conflation underpinned the formation of a 'Catholic-Polish axis'. The axis was 'transnational' because it incorporated German Catholics.

The definition of bilingualism offered by the educationalist, Eduard Blocher, highlights the feature of doubt which was intrinsic to it; doubt concerning 'to which of the two languages the relationship is closer, which is to be considered as the mother-tongue, which is used with the greater ease, or in which one thinks.' Indeterminacy permeated the national question in the borderlands and, as well as in bilingualism, came to expression in widespread, albeit localised, cases of ethnic hybridity. References to this were made frequently by scholars and commentators in regional *Landeskunde* surveys.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> E. Blocher, *Zweisprachigkeit: Vorteile und Nachteile* (Langensalza, 1909), p. 3.

<sup>202</sup> Regarding the concept of 'Zweisprachig', confusion had existed over whether this term denoted persons with two 'mother-tongues' (i.e. those born from a nationally mixed marriage) or those who were competent in two languages. The former understanding was affirmed by Ludwig Bernhard. L. Bernhard,

One scholar, Franz Brandstätter, described, in his analysis of the distribution of the nationalities in the district of Danzig Land, how ‘among the non-German-speaking inhabitants a great number of *Simulanten* must be counted’.<sup>203</sup> By ‘*Simulanten*’ he was no doubt referring to the bilinguals in the district. The statistician Eugen von Bergmann had reported how in some areas it was even common for the individual to use his name ‘both with a Polish ending as well as in the German form, depending on whether he wishes to appear to be more of one nationality or the other.’<sup>204</sup> This picture was corroborated by the statistician Heinrich Oelrichs who described the Danzig regency as follows:

All numerical indications concerning the members of one nationality or the other are extremely inaccurate, as the Polish and German elements are so fused together with one another, that in many families German and Polish are spoken, and it is to be determined with great difficulty, as to who belongs to the one or the other nationality. ... According to the corroborating reports from the prefects, indications in the statistical surveys are therefore completely unreliable....<sup>205</sup>

A prefect of the district of Thorn, Otto Steinmann, described the ethnic character of his region thus:

It can be no surprise that under the frequent change of relationships and of centuries-old constant contact of the principal two peoples as well as the different provincial elements of the German people amongst each other, national and provincial characteristics have not formed and maintained themselves distinctly, as this shows itself in other regions. Admittedly, the differences of character, language, religious confession and of economic trend, have distinguished the bulk of German and Slavonic elements constantly. Some of the immigrating Germans have also still kept in their individual features, characteristics of their homeland as is found with Swabian colonists who kept their native dialect. Meanwhile, it cannot be mistaken that as well as German and Polish elements becoming mixed through living together, and having exchanged many of their characteristic features between each other, the different Germanic peoples have especially amalgamated more and more, and have given up their particular ancestral features. Local customs and costumes are found for this reason here only in very weak concord. Moreover, a defined provincial character can usually only be pinpointed with difficulty, unless that is, it would be found in the reciprocal influence which the contact of nationalities and peoples amongst each other has manifested.<sup>206</sup>

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‘Die Fehlerquellen in der Statistik der Nationalitäten’ (foreword), in Weber, *Die Polen in Oberschlesien. Eine statistische Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1914), p. X.

<sup>203</sup> Similarly, Joseph Pawlowski, in a topographical survey of West Prussia, invented the category of ‘Polish-speaking Germans’, who were found in the regions around the towns of Stuhm, Christburg, Marienwerder, Graudenz and Deutsch-Eylau among others. J. Pawlowski, *Populäre Landeskunde oder Handbuch der Provinz Westpreussen* (Berlin, 1881), p. 31; F. Brandstätter, *Land und Leute des Landkreises Danzig* (Danzig, 1879), p. 331.

<sup>204</sup> E. v. Bergmann, *Zur Geschichte der Entwicklung deutscher, polnischer und jüdischer Bevölkerung in der Provinz Posen seit 1824* (Tübingen, 1883), p. 297.

<sup>205</sup> H. Oelrichs, *Statistische Mittheilungen über den Regency Danzig* (Danzig, 1863), pp. 50-51.

<sup>206</sup> O. Steinmann, *Der Kreis Thorn: Statistische Beschreibung* (Thorn, 1866), pp. 42-43.

Forms of ethnic hybridity were identifiable elsewhere in the Prussian East. For instance, the Upper Silesian village of Schönwald in the district of Gleiwitz was the subject of research by the German ethnographer Konrad Gusinde. Schönwald was considered a German settlement, dating back to the thirteenth century, but within a predominantly Polish region. The vocabulary of the Schönwalders, who were almost entirely Catholic, was characteristically *Ostmitteldeutsch*, but had been affected by the influence of Polish traders, field workers and immigrants. Polish words were commonly used by villagers in domestic life and many of the customs found such as the *Sommersingen* and *Dreikönigslieder* were Polish imports.<sup>207</sup>

The most quantifiable feature of transnational identity was bilingualism. Between the years 1843 and 1861 the category of ‘German and Polish Speaking’ had been included (inconsistently) in language-surveys for districts in the regencies of Posen, Danzig and Bromberg, and then again in 1890 and thereafter in all regencies.<sup>208</sup> The following table shows, upon the basis of official Prussian sources, the numbers of bilinguals in the four regencies which constituted the provinces of Posen and West Prussia. Data is unavailable or incomplete for some regencies in particular years, such as in Marienwerder where bilinguals were not counted until 1890. The figures for Polish-speakers in the regencies of Danzig and Marienwerder also include the Kashubians.

Table VI: Language Distribution in Posen and West Prussia 1849-1910

	<i>Polish-speaking</i>	<i>German-speaking</i>	<i>Bilingual*</i>
1849:			
<i>Posen</i>	489,963 (55.35%)	238,448 (26.93%)	156,721 (17.70%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	188,432 (42.00%)	158,283 (35.28%)	101,866 (22.70%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	-----	-----	-----
<i>Danzig</i>	-----	-----	-----

<sup>207</sup> K. Gusinde, ‘Schönwald: Beiträge zur Volkskunde und Geschichte eines deutschen Dorfes im polnischen Oberschlesien’, *Wort und Brauch*, 10 (1912), 1-80 (pp. 15, 25).

<sup>208</sup> This category was excluded in the regency of Marienwerder. Attempts to assign bilinguals to one nationality or the other were highly problematic. Klebs had suggested, with regard to the 1852 survey, that perhaps one-fifth of the bilinguals registered in Posen were of German nationality. The statisticians Schubert and Hofmann also attempted to pinpoint the *true* number of ‘Germans’, having used language-survey data in conjunction with confessional statistics. Bergmann, *Zur Geschichte*, p. 32.



1855:			
<i>Posen</i>	479,960 (53.36%)	245,048 (27.24%)	174,409 (19.39%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	-----	-----	-----
<i>Marienwerder</i>	-----	-----	-----
<i>Danzig</i>	90,009 (24.82%)	207,010 (57.08%)	65,606 (18.09%) <sup>209</sup>
1858:			
<i>Posen</i>	481,609 (53.00%)	251,729 (27.70%)	175,242 (19.28%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	-----	-----	-----
<i>Marienwerder</i>	-----	-----	-----
<i>Danzig</i>	92,136 (24.52%)	213,942 (56.94%)	69,596 (18.52%) <sup>210</sup>
1860:			
<i>Posen</i>	477,731 (52.07%)	253,425 (27.62%)	186,187 (20.29%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	182,706 (37.01%)	179,544 (36.37%)	131,405 (26.62%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	-----	-----	-----
<i>Danzig</i>	-----	-----	-----
1890:			
<i>Posen</i>	736,714 (65.44%)	382,416 (33.97%)	6,553 (0.58%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	311,410 (49.82%)	309,756 (49.55%)	3,632 (0.58%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	323,491 (38.30%)	508,855 (60.25%)	11,953 (1.41%)
<i>Danzig</i>	160,458 (27.23%)	421,125 (71.47%)	7,184 (1.21%)
1900:			
<i>Posen</i>	806,122 (67.27%)	385,500 (32.17%)	5,918 (0.49%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	351,123 (50.95%)	332,921 (48.31%)	4,770 (0.69%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	355,544 (39.60%)	529,807 (59.02%)	12,053 (1.34%)
<i>Danzig</i>	181,977 (27.32%)	477,589 (71.71%)	5,735 (0.86%)
1905:			
<i>Posen</i>	850,869 (67.38%)	406,587 (32.20%)	4,067 (0.32%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	365,337 (50.46%)	354,714 (48.99%)	3,353 (0.46%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	375,001 (40.21%)	550,380 (59.01%)	6,799 (0.72%)
<i>Danzig</i>	192,327 (27.11%)	511,423 (72.10%)	4,968 (0.70%)
1910:			
<i>Posen</i>	900,059 (67.37%)	427,232 (31.98%)	6,943 (0.51%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	378,831 (49.58%)	379,488 (49.67%)	4,956 (0.64%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	381,045 (39.65%)	565,323 (58.83%)	13,959 (1.45%)
<i>Danzig</i>	202,319 (27.24%)	532,619 (71.72%)	6,993 (0.94%)

*\*The persons represented in this column were classified in the surveys under the heading 'German and Polish speaking' in 1858 and 1860, but then usually as 'German and another language' from 1890*

<sup>209</sup> The statistics given here for the regency of Danzig excludes the data available for the district 'Danzig Stadt', for which complete statistics are not available in this year.

<sup>210</sup> The statistics given here for the regency of Danzig excludes the data available for the district 'Danzig Stadt', for which complete statistics are not available in this year.

onwards. The figures for 1890, 1900, 1905, and 1910, therefore, will include a negligible number of persons who spoke German and a language other than Polish.

Sources: Richard Böckh, *Der Deutschen Volkszahl und Sprachgebiet in den europäischen Staaten* (Berlin, 1869), pp. 236-242; Leszek Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten im preussischen Staat 1815-1914* (Marburg, 1990), pp. 93-117, 118-214; Karl Streiter, *Die nationalen Beziehungen im Grossherzogtum Posen (1815-1848)* (Bern, 1986), p. 167.

The statistics presented in the table VI (above) show that approximately one in five (20.29%) of the population of the Posen regency, and over 26 percent of the population of Bromberg regency, were classified as bilingual in 1860. The surveys of 1849, 1855 and 1858 had produced comparable results. But by 1890, the proportion of bilinguals, according to official sources, had fallen drastically. The discrepancy between the rates of bilingualism in 1860 and 1890 requires explanation.

The sharp drop in bilingualism in Posen and West Prussia between 1860 and 1890 is attributed here to the politicisation of population censuses following German unification.<sup>211</sup> Statistical practice was academically led. It has been shown how the influential theories of Richard Böckh denied the validity of the concept of bilingualism, and on census papers after 1890 it was stated that 'as a rule, each man possesses only one mother-tongue, which is most familiar to him from childhood and in which he thinks and also prays'. Admission to the bilingual category was therefore viewed with scepticism on the purely theoretical level.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> At the census of 1890 a number of other important methodological changes were made from previous counts. Census returns could now be filled out by inhabitants themselves, rather than by civil servants. And the military population, including families, were to be included in the counts, whereas before these had only included the civil population. A particularly important methodological difference between the 1861 and 1890 population counts is that in 1861 the language count was based upon 'Familiensprache' according to the principles of Ernst Engel, but in 1890 the criterion was 'Muttersprache'. By using the criterion of 'Familiensprache', the members of a household became categorised according to the linguistic identity of the head of the house. This is significant because it could potentially have resulted in members of the house who were not bilingual being classed as such and consequently, the rates of bilingualism overall being overstated. This difference does not account for the drastic statistical change evident between 1890 and the counts in, and prior to, 1860, because these were, in the majority of cases, based upon mother-tongue just as in 1890. For a comparison between the 1890 and preceding censuses, see P. Stade, *Das Deutschtum vs. die Polen in Ost- und Westpreussen nach den Sprachzählungen von 1861, 1890, und 1900* (doctoral thesis, Berlin, 1908), pp. 5-7; R. Böckh, *Der deutschen Volkszahl und Sprachgebiet in den europäischen Staaten* (Berlin, 1869), pp. 19-21, 225; L. Wegener, *Der Wirtschaftliche Kampf der Deutschen mit den Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1903), pp. 17-21.

<sup>212</sup> Bernhard, 'Die Fehlerquellen', p. XI.

It is to be argued that the statistical fall did not correspond to reality; rather, levels of bilingualism most probably remained constant, while statistical practice changed to suit political expediency. Social and economic factors cannot be shown to account for this degree of demographic change. On the contrary, one of the main social causes of bilingualism was mixed marriage, and the occurrences of this institution, as it will be shown, remained constant throughout the period. The political need to reduce nationality as far as possible to two categories was a direct consequence of the national conflict. It was in the interests of both the state and the Polish national movement to claim as many members for their respective nationalities as possible.<sup>213</sup>

The state had a vested political interest in minimising the size (perceived and real) of the Polish population. One direct reason for this was that political rights in Germany became tied to the results of the censuses. The *Reichsvereinsgesetz* (Associations Law) of 19 April 1908 made the political right of association absolutely dependent upon the results of nationality counts. Only in those districts where a foreign language population surpassed 60 percent of the entire population could public meetings in that foreign language be held. This new law empowered Prussian officials to require public meetings held by Polish organizations to be conducted in German. Meetings held in relation to parliamentary elections were exempt because Imperial Law guaranteed the right of voters to use their mother-tongue in such instances. The basis for such a determination was the result of the previous census. The fact that the size of the Polish population in many districts was close to this threshold caused the politicization of the censuses, and attempts to influence their outcomes. It was for these reasons that the 1910 census was the most highly politicised yet seen.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Research has shown that the Prussian authorities carried out the manipulation of statistics for political purposes even up to the time of the Weimar Republic. See M. Orzechowski, 'Statistics and Language Maps as a Tool of Prussian Nationalistic Policy', *Polish Western Affairs*, VI (1965), 197-217. See also, H. Glück, *Die preussische-polnische Sprachenpolitik* (Hamburg, 1979). As a result of the 'Gesetz betreffend die Geschäftssprache der Behörden, Beamten und politischen Körperschaften des Staats' (28 Aug. 1876) the German language became exclusively the official language of all the 'authorities, officials, and political bodies of the state', with all written correspondence also required to be in German.

<sup>214</sup> Bernhard, 'Die Fehlerquellen', p. VII. The anti-Polish 'muzzle paragraph' of this law was an embarrassment to the Progressives who now supported Bülow in alliance with Conservatives and National Liberals. Nevertheless, the Progressives did give their backing to the bill having won an amendment, according to the enforcement of this requirement was suspended for a period of twenty years in those districts where Poles numbered 60 percent or more of the population. In practice, this meant that the terms of the law were not valid in 26 of Posen's 42 districts, and the effect of the law was more to

This point is underlined by a letter sent by the committee of the Eastern Marches Association in the weeks before the population count on the 1 December 1910 to the regency president in Danzig which advised that ‘The entire committee wishes to influence the local communities at the forthcoming census, so that as many German counters as possible become appointed, and that the German Catholics take care that they become registered as Germans.’<sup>215</sup> Bilingualism was portrayed in the association’s journal *Die Ostmark* as a stepping-stone to the full Polonization of the eastern provinces. The minimization of Polish in public life, including the schools, was a necessity for German survival in the East. It was therefore argued that no concessions should be made to the Poles in respect of language rights and that religious instruction in school at all levels should be practised in the German language.<sup>216</sup>

In the run-up to the population count in December 1910, the supreme president of West Prussia sent a letter to the regency president in Danzig, reiterating the decree of the minister of the interior (19 August 1910) that ‘in those regencies whose population is strongly interspersed with foreign-speaking elements, particular weight must be placed on the recruitment of reliable counters in order to prevent erroneous results’. In particular, he requested that ‘care be brought to bear that those carrying out the count are briefed suitably so that especially those cases are avoided as far as possible that bilingual families which appear sufficiently competent in German, and whose children have acquired advanced knowledge of German through school education, nevertheless identify Polish or Kashubian as their mother-tongue’. The significance of the census for church politics was also commented upon in respect of the bearing this would have on the provision of German services and the teaching of catechism in German.<sup>217</sup> The classification of the population was also highly meaningful in church politics, since Polish Catholic priests justified their provision of services and catechism instruction in the German language on the basis of population surveys.<sup>218</sup>

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antagonize than to block Polish activism. W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews; the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914* (Chicago, 1980), p. 191.

<sup>215</sup> GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919. Letter dated 17 Nov. 1910.

<sup>216</sup> ‘Zur Sprachenfrage’, *Die Ostmark*, 9 (1901), 77.

<sup>217</sup> President of the Province of Posen to the regency president in Danzig (4 Oct. 1910). GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919.

<sup>218</sup> Bernhard, ‘Die Fehlerquellen’, p. V. A sub-prefect in the district of Marienwerder had suggested in a report in 1900 that the simple asking of a person’s mother-tongue aided the cause of ‘the opponents of

For the same reasons, the results of censuses were of concern to Polish electoral authorities and were monitored in the Polish press. Polish newspapers had been highly sceptical towards the results of the counts. For instance, the *Pielgrzym* (Pilgrim) raised doubts in 1910 over the content of the statistical *Gemeindelexikon* published by the Royal Statistical Bureau which it claimed misrepresented the majority of the Catholic population of Stenzlau in the district of Dirschau as German when it was really Polish. In the aftermath of the count, the *Pielgrzym* told of how it had received reports that officials had not issued returns to some households, and that at others, their completion had been denied to the householder and completed by the counter instead. It was asserted that in some cases the counter had asked parents only for the confession and birthday of a child, leaving the selection of nationality to himself.<sup>219</sup> The political imperatives of maximising the Polish turnout at the time of censuses is suggested by an appeal issued by the Polish election committee in the city of Posen before the 1910 census, which cautioned Poles against becoming listed as German or bilingual:

Indicate the Polish language as mother-tongue in the census! At present, official forms are being distributed which are to be filled out for the census. Pay attention to question nine: mother-tongue? Each Pole should underline the word 'Polish' and should be careful that the counter only marks this one word. Whosoever allows that both 'Polish' and 'German' are marked, does not want to be counted as a true Pole, but as half Pole, half German. Let us show our might! Fight for our rights!<sup>220</sup>

Similarly in West Prussia, the *Gazeta Gdańska* (16 August 1910) had told its readers:

Nobody should forget the day of the population count...we must move heaven and earth in order to show that we have become greater, that all official policies against us have not only not been able to suppress the Polish spirit within us, but that it has made us Poles so much stronger. It is our holy duty to pay attention to those who sleep or sit in the dark, for whom the count has no political significance... We must agitate and convince them that it is their Polish and Catholic duty to register themselves not as German, nor as German and Pole, but solely as Poles....our Polish honour must see to it that in many districts the Polish population increases itself so that there meetings can be held.<sup>221</sup>

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German sermons'. Therefore, it would be better to request the language in which a person is competent, rather than their 'mother-tongue'. In doing so, the consequences of elementary schooling for the Polish population could be taken into account. There was clearly much more negotiability over the linguistic competency of an individual than over the language of their parents.

<sup>219</sup> *Pielgrzym* (20 Sept. 1910 and 6 Dec. 1910), in GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919, pp. 497, 523.

<sup>220</sup> Bernhard, 'Die Fehlerquellen', p. XII. A similar appeal had been issued on 24 November 1910 by the National Democrat newspaper 'Kurjer Poznański', in which it demanded: 'to turn with the help of the press and special appeals to the lower classes, so that they indicate as their mother-tongue only the Polish language and do not allow, to nominate next to the Polish language also the German one'.

<sup>221</sup> GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919. Many other similar examples of propaganda, stressing the political significance of the censuses in the formulation of government policy, appeared in the Polish press in the run-up to the 1910 census. For instance, see articles in *Dziennik*

For the German bureaucracy such mobilisation threatened the national status of bilingual Germans, namely German Catholics, among whom bilingualism was commonplace. This concern was reflected in a report sent from the president of Bromberg to the provincial president in Posen:

In local regions, namely in western and northern areas, lives a numerous Catholic population, which is by nationality and mother-tongue undoubtedly German, but is more or less entirely competent in Polish. The more the Polish leaders, namely the Polish-Catholic clergy have recognised the significance of the census results, so much greater has the pressure become applied to the population in question to designate itself as 'Polish-speaking'.<sup>222</sup>

It was the very mutability and indeterminacy of nationality in the Eastern Marches, and the problems of scientific analysis this created, which allowed scope for political influence upon census results at all. This influence could be exerted at several stages along the official administrative chain which census papers passed. This chain ran from the counters on the ground, to the police authorities or census commission, to the sub-prefect of the district (*Kreis*), and then up to the regency president (*Regierungspräsident*). Finally, checks were carried out by the *Königliche Statistische Landesamt* in Berlin. The most crucial level of political intervention was that of the counter.

The counters, who were drawn predominantly from the loyalist ranks of the elementary school teachers, were invested with the authority to correct false or incomplete data on the spot.<sup>223</sup> In practice, they often went further than this and completed the language question on behalf of the individuals concerned when visiting a household. This was despite the fact that, from 1890, the citizen was allowed to mark the census return himself.<sup>224</sup> The population counts were intended, in principle, as self-counts; on the cover of the letter sent to each household were the instructions that the returns were to be completed by the head of the household. But the reports of regency

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*Bydgoski* (13 Nov. 1910), *Postęp* (12 Nov. 1910), *Dziennik Kujawski* (19 Nov. 1910), in GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 1010 (vol. I).

<sup>222</sup> It was added that this had affected the nationality statistics in individual towns with significant German-Catholic populations, producing absolute and percentage increases in the 'Polish-speaking' populations in towns such as Czarnikau, Filehne, and Kolmar. The report was dated 9 April 1913. GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 688.

<sup>223</sup> Bernhard, 'Die Fehlerquellen', p. XIII.

<sup>224</sup> GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919.

presidents showed that such participation was small, especially in rural areas. One reason for this was that in Polish and Danish areas, many inhabitants were not able to understand the documentation, and this was particularly true among those sections of the population with little or no education.<sup>225</sup> As one prefect reported to the president of the Danzig regency after the 1910 census: 'the filling out of the returns has been completed for the most part by the counters, but also by the heads of households on several occasions; occasionally this has also happened through the landlords or employers on behalf of their tenants and workers'.<sup>226</sup>

The practice of returns being filled out by the counters introduced questions of interpretation and bias by a third party. This issue was well understood by academic commentators. Eugen von Bergmann, an expert on Poznanian demography, commented:

There is in many instances an almost insoluble problem with the individual who is competent in both languages, speaking perhaps German in the military, Polish with his parents and brothers and again German with his wife and children, of determining whether he is a "German" or a "Pole". The authorities must, in such cases, consider the decision very carefully. And in which direction the decision generally goes, is naturally easy to guess. And these accusations are confirmed through the testimony of officials themselves.<sup>227</sup>

The historian of West Prussia, F.W.F. Schmitt, also questioned the reliability of census-officials, remarking that counters were not able to separate in their minds the conflations: German=Evangelical and Polish=Catholic. He criticised the general educational standards of the subordinates of the mayors in the larger towns of West Prussia, and the mayors and magistrates themselves in the smaller towns and villages, for not understanding what the Prussian authorities expected of them. The bias of counters was also noted as a problem since 'where they were themselves German, they list each Pole who speaks some German sentences as German; if they are Poles, then they put every German who they once hear mutter Polish on the Polish list.'<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> The distribution of foreign-language census papers was carried out for the last time in 1871.

<sup>226</sup> GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919. Report of the prefect of the district of Danzig Niederung to the regency president, 24 Jan. 1911.

<sup>227</sup> Bergmann, *Zur Geschichte*, p. 33.

<sup>228</sup> F.Schmitt, *Die Provinz Westpreussen, wie sie entstanden und wie sie gegenwärtig beschaffen ist* (Thorn, 1879), pp. 78-79.

Ludwig Bernhard, professor of politics at the University of Berlin, provided further evidence of the bias of officials and its effect upon the results of censuses:

In the heat of the nationality conflict it is not easy to maintain cool objectivity, and when the sub-prefect or regency president considers the count as a political instrument, the objectivity of the counter is put under pressure. Since the counters are predominantly elementary school teachers, their professional interests come into play. An increase in the size of the German or bilingual populations at the expense of the Poles, appears as a Germanizing success for the German schools ... Then, at the following stages of control, by the sub-prefect and with the supervision of the counts by the regency president, the will to stand against the Polish agitation becomes more intense...<sup>229</sup>

The struggle over the linguistic contours of the border provinces also infected school education. Ever since the *Kulturkampf* the state had been embroiled in a continual, albeit inconsistent, struggle against the use of Polish teaching in schools. Under Bismarck's leadership a concerted campaign had been launched in order to linguistically assimilate Polish children through the deprivation of either the teaching of the Polish language or the teaching of other areas of the curriculum in Polish. In doing so, the government did much to antagonise and worsen the national relationship in the East. But it was a paradox that the elementary schools, in conforming through much of their history to a principle of 'bilingual' education, had effectively promoted the bilingualism of the general populace. The forced assimilation of Polish children through the use of German for teaching in the schools failed to work, and instead afforded Polish children an economic advantage through their ability to use two languages. Prussian schools had been founded upon confession, not nationality. Consequently, Polish and German Catholic children attended Catholic schools together. It was in these Catholic schools that the question of bilingual education was centred in the eastern provinces.

Bilingualism in school became a contested issue of political importance in other bi-national territories such as Alsace-Lorraine, following its incorporation into the German Empire as the *Reichsland*, and in Bohemia, where conflict between Germans and Czechs over elementary school education occurred for the first time during the 1860s

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<sup>229</sup> Bernhard, 'Die Fehlerquellen', p. XVIII.



and 1870s as intensive industrialisation encouraged Czech migration to the frontier districts, altering the national composition of the region.<sup>230</sup>

In the Prussian East, a reactionary turn to Germanization had ensued following the Polish insurrection of January 1863 in Russian Poland. This occurred first in Upper Silesia, and then, by 1865, the Minister of Education had ordered the elementary schools in West and East Prussia to make greater use of German for teaching, and only to use Polish when necessary for the upper year groups. In the province of Posen, the general inclination towards Germanization led in 1867 to the requirement that German be taught to children from the start of their elementary education.<sup>231</sup>

The *Kulturkampf* brought the polarisation of relations between the interests of the Prusso-German state and those of Polish Catholicism in the East. The perception of irreconcilable interests led to a gradual change of mood, turning against the tolerance of bilingual teaching. The most important political issue, however, and one which was at the centre of the *Kulturkampf*, was the influence of the Polish clergy in the school system. At a ministerial meeting held on 1 November 1871, Bismarck had charged the Catholic clergy with trying to thwart the advancement of the German language for the reason that 'the Slavic and the Romanic peoples in league with the *Ultramontanes* are trying to maintain barbarism and ignorance, and everywhere in Europe are fighting the Germanic spirit, which is trying to spread Enlightenment.' It is possible to detect here the promotion of a dichotomy between Germanic Protestantism as a force for progress and Roman Catholicism as one of reaction.<sup>232</sup>

Prussian schools were denominational rather than secular; this was despite the principle having been established in the early nineteenth century of state jurisdiction over education. Most commonly, teachers and the majority of pupils in any given school belonged predominantly to one religion, usually Judaism, Catholicism or Protestantism. This religion was then taught as an integral part of the curriculum. Some inter-confessional schools also existed and provided tuition in the respective religions

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<sup>230</sup> J. Lombard, *Zweitsprachige Schulen im Reichslande* (Langensalza, 1909); E. Wiskemann, *Czechs and Germans: A Study of the Struggle in the Historic Provinces of Bohemia and Moravia* (Oxford, 1938), pp. 37-39.

<sup>231</sup> J. Kulczycki, *School Strikes in Prussian Poland 1901-1907: the Struggle over Bilingual Education*, (New York, 1981), p. 10.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

of the pupils. Supervision of education had been allowed to the clergy traditionally, and by the Prussian Constitution of 1850, the right to direct religious instruction had been given to the churches.

From the beginning of the 1870s the issues of school inspection by the clergy and the limits of the use of the Polish language in schools were the main points of contention among the Polish and Catholic sections of society in the East. Petitions and public meetings served as the main forms of Polish protest against government policy. In March 1872 the Prussian Landtag passed the School Inspection Law, according to which all school inspectors were to be state officials. Inspectors had formerly been clergymen and these changes occurred most quickly in the East. Teachers were already appointed by the state as a way of avoiding those with involvement in 'dangerous social, political or national party interests'.<sup>233</sup>

At the same time, the Prussian Culture Minister Adalbert Falk aimed to promote inter-denominational schools, with the effect of weakening the homogeneity of the Catholic-Polish milieu. The number of these schools increased from 60 in 1871 to 442 in 1879. In addition, a series of government decrees and regulations were introduced to reinforce the hegemony of the German language in Prussia's schools. Directives issued between September 1872 and October 1873 contributed towards this process, making the use of Polish only allowed for the teaching of religion in elementary schools, for the lower-grades in the district of Oppeln in Upper Silesia, and in West and East Prussia; and the upper, middle and lower grades in Posen and the district of Köslin in Pomerania.<sup>234</sup>

In the city of Posen special efforts were being made around this time to soften the confessional and national divides in school. In 1873 a restructuring of the school system in the city occurred as a result of which confessional schools ceased to exist and a new kind of school, the *Simultanschule*, took their place, thus returning to the system of the 1850s. This change did not apply in the province at large, where denominational schools continued to predominate. The new policy also affected the grammar schools which moved towards non-confessional status. At the *Simultanschule* Jewish teachers

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<sup>233</sup> 'Das Verhalten des Lehrers in socialen, politischen und nationalen Angelegenheiten', *Katholisches Schulblatt für die Provinz Preussen* (Graudenz, 1862).

<sup>234</sup> Kulczycki, *School Strikes*, pp. 14-15.

were not excluded from employment, and religious instruction for children of all religions (in segregated classes) was provided. For all other subjects, pupils were taught together. The reason for the move to *Simultanschule* in the city of Posen was given in a local government report of 1872 as follows: 'The national and confessional separation in the education of our population separates also for life; in comparison, unity in education effects the approximation and contact of the nationalities and thus awakens and nourishes a reconciliatory and peaceable tone in society.'<sup>235</sup>

During the 1880s Gustav von Gossler, as Prussian Culture Minister, pressed for vigorous enforcement of the language decree of 1873 with the result that the Posen district authorities impelled school inspectors to eliminate Polish from schools located in areas with German-speaking majorities completely. Failing this, it was suggested that the teaching of the Polish language should be delayed until German had been mastered, and the possibility was encouraged of teaching Polish-language classes in German. Nevertheless, the *Schulzeitung der Provinz Posen* reported in 1881 that in the city of Posen Polish was being taught for three to four hours per week in individual schools. Furthermore, Polish-speaking children were also receiving their religious instruction in this language, which amounted to four hours per week everywhere. Polish children therefore received 7-8 hours of teaching per week in their native tongue.<sup>236</sup>

In October 1887, a major legislative step was taken against the Polish language when Gossler decreed that Polish-language lessons be banned throughout the whole of Prussian Poland. Similar action followed in April 1889 for Schleswig-Holstein where Danish language teaching now became prohibited. However, in areas with Lithuanian,

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<sup>235</sup> There was an important difference between the terms *Simultanschule* and so-called *Paritätischeschule*. *Paritätischeschulen* were schools which accorded the same rights to both Catholics and Protestants, including in their affiliated teacher training colleges. Until the beginning of the 1850s, children, regardless of their language or religion, were taught together in the same class in elementary and secondary schools. The denominational designation and authority for each school was decided according to that of the majority of pupils. W. Kriebel, *Das erste Jahrhundert der Simultanvolksschule in der Stadt Posen* (Posen, 1883), pp. 6, 15; M. Wenck, *Handbuch für liberale Politik* (Berlin, 1911), pp. 324-325.

<sup>236</sup> *Schulzeitung der Provinz Posen* (Bromberg, 1881), p. 103. Dedicated periodicals such as the *Katholisches Schulblatt für die Provinz Preussen* (first published in 1859 in Marienwerder), and the *Schulzeitung der Provinz Posen. Organ des Pestalozzi-Vereins und des Provinzial-Lehrervereins der Provinz Posen* (first published in Bromberg in 1879) provided advice and support to elementary school teachers and schools inspectors on how to effectively teach in bilingual schools, and in particular how to teach German to Polish children. The *Katholisches Schulblatt* also provided a forum for the discussion of the national and political role of teachers.

Polish, Danish, or Walloon populations, children could still receive religious instruction in their family language. This legislation represented the strongest stand taken so far against the principle of bilingual education and was nothing less than a rejection of it. Until this time, some degree of bilingual education had been accepted as normal in the East. But it was characteristic of *Polenpolitik* that policy oscillated and just a few years later the chancellorship of Caprivi brought a more moderate course.<sup>237</sup>

The appointment of Leo von Caprivi as chancellor in 1890 marked a turning-point in German-Polish affairs characterised by a mood of reconciliation on the part of the Prussian government towards the Polish population. As a contribution towards reconciliation the government had allowed the conciliator and Polish loyalist Father Florian Stablewski to be appointed as archbishop of Gnesen-Posen. The government did not rescind the 1887 legislation for the complete removal of Polish language lessons, but in order to satisfy religious objections, took notice of the concerns represented in the Prussian parliament by Stablewski, who stressed the importance of Catholic children being able to read Polish hymnals and catechisms. Stablewski's arguments seem to have been successful, since the minister of education made reference to them when on 11 April 1891 he issued a directive to the districts of Posen allowing teachers to participate in the teaching of Polish privately, and the possibility of using school buildings for this purpose. The reinstatement of religious instruction in the Polish language was also made for children who had difficulty in understanding German religion classes and who lived in linguistically-mixed areas. In West Prussia and Silesia concessions did not follow so soon in this 'period of reconciliation' and parents and priests petitioned during the early 1890s for the same allowances that had been granted in Posen. There were also still many among the Polish deputies in the Landtag who demanded the repeal of the decree of 1887 by which Polish language lessons were banned from the school curriculum.<sup>238</sup>

As a concession to the Poles, and as a reward for the loyalism of Polish leaders towards Caprivi's administration, the Prussian Culture Minister Robert Bosse reintroduced Polish language lessons into the curriculum as part of a directive in March

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<sup>237</sup> 'Das gesamte Volksschulwesen im preussischen Staate im Jahre 1886', *Preussische Statistik*, 101 (1889), p. 32.

<sup>238</sup> Kulczycki, *School Strikes*, pp. 31-33.

1894. The directive concerned the province of Posen, the only province where the teaching of the Polish language was allowed. The package involved the allocation of (optional) Polish-language tuition of two hours per week for two years in the middle grades. A further stipulation was that to qualify for Polish-language classes, a pupil was required to be receiving religious instruction in Polish in the same middle-years. In this way the number of pupils eligible for Polish language classes could be kept to a minimum. This directive implicitly made the connection between religious instruction and the need for competence in Polish in order for some children to gain maximum benefit from it.<sup>239</sup>

Caprivi's school concessions provoked various national-political critiques. They were sharply criticised by the Pan-German League and the Eastern Marches Association. The government's decision to permit the provision of private Polish instruction in the elementary schools was denounced by the Pan-German League. The Eastern Marches Association had campaigned for Polish to be removed entirely from the curricula in schools, with the aim of 'furthering Germanized school instruction' featuring as a principal objective in the first manifesto of the Association. At the opposite end of the national and political spectrum, the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) called for secular schools in which all subjects were to be taught in Polish.<sup>240</sup>

The appointment of Konrad von Studt as Culture Minister in 1899 led to the introduction of a package of legislation against the use of Polish in schools, including the order that all schools in the provincial capital of Posen would have to carry out religious instruction in the middle and upper grades in the German language. Polish language instruction was also abolished entirely. The school language issue was a constantly sensitive one because of the way it connected the national question to religion. Not only was the Polish nation under attack, but also its identification with Catholicism. The injustice felt by sections of the Polish population towards the government's discriminatory education policies eventually crested after 1900 in waves of protest and civil disobedience. On 8 September 1900, the first Polish protest meeting

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> B. Danilczuk, *Działalność SPD i PPS zaboru pruskiego w Poznaniu w latach 1891-1914* (Toruń, 1962), pp. 33-34; *Die Ostmark*, No. 10 (1898); No. 4 (1899); Nos. 5, 9 (1900); No. 9 (1891); Kulczycki, *School Strikes*, pp. 34-35, 41; R. Tims, *Germanizing Prussian Poland: the H-K-T Society and the Struggle for the Eastern Marches in the German Empire, 1894-1919* (New York, 1941), p. 65.

took place in Posen, at which appeals for support were made to the archbishop and the Pope; others followed, with 40 similar meetings over the following nine months.<sup>241</sup> In addition, school strikes occurred after 1900 during which parents withheld their children from attending school. The first of these came sporadically between 1901 and 1905, followed between 1906 and 1907 by a general school strike involving approximately 93,000 pupils in more than 1,600 schools in Prussian Poland. Children who truanted were flogged and parents were gaoled.<sup>242</sup>

It was a paradox of Germanization policy, however, that it produced effects which were in fact harmful to the German national interest. As the historian Arthur Rhode has noted: 'The Germanization of school education had the unintended economic result that now the Poles became bilingual and hence better equipped for economic competition ... German businessmen, in consideration of their Polish customer base, were more willing to employ Poles who later became the successful rivals of their former bosses'.<sup>243</sup> This problem was well understood at the time. An article in the conservative daily *Das Volk* highlighted how the superiority of Polish businessmen in the East was attributable largely to the monolingualism of German traders.<sup>244</sup> An Englishman named Sutherland Edwards who had travelled around Posen had also commented upon the experience of bilingualism in the city: 'at the railway station no language but German is heard. You see German inscriptions over all the public offices, you are driven by a German to a half-German, half-Polish hotel, a polyglot waiter brings you the bill of a German theatre'.<sup>245</sup> The promotion of German within the school system advanced the socio-economic position of the Polish nationality significantly. As one school inspector verified in his study of school education in the East, 'the number of illiterates has diminished strikingly consequently with the abolition of Polish as a teaching language, of Polish language and religion teaching'.<sup>246</sup> This role continued to be performed while Germanization policies, at least according to the official statistics, clearly failed to reduce the Polish school population as the following statistics show.

<sup>241</sup> Kulczycki, *School Strikes*, pp. 45-47.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., pp. 110-112; N. Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1981), II, 135.

<sup>243</sup> A. Rhode, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche im Posener Lande* (Würzburg, 1956), p. 164.

<sup>244</sup> 'Aus unserer Ostmark', *Das Volk*, 4. Nov. 1897.

<sup>245</sup> S. Edwards, *The Polish Captivity: an Account of the Present Position of the Poles in the Kingdom of Poland, and in the Polish Provinces of Austria, Prussia, and Russia*, 2 vols (London, 1863), II, 75.

<sup>246</sup> J. Rassmann, *Die Schule im deutschen Osten* (Lissa, 1907), p. 11.

Table VII: *Language of Children in the Elementary Schools of Posen and West Prussia, 1886-1911*

	<i>German-speaking</i>	<i>Polish-speaking</i>	<i>Bilingual*</i>
<i>1886:</i>			
<i>Posen</i>	61,760 (30.45%)	133,373 (65.77%)	7,628 (3.76%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	51,613 (47.17%)	52,913 (48.36%)	4,879 (4.45%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	83,099 (56.18%)	55,617 (37.60%)	9,195 (6.21%)
<i>Danzig</i>	59,991 (65.45%)	27,080 (29.54%)	4,579 (4.99%)
<i>1891:</i>			
<i>Posen</i>	58,561 (29.25%)	133,883 (66.87%)	7,730 (3.86%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	49,849 (46.79%)	52,460 (49.24%)	4,213 (3.95%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	82,082 (56.07%)	55,358 (37.82%)	8,929 (6.10%)
<i>Danzig</i>	63,338 (69.62%)	27,362 (30.07%)	3,374 (3.70%)
<i>1896:</i>			
<i>Posen</i>	57,006 (27.06%)	144,972 (68.83%)	8,589 (4.07%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	52,473 (46.02%)	57,046 (50.3%)	4,501 (3.94%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	88,276 (54.66%)	63,111 (39.07%)	10,052 (6.22%)
<i>Danzig</i>	66,887 (66.24%)	30,238 (29.94%)	3,851 (3.81%)
<i>1901:</i>			
<i>Posen</i>	57,288 (25.60%)	157,194 (70.26%)	9,187 (4.10%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	55,292 (44.98%)	63,265 (51.46%)	4,361 (3.54%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	90,503 (53.97%)	67,281 (40.12%)	9,878 (5.89%)
<i>Danzig</i>	70,686 (65.62%)	33,258 (30.87%)	3,860 (3.58%)
<i>1906:</i>			
<i>Posen</i>	60,709 (24.63%)	176,158 (71.47%)	9,543 (3.87%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	58,020 (43.60%)	64,773 (48.67%)	10,270 (7.71%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	89,704 (51.54%)	74,917 (43.04%)	9,417 (4.26%)
<i>Danzig</i>	74,385 (63.68%)	37,284 (31.92%)	5,130 (4.39%)
<i>1911:</i>			
<i>Posen</i>	61,005 (23.01%)	196,409 (74.08%)	7,648 (2.88%)
<i>Bromberg</i>	61,221 (43.11%)	67,006 (47.18%)	13,773 (9.69%)
<i>Marienwerder</i>	89,767 (49.99%)	79,922 (44.51%)	9,866 (5.49%)
<i>Danzig</i>	78,036 (63.08%)	40,241 (32.53%)	5,411 (4.37%)

\*This category includes children classed as speaking both German and one of the following languages: Polish, Kaschubian, Lithuanian, Danish, Masurian, Moravian, Wendish, although the occurrences of languages other than German, Polish and Kaschubian were negligible in Posen and West Prussia.

Source: Leszek Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten im preussischen Staat 1815-1914* (Marburg, 1998), pp. 93-214.

According to the statistics above the rates of monolingualism and bilingualism remained relatively constant throughout the period 1886-1911. Thus, the government's own statistics showed that the strategy of forced assimilation had not produced any significant change in the numerical relationship between Germans and Poles or between monolinguals and bilinguals in the elementary schools.

It was one of the many ironies of the national relationship that in order to counter what was viewed by many, including the Eastern Marches Association, as the advantage bilingualism conferred upon the Poles, some sought to promote bilingualism among Germans; some even argued that the viability of the German middle class depended on it. The Eastern Marches Association opposed this idea and one of its founders, Heinrich von Tiedemann, had been quoted in *Die Ostmark* as arguing that 'If we should try to foster knowledge of the Polish language among Germans, the inevitable result would be that in thirty years' time not one more word of German would be spoken in the province of Posen!' The Association's position remained firm on this issue, refusing to condone bilingualism, while its organ *Die Ostmark* even went so far as to publicly condemn German businessmen who employed bilingual Germans as sales persons, and who advertised in Polish, even polonizing their names and addresses.<sup>247</sup> As part of the Association's campaign to preserve German as the exclusive *Staatssprache* it maintained a broad campaign against all aspects of the region's distinctive bilingual culture. This encompassed the use of Polish on trams and other forms of public transport, shop fronts, advertisements, public signs, and in the administration of banks, parishes and associations.<sup>248</sup>

## (ii) The Semantics of Nationalism

The Prussian state's statisticians aimed to impose maximum order on the national relationship in the East. An accurate analysis of the national relationship in the border

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<sup>247</sup> The Landtag deputy for Bromberg and member of the Eastern Marches Association, Christoph von Tiedemann, was exceptional in backing German bilingualism in a speech made in the Landtag on 14 January 1902. Tims, *Germanizing Prussian Poland*, pp. 137-141.

<sup>248</sup> Tims, *Germanizing Prussian Poland*, p. 135.



provinces was a prerequisite for the solution of the Polish question. Upon this basis the state implemented and judged its methods of rectification. But the binary model upon which these methods were based was continually subverted by a reality in which personal and collective identities and allegiances transgressed the limits of nationalist ideology.

Through generations of social contact between the nationalities in the Eastern Marches, a peculiar understanding of nationalism had evolved, which came to expression semantically; an understanding which was of critical significance. Witnesses suggest strongly that throughout the nineteenth century, a semantic *conflation* of nationality and religion had been widespread; 'German' was popularly synonymous with 'Evangelical', and conversely, 'Polish' was synonymous with 'Catholic'. This understanding was deeply rooted in popular consciousness. Hence, the director of the Statistical Bureau cautioned over the statistical survey of 1858 for Danzig and Marienwerder, where he admitted: 'Although no great emphasis can be placed on these figures, as with the count, frequently the confessional element becomes mixed with the national, they do, however, provide some indication in order to understand the relationship of the Polish population.'<sup>249</sup>

Similar considerations were expressed in the neighbouring province of Posen, where, in a survey of the Grand Duchy of Posen, one author explained:

The majority of the current inhabitants of Posen profess themselves to the Catholic religion, but there are also many Protestants. The inhabitants of Slavic descent are predominately Catholic, those of German descent are for the most part Protestant; for this reason, in everyday life the uneducated man uses Polish and Catholic and German and Protestant as synonymous.<sup>250</sup>

But it was not necessarily only among the uneducated that these synonyms applied. In his study of the 'Bamberger', the archivist Max Bär contended that it was not solely among the uneducated that the terms 'Polish' and 'Catholic' were understood as being synonymous with each other, but also among educated people. He cited the following incident as evidence of this:

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<sup>249</sup> H. Oelrichs, 'Ueber die Entwicklung der landwirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse in Westpreussen seit der Besitznahme durch Friedrich den Grossen', *Zeitschrift des Königlich preussischen statistischen Bureaus*, 7/8/9 (1867), 201-215 (p. 205).

<sup>250</sup> A. Bäck, *Die Provinz oder das Grossherzogthum Posen in geographischer, statistischer und topographischer Beziehung* (Berlin, 1847), p. 37.

On the occasion of a school inspection, a Protestant child was discovered in the Polish-Catholic religion class. The teacher explained that he was nevertheless Polish. But the inspector replied that he was not Catholic, asking 'do you believe then, that all Poles are Catholic and all Catholics are Poles?' 'Naturally' replied the teacher. The official continued: 'You are indeed Polish and Catholic yourself, but you know what the Pope is; he is an Italian, or do you believe that he is also a Pole?' 'Naturally' replied the teacher, 'the Pope is a Pole as much as I am' - the last remark is a view which is almost universally held.<sup>251</sup>

The semantic conflation was of particular significance to the gathering of population statistics. The historian of West Prussia, F.W.F. Schmitt, made reference to the way in which statistical practices were thwarted by the religious codification of nationality:

When the authorities made a beginning [...] with the statistical surveys, they formulated the questionnaire in such a way that they sought the language of an individual as the surest signifier of his nationality. This arrangement was very wise. For if the authorities had put, for instance, the categories of 'German' and 'Polish' on the returns, in most regions they would have received a straight repetition of the categories 'Evangelical' and 'Catholic', not merely because in most regions the religious distinction coincides with the national one, but because the survey counters themselves, with the best intentions, do not understand the distinction between the terms 'Evangelical' and 'German' on the one hand, and 'Catholic' and 'Polish' on the other. The indissoluble connection in which these terms exist appears almost unbelievable to an inhabitant of the pure German provinces. Very often people explain to officials with seriousness, that they can speak 'Catholic'. Children request books with 'Catholic' lines (in which to write 'Polish'); Catholic *Rheinländer* who have immigrated, become listed as 'Polish'; a Catholic, who adopts the evangelical faith, has become 'German'. The common Pole is usually convinced that the Pope speaks 'Polish'. Once, a Pole wept, when his priest denied this.<sup>252</sup>

Wilhelm von Massow added to this point that 'many a German Protestant in the province of Posen submits to the regional use of language and explains in answer to the question of his confession: "I am of German religion". Conversely, one hears from time to time from Poles expressions such as when a judge repeatedly received the answer in his court: "I speak Catholic"'.<sup>253</sup>

Confession was commonly codified in terms of language, demonstrating further the interchangeability of confessional and national references. A reporter in the *Preussische Provinzial-Blätter* commented that in the *Marienburger Werder*, language was taken as

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<sup>251</sup> M. Bär, *Die 'Bamberger' bei Posen zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Polonisierungsbestrebungen in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1882), pp. 47-48. This author describes how since the Polish Commonwealth became dissolved, the Catholic Church had become a central bearing for Polish national consciousness, around which to form a Polish state. He adds: '[...] *Polenthum* and *Ultramontanismus* are so fully identical that in every-day language, the designations 'Polish' and 'Catholic' and 'German' and 'Protestant' are synonymous and each is used arbitrarily in the place of the other'.

<sup>252</sup> Schmitt, *Die Provinz Westpreussen*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>253</sup> W. v. Massow, *Die Polen-Not im Deutschen Osten: Studien zur Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1903), pp. 179-180.

a signifier of confessional affiliation, whereby inhabitants would designate themselves as 'Polish' if they were Catholic, whatever their descent. The same author added: 'Religion becomes a sectarian matter, and because of that compels the people to fanaticism'.<sup>254</sup> In support of this point, one author, writing in 1907 about the Protestant 'West Prussian Diaspora', described how the close association between 'Deutschtum' and 'Protestantismus' meant that 'one speaks here, down to the present day, of a German and a Polish faith'.<sup>255</sup>

A critical feature of the conflation was that it semantically incorporated German Catholics into a powerful transnational community of faith. On a subjective level, a German could be perceived as a 'Pole' because of his religious affiliation, and even see himself as Polish for this reason. The most tangible features of this in daily experience were centred on church and school. Although linguistically German, these Catholics often lived within milieus heavily marked by Polish culture. It was primarily because of the dependence of German Catholics upon Polish-language liturgy and school instruction that bilingualism was generally more prevalent among Catholics than Protestants.<sup>256</sup> In 1890, German Catholics accounted for no less than seven and sixteen

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<sup>254</sup> Heinel, 'Einige Nachrichten über das grosse Marienburger Werder, besonders in kirchlicher Hinsicht', *Preussische Provinzial-Blätter*, 8 (1832), 209-229, 317-330 (p. 327). Further corroboration of the conflation of confession and nationality is found in: Bergmann, *Zur Geschichte*, p. 28; L. Wegener, 'Die Nationalitäten in der Provinz Posen von 1871 bis 1895', *Die Ostmark*, 6 (1901), 47-48; C. Meyer, 'Die deutsche katholische Gemeinde in Posen', *Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Landeskunde der Provinz Posen*, 3 (1884), 164-179 (p. 177); Alldeutscher Verband, *Die deutsche Ostmark: Aktenstücke und Beiträge zur Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1894), p. 102; C. Fink, *Der Kampf um die Ostmark. Ein Beitrag zur Beurteilung der Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1897), p. 252; 'Die Germanisirungspolitik der Hohenzollern', *Im Neuen Reich*, 2 (1881), 385-401 (p.394); F. Schmitt, *Der Kreis Flatow in seinen gesammten Beziehungen* (Thorn, 1867), pp. 157-158; W. Reinhard, *Die Mischehengefahr und ihre Bekämpfung* (Danzig, 1900), (foreword); O. Hermens, *Die gemeinsame Gefahr der evangelischen Kirche und der deutschen Nationalität in der Diaspora der deutschen Grenzmarken* (Leipzig, 1895), pp. 27, 47, 50; L. Wegener, *Der Wirtschaftliche Kampf der Deutschen mit den Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1903), p. 27; H. Delbrück, *Die Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 36-37; J. Altkemper, *Deutschtum und Polentum in politisch-konfessioneller Bedeutung* (Leipzig, 1910), pp. 115, 166; H. Oelrichs, *Statistische Mittheilungen über den Regency Danzig* (Danzig, 1863), pp. 50-51. The Progressive deputy Rudolf Virchow also affirmed the existence of the conflation in parliament thus: 'Whoever has engaged himself for fifty years with the matter of Germanization and Polonization in those lands, knows that Protestant-German and Catholic-Polish are opposites which have stood against each other.' Speech of 7 April 1886, Landtag, HdA.

<sup>255</sup> F. Jacobi, *Die Westpreussische Diaspora, einst und jetzt* (Leipzig, 1907), p. 13.

<sup>256</sup> This is evidenced by the results of the population count for the regency of Danzig on 1 December 1910. In this regency, 4.6 percent of all bilinguals were Protestant, 95 percent Catholic, 0.2 percent Jewish and 0.2 percent belonged to other religions. GStA PK, XIV. HA Westpreussen, Rep. 180, I, No. 13919.

percent of the populations of Posen and West Prussia respectively or eleven percent of the populations of both provinces combined.<sup>257</sup>

These figures, however, hide the wide variation between individual districts. The Poznanian districts with the most substantial populations of German Catholics included Schwerin (49% in 1890), Fraustadt (34%), Meseritz (27.6%), Lissa (25%), Schmiegel (6%), Rawitsch (8%), Kolmar (21%), Czarnikau (17%), Bomst (14.5%), Bromberg-city and land (9%), Posen city (7.5%), Birnbaum (7.7%), Wirsitz (6.6%) und Filehne (6.7%). In West Prussia, they were represented most strongly in the districts of Marienburg (33%), Neustadt (19%), Putzig (11%), Marienwerder (10%), Dirschau (25%), Konitz (26%), Tuchel (14%), Berent (5.7%), Carthaus (7%), Stuhm (25%), Flatow (14%), Thorn (8%), Culm (5%), Graudenz (11%), Schwetz (5%), and Schlochau (30%). In other districts there were either relatively few Catholic Germans or significant German Catholic populations but few Poles. The proportion of German Catholics tended to be higher in the large towns.<sup>258</sup>

Included among the German Catholics were the 'Koschnewier' who lived in the so-called *Koschneiderei* region in West Prussia, inhabited by German Catholics since the fourteenth century. The 'Koschnewier' inhabited the region between the towns of Tuchel and Konitz, south-west of the river Brahe. According to F.W.F Schmitt this group differed little from their Protestant neighbours; and from the Polish Catholics, they distinguished themselves with sombre-coloured costumes, such as dark coloured stockings worn by the women. But during the 1870s the women had begun to adopt bright-coloured cloaks in the Polish style. Schmitt added 'recently an approximation to the Polish nationality has again taken place, which comes to expression in mixed-marriages with Poles and in coalitions with the national-Polish party at elections'. Such bonds were galvanised by the common experience of oppression brought by the *Kulturkampf*. The Koschnewier lived within the diocese of Culm, the bishop of which, Jan Nepomucen Marwitz (1857-1886), first gave his backing to the Polish national

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<sup>257</sup> See table II.

<sup>258</sup> L. Bezyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten im preussischen Staat 1815-1914: die preussische Sprachenstatistik in Bearbeitung und Kommentar* (Marburg, 1998); L. Wegener, 'Die Nationalitäten in der Provinz Posen von 1871 bis 1895', *Die Ostmark*, 6 (1901), 47-48.

movement at the time of the *Kulturkampf*, encouraging the participation of priests within it.<sup>259</sup>

Another notable group of German Catholics were the so-called 'Bamberger' who lived in the wool-combing villages in the vicinity of the city of Posen.<sup>260</sup> The Bamberger had been invited to leave Bavaria and settle around Posen by the Magistrat of Posen after the Nordic War between Sweden, Russia and Saxony (1700-1721) and plague had depopulated Posen. The Bamberger were devout and visited church diligently; sometimes this was the succursal, the *Franziskanerkirche*, which held German services, but more often the local parish church with Polish services. According to their foremost historian Max Bär, intermarriage with Poles had soon ensued once they had settled, and they had adopted the costume of the local Polish population and vice-versa.<sup>261</sup>

For most of their history the Bamberger maintained a hybridic identity, and their gradual Polonization during the course of the nineteenth century produced a distinctly transnational culture. The socialization of the Bamberger among the Polish population was mediated particularly by the church and schools. One school inspector explained that the 'Polonization' of the Bamberger occurred mainly as the result of the school system in their villages. For instance, in 1851 a provost named Kaminski instructed the school teacher in Wilda to teach religion in Polish even though all the children were German. But this was not against the wishes of the parents. Better instruction in Polish language had in fact been constantly requested by parents, even though Polish was not

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<sup>259</sup> Schmitt added that in the other, mainly Protestant Germans living in south-Pomerania and the Netze district 'an adoption of Polish costume and manners has never occurred. The more numerous features of Polish influence are apparent in language'. He went on to describe in detail how educated German often bore a Polish accent and intonation but had tended not to appropriate Polish root-words. Conversely, with the common man, German accent was combined with numerous instances of Polish vocabulary. (e.g. Katsch=Ente, Schmand=Sahne, Wunzen=Schurrbart). Schmitt, *Die Provinz Westpreussen*, pp. 67-69; K. Wajda, 'The Poles and the Germans in West Prussia Province in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century', in Sziling and Wojciechowski (eds.), *Neighborhood Dilemmas; the Poles, the Germans and the Jews in Pomerania along the Vistula River in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Torun, 2002), pp. 9-19 (pp. 12-13). For a further discussion of the Slavic influence on the German dialect of West Prussia, see E. Förstemann, 'Slavische Elemente in deutschen, namentlich west-preussischen Volksmundarten', *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete des Deutschen, Griechischen und Lateinischen*, 1 (1852), 412-429. The most comprehensive history of the Koschneiderei region is Joseph Rink's *Die Geschichte der Koschneiderei* (Danzig, 1932). For a study of the Koschnewier dialect, see M. Semrau, *Die Mundart der Koschneiderei* (Halle, 1915).

<sup>260</sup> These included Rataj, Dembsen, Luban, Wilda, Jersitz, Gurtschin, Winiary, Czapury, and Wiorek.

<sup>261</sup> Bär, *Die 'Bamberger'*, pp. 33-53; Rassmann, *Die Schule*, p. 8.

the principal language of instruction. The Bamberger of Wilda sent the following request to Kaminski on 15 June 1858:

For six years we have submitted complaints to Your Honour against our teacher, that he provides too little Polish instruction in both the upper and lower classes. We wish that our children receive a solid education in Polish language and that in the lower class Polish receives as much attention as German.<sup>262</sup>

Not only did the Bamberger want their children to be able to understand the liturgy, but social relations with Polish neighbours, as well as effective dealings with local Polish institutions, required knowledge of Polish. The teaching of Polish was therefore supported by the Bamberger. The hybridic subjectivity of the Bamberger was evident also in village of Rataj. On the order of the school inspector Pluszczewski, children were banned from speaking to each other in German. Eventually all teaching was carried out in Polish. Consequently, the children's fathers lodged a complaint with the government in Posen on 18 August 1856, which reveals something of their ambivalent attitude towards the question of nationality:

We are well disposed to our children being taught in the Polish language, but we cannot allow that our teacher, who himself does not speak the best German, Polonizes our children out of a vested interest. We request that your highness will appoint a teacher who will strictly teach our children all lessons only in our mother-tongue.<sup>263</sup>

Similar evidence of the liminality of German Catholic identity at around this time had come to expression in an appeal made to the government by a parish of German Catholics in the district of Kosten, opposing plans made during the 1848 Revolution to partition the Archbishopric of Posen-Gnesen. Here, the German Catholics paradoxically affirm their nationality as being Polish:

We are German by tongue, but our customs, traditions and manners in which we have been born and educated are of Polish character, and we would stand out from other Germans in Germany very much...in respect to the Catholic religion we have not the best impression of Germany. We request

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<sup>262</sup> Quoted in M. Paradowska, *Die Bamberger im Posener Land* (Bamberg, 1994), p. 127. At this date the majority of children at the school in Wilda were German. The protocol of an inspection stated the following: 'The children are, with the exception of approximately ten, all German and for this reason the school is a German one. The teacher begins German reading, although almost all children are German, first in the upper class and ensures that he brings the children most easily to the right standard in German and Polish reading; in the lower and middle sets he teaches only Polish, and in the upper set Polish and German. The children read Polish better than German'. (pp. 128-9).

<sup>263</sup> Rassmann, *Die Schule*, pp. 8-10.

therefore that the reorganization is carried out such that our Polish nationality is secured and maintained...<sup>264</sup>

The affiliation of the Bamberger with the Polish milieu was strengthened by the impact of the *Kulturkampf* and Germanization policies. During the 1870s, a petition had been sent by the Bamberger of Wilda to the authorities complaining that their children were not receiving religious instruction in Polish. They protested that

If the holy doctrine is given to these children in an incomprehensible language, it remains without effect and meaning. These children will become adults who are aloof to the fear of God and all laws, be they of God or Man. We therefore request that all children of Polish tongue, according to the presidential decree of 27 October 1873, receive religious instruction in Polish, that they learn church hymns in the same language, and are not excluded from teaching in Polish.<sup>265</sup>

The Bamberger, as with German Catholics living in Posen itself, were according to church degree obliged to attend parish churches in which the liturgy was only practised in Polish. In the province of Posen there was only one independent German Catholic church in existence in 1900, the *Franziskanerkirche*. Services and confessionals were administered here in German, but not baptisms or marriages except by special permission and extra fees. As a result of the limited church provision for German Catholics, many came to view German liturgy as unnecessary, since they were able to follow services in Polish.<sup>266</sup>

It had frequently been alleged by German nationalists that processes of denationalisation such as this were deliberately promoted by the Catholic clergy so as to integrate German Catholics into the enemy camp. A Protestant pastor named Josef Rosenberg, who had made a study of national conditions in the East, asserted that 'the denationalization of German Catholics, indeed of the Germans altogether, remains the ultima ratio of Rome'.<sup>267</sup> The historian of the Bamberger, Max Bär supported this view, describing how 'the old, long-standing synonyms in Poland of "German" and "Protestant" and "Polish" and "Catholic" were brought to bear as a tool for the confusion of the uneducated. Among the common people the foolish belief was spread

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<sup>264</sup> The granting of self-administration for Poles had been considered by the Frankfurt National Assembly. The petition came from the village of Radomitz in district of Kosten. W. Kohte, *Deutsche Bewegung und preussische Politik im Posener Lande 1848-49* (Posen, 1931), p. 80.

<sup>265</sup> Paradowska, *Die Bamberger*, pp. 131-134.

<sup>266</sup> 'Deutscher Religionsunterricht in Posen', *Die Ostmark*, 9 (1900), 84-85.

<sup>267</sup> J. Rosenberg, *Endlich gelöst!: Die Ostmarkenfrage, die Landarbeiterfrage* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 3.

[by the Catholic clergy] that the Pope was a Pole, the Virgin Mary was a Pole, and that the Catholic religion was especially Polish.' Moreover, German Catholic children were obliged to learn Polish prayers in school. The Catholic clergy had traditionally wielded great influence over elementary education with school inspectors usually having been priests.<sup>268</sup> For Bär this was all part of a plot to Polonize German Catholics. The fusion of Polish nationalism with Ultramontanism was at heart of the problem. Ever since the Polish republic had ceased to exist, the Catholic Church remained the only certain reference point around which Poles could work for their national future.<sup>269</sup> A statistical survey of Kreis Berent in West Prussia reported that 'because the Catholic, if he was not a Pole, has to appropriate the Polish language, one does not separate the concepts of nationality and church, but accepted Catholic and Polish as synonymous.'<sup>270</sup>

Wilhelm von Massow had argued that this conflation between religion and nationality was exploited by the Poles for their own national ends:

That the Poles have a vested interest in maintaining this conceptual confusion through which the German Catholics in the Eastern Marches simply become considered as non-existent is well recognised. They can only win if the opposition between the nationalities is played out on the high risk ground of religious difference and the struggle of their nationality becomes represented as a threat to religious interests. For the German Catholics this confusion could not be more harmful. For the reproach is made to them that, despite their true loyalty to the church, they are not real Catholics...It is no wonder that uneducated, limited, anxious people among the German Catholics in the East finally come to believe that they are to do the right thing by giving up their mother-tongue and consider themselves as Polish.<sup>271</sup>

The circumstances of German Catholics were a particular concern of the German nationalist movement in the Prussian East. It was asserted in *Die Ostmark*, the organ of the Eastern Marches Association, that 'the Catholic Germans have played the role of a scullion, because the Polish clergy, through the equation of the terms "Polish" and "Catholic" and by promoting the belief that the German prayer is a sin and that only a Pole is a true Catholic, denigrate the Catholic Germans as being inferior members of the Church and treat them accordingly'.<sup>272</sup> The lack of adequate church provision for

<sup>268</sup> Most Catholic priests were Polish, although in West Prussia an important minority were German. For instance in the Culm diocese 60 percent of the priests were Polish in 1888 and 67 percent in 1914 (there were 560 priests in this year). Wajda, 'The Poles and the Germans', p. 17.

<sup>269</sup> R. Böckh, 'Die Verschiebung der Sprachverhältnisse in Posen und Westpreussen', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 77 (1894), 424-436 (p. 429); Bär, *Die 'Bamberger'*, pp. 35, 47-50.

<sup>270</sup> *Statistische Darstellung des Berenter Kreis im Regency Danzig* (Berent, 1863), pp. 30-31.

<sup>271</sup> v. Massow, *Die Polen-Not*, p. 180.

<sup>272</sup> 'Deutscher Religionsunterricht in Posen', *Die Ostmark*, 9 (1900), 84-85.



the German nationality provoked widespread criticism in the German press.<sup>273</sup> The *Posener Tageblatt* reported in July 1909 how in Kolmar, 'an almost completely German town', Catholic German children were being forced to participate in communion held in Polish.<sup>274</sup> The paper had also reported that in the town of Betsche 'every second Sunday Polish is preached, while the hymn is always Polish. The May reverences and the rosary prayers in October occur without exception in the Polish language. And yet in Betsche the number of German Catholics is much greater than Polish speakers. In the town, so observes the visitor...one hears not a single Polish word except in the priest's and the organist's residences.'<sup>275</sup>

Similarly, the *Berliner Tägliche Rundschau* published a 'letter from West Prussia' in which it was reported:

One of the most wicked, if not the most wicked, forms of harm to the Eastern Marches is the denationalisation of the German Catholics by the Polish clergy. Just as much as it is unnoticed, is it also true that inside the borders of the German Empire the German Catholic has no legally secured right on German confessionals and official acts in German on the part of his priests...Germans often do not receive a eulogy in German at the burials of their loved ones, nor the Lord's prayer in German, but must instead submit to a torrent of Polish words. "Be off with you, first learn Polish and then come again to the confessional" a West Prussian priest called not so long ago to German women who knelt at the confessional.<sup>276</sup>

The Pan-German League, which had been founded in 1891 by Alfred Hugenberg, attacked the Prussian state for not taking adequate steps to ensure that German Catholics in the Eastern Marches were provided with priests who were German-speaking and loyal to the German nation. It was contended that the Archbishop of Posen-Gnesen trained priests in his institutions to be hostile to the German nation. As part of this accusation it was claimed that 'the German son of a townsman or farmer, who receives his education here, returns to his community as a fanatic of "Polonismus".' It was also claimed that the Archbishop refused to provide Catholics

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<sup>273</sup> Reports of *Landräte* show that German Catholics were frequently deprived of German liturgy in local communities; sometimes these were received fewer than half-a-dozen times a year. Provision was highly variable between districts. GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, II, No. 2303.

<sup>274</sup> *Posener Tageblatt*, 6 July 1909, in APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, p. 596.

<sup>275</sup> *Posener Tageblatt*, 4 May 1905, in GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, II, No. 2306.

<sup>276</sup> *Berliner Tägliche Rundschau*, 5 May 1905. GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, II, No. 2306.

from Westphalia, who had been resettled by the Colonization Commission, with reliable German priests.<sup>277</sup>

Whether the attempted Polonization of the German Catholics corresponded to a real numerical decrease of their communities is less clear. The calculations of Richard Böckh suggested that between 1861 and 1890, the German Catholic populations of the Danzig and Marienwerder regencies increased as a percentage of the population as a whole, from 17.8 to 19.8 percent and 11.1 to 13.5 percent respectively. But in the more strongly Polish province of Posen, the opposite was true; here, the German Catholic populations in the regencies of Bromberg and Posen had decreased from 7.8 to 6.5 percent and 9.2 to 7.5 percent respectively.<sup>278</sup>

### (iii) Conclusion

Language not only structured the interface between German and Polish nationalisms; it also subverted it. This occurred in two ways: through the existence of a semantic conflation and, secondly, through bilingualism. The semantic conflation of religion and nationality grounded a transgressive axis for individual and collective identity predicated upon Catholicism. German Catholics not only existed materially in a transnational milieu strongly coloured by Polish culture and nationalism; their transnationalism also existed 'subjectively', as the perception of a Catholic identity which transcended the national divide. The culture of the German Catholics was strongly coloured by Polish influences which came principally through the schools and church. The majority of bilinguals were Catholic, particularly German Catholics who had appropriated the Polish language through their exposure to Polish liturgy and school tuition.

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<sup>277</sup> Alldeutscher Verband, *Die deutsche Ostmark*, p. 103. A detailed account of the relationship between German and Polish Catholics from the perspective of German nationalism is given in: V. Schoultz (ed.), *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Ostmarkenvereins* (Berlin, 1908), pp. 122-130. Here, it is alleged that the German Catholics most vulnerable to Polonization were in the districts of Tuchel and Konitz in West Prussia, and Pleschen, Jarotschin and Wreschen in Posen.

<sup>278</sup> See tables I and II. Between the censuses of 1861 and 1890, the Protestant German populations of all four regencies decreased, rendering the German Catholic populations of Danzig and Marienwerder anomalous overall.

Bilingualism, in school or among the population at large, represented a clear transgression of the national divide. The social contact between the nationalities continually produced degrees of bilingualism. As a national conflict developed within the provinces of Posen and West Prussia, nationalists on both sides sought to homogenise their respective communities so as to gain political advantage. Nevertheless, bilingualism remained a distinct feature of the region. This is particularly shown by the prevalence of bilingualism among school children up to 1911. Indeed, the elementary schools were central in the promotion of bilingualism, the principle of bilingual education having been employed variously in the Prussian school system since 1871.

In their transgression of the German-Polish interface, bilingualism and the semantic conflation provided the critical foundations for further transnational political and social forms to be examined in the following chapters. Each subverted the integrities of the German and Polish nationalities, and diminished the state's ability to control the national relationship in the East.

## Chapter 4

### Marriage and Sex across the National Divide

In every marriage or sexual encounter between German and Pole the paradigm of synthesis found its profoundest expression. These events brought not only changes of consciousness and behaviour. Sex between the nationalities was, moreover, perceived by contemporaries as producing cases of 'racial' hybridity. According to such reasoning, marriage represented the most extreme form of social interaction between the nationalities in the Prussian East.

The formation of sexual bonds between the nationalities represented a mutual contravention of the demarcation between them, and in marriage, the formation of a specifically *transnational* institution. Within the politicised context of a national conflict, this institution was a further source of national instability, rendering the national relationship harder to control. It was the transformative potential of sex and marriage which put them at the heart of the national question in the Prussian East. For the German side this problem was compounded by the fact that the mutational processes mediated by mixed marriage occurred within the private domain of the family, largely beyond the reach of the government's *Polenpolitik*. Each occurrence brought the critical question of the new family unit's national identity and allegiance. Given the foundational social role of the family unit in imperial society, and the actual frequency of mixed marriages occurring in the Eastern Marches, the institution's significance to the national question was considerable.

The national significance of mixed marriage did not go unnoticed by leading commentators of the period, invariably those from the right wing of the political spectrum with a particular interest in the Eastern Marches. For instance, the influential German publicist, Hans Delbrück, identified mixed marriage as one of the principal causes for the 'advance of *Polenthum*' and the 'decline of *Deutschtum*' in the Prussian East.<sup>279</sup> The prominent Hakatist, Leo Wegener, also noted in his economic study of

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<sup>279</sup> H. Delbrück, *Die Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1894), p. 23. The other three causes identified were: the faster natural population growth of the Poles; relatively greater westward migration of Germans, and the immigration of replacement Polish workers from Russia; and the stronger 'national feeling' of the Poles.

Posen that 'marriages between German and Polish Catholics occur frequently' and added that 'the children from these marriages go without exception to *Slaventum* and form always the most competent representatives of the Poles'.<sup>280</sup> Nor did the consequence of mixed marriage escape the sights of one of Wilhelmine nationalism's foremost theorists, Heinrich von Treitschke, for whom it was a 'peculiar phenomenon' that 'two nations who mutually detest each other are yet found intermarrying'.<sup>281</sup>

Before the 1890s, however, mixed marriage was most contentious in its religious implications, particularly during the *Kulturkampf*. Indeed, the German concept of *Mischehe* equally denoted intermarriage between religions. In Prussia, this type of marriage occurred most commonly between Catholics and Protestants. At stake in this case was a struggle of material and spiritual dimensions for the sustenance of each church. It was in the Wilhelmine period that *Mischehe* increasingly took on connotations of national and racial mixing. The heightened construal of mixed marriage in national terms during this period was largely an effect of the national conflict in the East, while its 'racialization' was a consequence of the widening influence of Social Darwinism and theories of racial hygiene. There were therefore two main narratives: one national and one religious. As it will be shown, despite shifts in prominence, these narratives remained inextricably linked, even sometimes conflated, throughout the period.

#### (i) Quantification and Methodology

Despite the political and national significance of mixed-nationality marriage, its quantification is problematic. There are two main categories of source material: church records and statistical data collected by the state. With respect to the first of these sources, Christian marriages were entered in parish registers, but these only recorded the confessional status of bride and groom and not their nationalities. Quantification of mixed-nationality marriage based upon this source would depend upon the assessment

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<sup>280</sup> L. Wegener, *Der wirtschaftliche Kampf der Deutschen mit den Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1903), pp. 23-24.

<sup>281</sup> H. v. Treitschke, *Politics*, ed. by Hans Kohn (New York, 1963), p. 131.

of personal names to determine nationality. Such a procedure, however, is inadmissible on the grounds that neither forenames nor family names are reliably indicative of nationality per se, and so would produce arbitrary and ultimately misleading results.

This methodological premise is supported by the testimony of Leo Wegener. On a tour through the province of Posen in autumn 1899, Wegener researched the frequency of Poles possessing purely German names, and his research, based upon personal contact, the testimony of others, and the names of influential members of Polish associations listed in newspapers, uncovered numerous cases which he later published. It was also the case that in the elementary schools of the city of Posen in 1884, there were 759 children with German names who received religious instruction in Polish because in their families Polish was spoken. Given that there were 6,305 children in attendance at public elementary schools in the city in 1886, this figure (representing more than ten percent of all children) was significant.<sup>282</sup>

There are also further problems involved in attempting to use parish records. Many parish records in the eastern provinces were either partially or entirely destroyed during the Second World War. This fact prevents pan-provincial analysis based upon this source alone, and sometimes even for individual parishes. A possible alternative would be a comparative methodology based upon sampling a number of particular locations. The problem with this approach is that it could never produce results which could be considered representative of the region as a whole, owing to the great demographic variance between parishes and districts. Nevertheless, this methodology, involving the use of parish registers, has been employed hitherto on a micro-level. Krzysztof Makowski, in his research of marriage in the city of Posen in the first half of the nineteenth century, has presented the following statistics.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Wegener, *Der wirtschaftliche Kampf*, pp. 24-25; 'Das gesammte Volksschulwesen im Preussischen Staate im Jahre 1886', *Preussische Statistik*, 101 (1889), p. 208.

<sup>283</sup> Makowski describes his methodology as follows: 'The basis for my quantification is the character of surnames. I am conscious, however, that in the case of the annexed Prussian territories, extreme caution is required if this is to be made the criterion. For this reason, I have employed other criteria. In this respect, useful information is provided by forenames, places of birth, and to a lesser degree, confessional status.'

K. Makowski, 'Die Polnisch-Deutschen und Katholisch-Evangelischen Mischehen in Posen in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts', *Studia Historica Slavo-Germanica*, XVIII (1994), 51-62 (p. 52). See also the relevant sections in Makowski's monograph on family life in Posen: K. Makowski, *Die Posener Familie 1815-1848* (Lüneburg, 1996).

*Table VIII: Polish-German Marriage in the City of Posen, 1815-1848*

Year	Total Marriages	Mixed Marriages	Mixed Marriages (%)
1815-1820	1035	210	20.3
1829-1834	1533	380	24.8
1843-1848	1942	452	23.3

*Table IX: Catholic-Protestant Marriage in the City of Posen, 1815-1848*

Year	Total Marriages	Mixed Marriages	Mixed Marriages (%)
1815-1820	1081	96	8.8
1829-1834	1614	302	18.7
1843-1848	1974	250	12.7

*Source:* Krzysztof Makowski, 'Die Polnisch-Deutschen und Katholisch-Evangelischen Mischehen in Posen in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts', *Studia Historica Slavo-Germanica*, 18 (1994), 51-62 (pp. 53, 58).

According to Makowski's figures, mixed-nationality marriages in the city of Posen in the three sample periods consistently exceeded 20 percent of all marriages, and it is clear that mixed-confession marriages, although common, were consistently less common than mixed-nationality marriages.<sup>284</sup>

The alternative to the use of church registers is to use secular data sources. The most important of these were published by the Royal Prussian Statistical Bureau, which systematically collected data on marriage. As with church registers, the statistics of mixed marriage published in the Bureau's periodicals normally indicated mixed-confession marriages. In other words, these sources indicated the denomination of bride and groom but not nationality. The consistency of this source allows for a full and consistent regional analysis, allowing as well as a comparison between regencies, also one between urban and rural communities. From these statistics of inter-denominational

<sup>284</sup> Krzysztof Makowski's research into mixed-nationality marriage in the city of Posen in these three periods has suggested that in each period the majority of mixed marriages involved persons of the same confession (67.4 percent, 61.4 percent, and 73 percent respectively). Given that there were barely any Protestant Poles in Posen, these were almost entirely between German and Polish Catholics. Makowski, *Die Posener Familie*, p. 222.

marriage, mixed-nationality marriage must be inferred according to the principle that in general 'Polish=Catholic' and 'German=Protestant'. This principle can be utilised either quantitatively or phenomenologically, in accordance with the semantic categories of the period.

With the first approach a degree of inaccuracy is inherent owing to the existence of German Catholics in some areas. According to the calculations of Richard Böckh, on 1 December 1890, 10.47 percent of Catholics in the regency of Posen were German, 11.84 percent in Bromberg, 41.70 percent in Danzig, and 26.05 percent in Marienwerder. In comparison, a statistically negligible number of Protestants were Polish: 5.37 percent of Protestants in Posen, 0.40 percent in Bromberg, 0.38 percent in Danzig, and 1.38 percent in Marienwerder.<sup>285</sup> Therefore, when viewing the statistics for mixed-confession marriage (see tables X-XII below), two important limitations should be considered. First, based upon the figures for mixed-confession marriage, the number of mixed-nationality marriages would need to be *reduced* owing to the fact that a certain proportion of those categorised as *Catholic-Protestant* marriages would have involved a Catholic German in marriage to a Protestant German. Conversely, the final tally would need to be *increased* because of the number of *Catholic-Catholic* marriages between a Catholic German and a Catholic Pole, which consequently were mixed-nationality marriages. In both cases, the national profile of a significant proportion of marriages remains 'hidden' within the statistics. Moreover, in the case of Danzig Regency the proportion of the Catholic population that was German was so high that the quantitative approach in this particular case is rendered unviable. Given the limitations of the sources available, the statistics gathered from this source must be considered, as those of other methodologies, as approximations involving a margin of error.

The second approach is to postulate that a scientific methodology to the quantification of mixed-nationality marriage obscures the true period understanding of *Mischehe*. According to the logic of the semantic conflation between religion and nationality, described in chapter three, *Mischehe* between Catholics and Protestants was

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<sup>285</sup> R. Böckh, 'Die Verschiebung der Sprachverhältnisse in Posen und Westpreussen', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 77 (1894), 424-436 (pp. 428-430).



popularly understood as synonymous with mixed marriage between Germans and Poles; there was effectively only *one* type of mixed marriage. There is some support for this perspective. The eminent statistician of the Royal Prussian Statistical Bureau, Arthur von Fircks, wrote, in reference to the region: 'The number of German-Polish mixed marriages almost coincides in those areas with the number of mixed marriages between Protestant and Catholic persons'.<sup>286</sup> This perspective was endorsed by a reviewer of Böckh's work, for whom 'the numerous mixed marriages are to be understood, since nationality in the mixed territories mostly coincides with confession, predominantly also as marriages between Germans and Poles.'<sup>287</sup> According to the logic of this interpretation, the figures for mixed-confession marriage are to be understood as practically equivalent to those for mixed-nationality marriage.

The following three tables represent total mixed-confession marriage in all four regencies of Posen and West Prussian (table X), mixed-confession marriage in the rural communities (table XI), and mixed-confession marriage in the towns (table XII). They represent the period 1870-1910 at ten-year intervals.

*Table X: Total Mixed-Confession Marriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Posen and West Prussia, 1870 -1910*<sup>288</sup>

	Total No. of Christian Marriages	No. of Mixed Marriages	Mixed Marriages as % of Total
Province of Posen			
<i>Regierungsbezirk Posen:</i>			
1870	6,785	295	4.34%
1880	7,685	362	4.71%
1890	8,154	294	3.60%
1900	9,235	335	3.62%
1910	8,761	250	2.85%

<sup>286</sup> Fircks adds that the data for mixed confession marriage is provided quarterly by the Royal Statistical Bureau. This data was 'complete, as marriages can only be validated before a registrar of births, marriages, and death, and reliable, because the indications of religious denomination are based upon official entries in the civil register.' A. v. Fircks, 'Die preussische Bevölkerung nach ihrer Muttersprache und Abstammung', *Zeitschrift des Königlich-Preussischen Statistischen Bureaus*, 3 (1893), 189-296 (p. 247).

<sup>287</sup> *Zeitschrift der Historischen Gesellschaft für die Provinz Posen*, 3/4 (1895), 343.

<sup>288</sup> The statistics given in this table exclude the relatively few marriages involving Jews or members of other Christian denominations.

*Regierungsbezirk Bromberg:*

1870	4,044	144	3.56%
1880	4,500	219	4.86%
1890	4,699	227	4.86%
1900	5,411	200	3.69%
1910	5,198	153	2.94%

## Province of West Prussia

*Regierungsbezirk Danzig:*

1870	3,383	328	9.69%
1880	4,299	564	13.11%
1890	4,579	580	12.66%
1900	5,381	650	12.07%
1910	5,083	535	10.52%

*Regierungsbezirk Marienwerder:*

1870	5,513	218	3.95%
1880	6,395	333	5.20%
1890	6,380	356	5.57%
1900	6,808	275	4.03%
1910	6,511	225	3.45%

Sources: *Preussische Statistik* 29 (1874); 61 (1882); 117 (1892); 169 (1902); 229 (1911).

Table XI: *Mixed-Confession Marriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Rural Communities, 1870-1910*<sup>289</sup>

	Total No. of Christian Marriages	No. of Mixed Marriages	Mixed Marriages as % of Total
Province of Posen			
<i>All Rural Communities-Posen:</i>			
1870	5,002	79	1.57%
1880	4,041	103	2.54%
1890	3,913	65	1.66%
1900	3,967	54	1.36%
1910	3,795	55	1.44%
<i>All Rural Communities-Bromberg:</i>			
1870	3,044	75	2.46%
1880	3,100	112	2.61%
1890	3,050	85	2.78%
1900	3,367	72	2.13%
1910	3,244	55	1.69%

<sup>289</sup> The statistics given in this table exclude the relatively few marriages involving Jews or members of other Christian denominations.

Province of West Prussia

*All Rural Communities- Danzig:*

1870	2,303	130	5.64%
1880	2,885	207	7.17%
1890	2,858	198	6.92%
1900	3,144	128	4.07%
1910	3,032	153	5.04%

*All Rural Communities- Marienwerder:*

1870	3,862	106	2.74%
1880	5,174	197	3.80%
1890	4,975	205	4.12%
1900	5,291	137	2.58%
1910	4,873	115	2.35%

*Sources: Preussische Statistik 29 (1874); 61 (1882); 117 (1892); 169 (1902); 229 (1911).*

*Table XII: Mixed-Confession Marriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Towns, 1870-1910* <sup>290</sup>

	Total No. of Christian Marriages	No. of Mixed Marriages	Mixed Marriages as % of Total
Province of Posen			
<i>All Towns-Posen:</i>			
1870	1,783	216	12.11%
1880	3,644	259	7.10%
1890	4,241	229	5.39%
1900	5,268	281	5.33%
1910	4,966	195	3.92%
<i>All Towns-Bromberg:</i>			
1870	1,000	69	6.90%
1880	1,400	107	7.64%
1890	1,649	142	8.61%
1900	2,044	128	6.26%
1910	1,953	98	5.01%
Province of West Prussia			
<i>All Towns- Danzig:</i>			
1870	1,080	198	18.33%
1880	1,414	357	25.24%
1890	1,721	382	22.19%
1900	2,237	522	23.33%
1910	2,051	382	18.62%

<sup>290</sup> The statistics given in this table exclude the relatively few marriages involving Jews or members of other Christian denominations.

*All Towns- Marienwerder:*

1870	1,651	112	6.78%
1880	1,221	136	11.13%
1890	1,405	151	10.74%
1900	1,517	138	9.09%
1910	1,638	110	6.71%

*Sources: Preussische Statistik 29 (1874); 61 (1882); 117 (1892); 169 (1902); 229 (1911).*

From a comparison of the data in the three tables above, a number of salient trends are discernable over the period of four decades. The statistics in table X show that the level of mixed marriages between 1870 and 1910 in the four regencies of Posen and West Prussia ranged between 2.85 percent and 13.11 percent, depending upon year and regency. In each of the four regencies, there was a marked increase in such marriages between 1870 and 1880, but in the following three decades there was a slight decrease overall in all provinces. This general increase between 1870 and 1880 suggests that Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* and the Germanization Laws of the 1870s had not caused mixed-confession marriage to decrease, although the gradual downward trend post-1880 may be attributable to the national conflict.

Whilst rates of mixed marriage in Posen, Bromberg and Marienwerder were similar in all years, the figures for the regency of Danzig appear anomalous throughout the entire period, with 9.69 percent of marriages being mixed in 1870, rising to a peak of 13.11 percent in 1880, and then falling to 10.52 percent by 1910. It is difficult to establish for certain the reason for this discrepancy. In a period analysis of mixed marriage, one author offered the following explanation: 'Catholic mixed marriages occur proportionally most frequently in predominantly Protestant areas, because in these, the possibility for a Catholic man of finding a woman of the same confession is smaller. And the same was true of Protestant mixed marriages'.<sup>291</sup> Of the four regencies, Danzig possessed the highest proportion of Protestants, standing at just over 50 percent in 1890. In each of these instances, the extrapolation of mixed-nationality marriage, based upon statistics for mixed-confession marriage, can only yield approximations.

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<sup>291</sup> A. Braasch, *Das Conto zwischen der evangelischen und katholischen Kirche auf dem Gebiet der Mischehen in Deutschland* (Jena, 1883), p. 5.

From 1 January 1911, following ratification by the Minister of the Interior, birth, marriage, and death certificates were required to include a question of nationality (mother-tongue) in the eastern regencies of Allenstein, Danzig, Marienwerder, Posen, Bromberg and Oppeln. In effect, the nationalities of the parents of the new born, and those of the newly wed, were recorded from this date.<sup>292</sup> The data collected in this year formed the basis of a study of the German-Polish relationship in the province of Posen by the member of the *Königlich Preussischen Statistischen Landesamts*, Max Broesike. Given that Broesike's figures for German-Polish marriage are based upon the indications of mother-tongue required by law from January 1911, they should be considered the most accurate statistics of mixed-nationality marriage available up to that date. Broesike's data is shown in table XIII below.

*Table XIII: German and Polish Marriages in Posen in 1911*

	<i>Ger. M/Ger. W</i>		<i>Pol. M/Pol. W</i>		<i>Ger. M/Pol. W</i>		<i>Pol. M/Ger. W</i>		<i>Total Marriages</i>
	Total	% of all Marriages	Total	% of all Marriages	Total	% of all Marriages	Total	% of all Marriages	
Regency Posen:	2,891	31.01	6,098	65.42	185	1.98	65	0.70	9,322
Regency Bromberg:	2,826	50.85	2,525	45.43	97	1.74	36	0.65	5,558
Province Posen:	5,717	38.42	8,623	57.95	282	1.89	101	0.68	14,800

*Source:* Max Broesike, *Deutsche und Polen der Provinz Posen im Lichte der Statistik* (Berlin, 1913), p. II.

The figures above show that in the province of Posen in 1911, 2.57% of marriages were mixed-nationality marriages (2.68% in Posen and 2.39% in Bromberg). In view of the figures based upon confession for the year 1910 in table X, Broesike's findings appear to support the principle of confession-based inferences. Nationality-based data is also

<sup>292</sup> GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 74.

available for the city of Posen between 1905 and 1914 (table XIV). The following two tables (XIV and XV) are based upon the statistics given in the monthly periodical *Statistische Monatsberichte der Stadt Posen*, which was published on behalf of the city council.

*Table XIV: Marriages between Germans and Poles in the City of Posen, 1905-1914*

	<i>German Woman</i>	<i>Polish Woman</i>	<i>Total Marriages</i>	<i>Total Mixed Marriages</i>
1905/6: German Man:	387	49	1056	66 (6.25%)
Polish Man:	17	603		
1906/7: German Man:	402	51	1088	68 (6.25%)
Polish Man:	17	618		
1907/8: German Man:	371	44	1057	69(6.52%)
Polish Man:	25	617		
1908/9: German Man:	362	49	990	68 (6.86%)
Polish Man:	19	560		
1909/10: German Man:	389	51	1029	59 (5.73%)
Polish Man:	8	581		
1910/11: German Man:	361	46	1037	62 (5.97%)
Polish Man:	16	614		
1911/12: German Man:	425	37	1094	48 (4.38%)
Polish Man:	11	621		
1912/13: German Man:	459	60	1176	72(6.12%)
Polish Man:	12	645		
1913/14: German Man:	417	44	1077	60 (5.57%)
Polish Man:	16	600		

*Source: Statistische Monatsberichte der Stadt Posen (Posen, Jahrgänge 1-9).*

*Table XV: Marriages between Protestants and Catholics in the City of Posen, 1905-1914*

	<i>Protest. Woman</i>	<i>Catholic Woman</i>	<i>Total Marriages</i>	<i>Total Mixed Marriages</i>
1905/6: Protestant Man:	290	37	1015	66(6.50%)
Catholic Man:	29	659		
1906/7: Protestant Man:	285	52	1037	82 (7.90%)
Catholic Man:	30	670		
1907/8: Protestant Man:	274	39	1024	76 (7.42%)
Catholic Man:	37	674		
1908/9: Protestant Man:	276	38	956	70 (7.32%)
Catholic Man:	32	610		
1909/10: Protestant Man:	302	49	982	74 (7.53%)
Catholic Man:	25	606		
1910/11: Protestant Man:	262	31	992	50 (5.04%)
Catholic Man:	19	680		
1911/12: Protestant Man:	294	50	1060	87 (8.20%)
Catholic Man:	37	679		
1912/13: Protestant Man:	310	65	1132	102 (9.01%)
Catholic Man:	37	720		
1913/14: Protestant Man:	306	40	1040	81 (7.78%)
Catholic Man:	41	653		

*Source: Statistische Monatsberichte der Stadt Posen (Posen, Jahrgänge 1-9).*

A comparison between tables XIV and XV shows that in percentage terms, mixed-confession marriage was only ever marginally more common than mixed-nationality marriage in the city of Posen. The rates of mixed-nationality marriage in this city in the years between 1905 and 1914 remained well above 5 percent except for the period 1911/12 when it fell to 4.38 percent. As the statistics show, marriage between a German man and Polish woman was consistently and significantly more common than marriage between a Polish man and a German woman. It is a striking fact that in 1908/9 almost fourteen percent of German men who married, took a Polish wife.

The final table, XVI (below), shows the relative frequency of mixed-confession marriage according to gender in all four regencies of Posen and West Prussia. As with

the city of Posen, mixed-confession marriage between a Protestant man and Catholic woman tended to be more common than its obverse, and this was true in all regencies in the years 1890, 1900, and 1910.

*Table XVI: Relative Frequency of Mixed-Confession Marriage according to Gender*

	<i>Evang.M/Evang.F</i>	<i>Cath.M/Cath.F</i>	<i>Cath.M/Evang.F</i>	<i>Evang.M/Cath.F</i>
1870				
Danzig:	1,706 (50.42%)	1,349 (39.87%)	149 (4.40%)	179 (5.29%)
Marienwerder:	2,611 (47.28%)	2,684 (48.60%)	118 (2.13%)	109 (1.97%)
Posen:	1,729 (25.48%)	4,761 (70.16%)	180 (2.65%)	115 (1.69%)
Bromberg:	1,588 (39.26%)	2,312 (57.17%)	56 (1.38%)	88 (2.17%)
1880				
Danzig:	1,856 (43.26%)	1,879(43.79%)	276 (6.43%)	288 (6.71%)
Marienwerder:	2,807 (43.89%)	3,255(50.89%)	174 (2.72%)	159 (2.48%)
Posen:	1,840 (23.94%)	5,483 (71.34%)	164 (2.13%)	198 (2.57%)
Bromberg:	1,754 (38.97%)	2,527 (56.15%)	113 (2.51%)	106 (2.35%)
1890				
Danzig:	1,949 (42.56%)	2,050 (44.76%)	241 (5.26%)	339(7.40%)
Marienwerder:	2,675 (41.92%)	3,349 (52.49%)	165 (2.58%)	191 (2.99%)
Posen:	1,836 (22.51%)	6,024 (73.87%)	139 (1.70%)	155 (1.90%)
Bromberg:	1,811 (38.54%)	2,661 (56.62%)	97 (2.06%)	130 (2.76%)
1900				
Danzig:	2,447 (45.47%)	2,284 (42.44%)	311 (5.77%)	339 (6.29%)
Marienwerder:	2,884 (42.36%)	3,649 (53.59%)	134 (1.96%)	141 (2.07%)
Posen:	1,921 (20.80%)	6,979 (75.57%)	154 (1.66%)	181 (1.95%)
Bromberg:	1,957 (36.16%)	3,254 (60.13%)	80 (1.47%)	120 (2.21%)
1910				
Danzig:	2,340 (46.03%)	2,208 (43.43%)	242 (4.76%)	293 (5.76%)
Marienwerder:	2,962 (45.49%)	3,324 (51.05%)	98 (1.50%)	127 (1.95%)
Posen:	2,090 (23.85%)	6,421 (73.29%)	105 (1.19%)	145 (1.65%)
Bromberg:	2,261 (43.49%)	2,784 (53.55%)	69 (1.32%)	84 (1.61%)

*Sources: Preussische Statistik 29 (1874); 61 (1882); 117 (1892); 169 (1902); 229 (1911).*



## (ii) The Primacy of Confession

Intermarriage between Germans and Poles had long been a normal feature of society in the Eastern Marches. Even the conservative Junker and co-founder of the Eastern Marches Association, Hermann Kennemann, acknowledged the fact, in the Landtag debates preceding the Colonisation Law of 1886, that 'the relationship between Germans and Poles was earlier entirely tolerable; it involved sociable intercourse, which in all classes led to familial ties.'<sup>293</sup> Mixed marriage between the nationalities was therefore a normal feature of society, although subject to external constraint, which Kennemann identified as religious.<sup>294</sup> In accordance with this view, it is to be argued that denominational constraint was the greatest determinant upon the frequency of mixed-nationality marriage in Posen and West Prussia. Denomination, however, was far from being the only the factor in the choice of a partner for marriage; social, economic, and political factors could also come into play.

For members of the nobility it was of greater importance to marry within the same social class than to marry a person of the same nationality, and consequently the family names listed in period registers of the nobility suggest that intermarriage between German and Polish noble families was a typical and traditional feature of marriage in this social group.<sup>295</sup> Intermarriage between the German and Polish aristocracy had occurred since the Middle Ages and had helped to forge close cultural and economic connections. The old Polish aristocracy, through the institution of marriage, had become interconnected with the aristocracies of Silesia and Pomerania. Moreover, family connections existed between Lithuania and the aristocracy of Samogitia, although the aristocracy in the province of Prussia and in Liefland was predominantly German in origin. The national diversity of the nobility in the region went further still;

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<sup>293</sup> Speech of 23 February 1886, Landtag, HdA.

<sup>294</sup> Kennemann had added that 'this peaceful cohabitation stopped when the bishops instigated the dispute over mixed marriages.' Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> E. v. Żernicki-Szeliga, *Der polnische Adel und die demselben hinzugetretenen andersländischen Adelsfamilien: General-Verzeichniss*, 2 vols (Hamburg, 1900); J. Dunin-Borkowski, *Rocznik Szlachty Polskiej* (Lwów, 1881); J. v. Krohne, *Allgemeines Teutsches Adels-Lexikon [...]* (Lübeck, 1774-76).

branches of Bohemian, Dutch, French, Italian, and English noble families had also come to settle in Poland.<sup>296</sup>

The behaviour of the nobility in the Polish territories is especially significant considering the proportion of Poles who belonged to this social group. It has been estimated that during the period of the Polish Commonwealth, between 10 and 15 percent of the population belonged to the aristocracy.<sup>297</sup> The social boundaries of the nobility were legally enforced by law in respect of marriage. According to the Prussian *Allgemeines Landrecht* (1794), noblemen were proscribed from marrying women of lower social standing. Soldiers in active military service were also forbidden to marry without the consent of the Crown. Similar permission was also required for members of the state bureaucracy, priests, and teachers. These laws were still left in force following the legal lifting of some restrictions following creation of the North German Confederation in 1868.<sup>298</sup>

Socio-economic factors were also critical within the middle and lower classes in determining the choice of partner. Heidi Rosenbaum has shown how among the rural peasantry in nineteenth-century Germany, considerations of livelihood and sustenance were the primary factors. Accordingly, class came before nationality, and prosaic calculation prevailed over sexual predilection. In farming communities social endogamy was the norm. Peasant farmers traditionally married within their own class and transgressions of the social divides were strongly sanctioned. Marriage within farming milieus was not only a personal necessity; the agrarian economy depended upon it. The farmer required a wife for the running of the home, as well as for the rearing of children who would take over the burden of work if and when he became

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<sup>296</sup> Żernicki-Szeliga, *Der polnische Adel*, p. 19; R. Breyer, *Nachbarn seit tausend Jahren: Deutsche und Polen in Bildern und Dokumenten* (Mainz, 1976), pp. 72-78. A discussion is presented here of German-Polish family relations among the nobility. Perhaps the most monumental of studies of the genealogy of the Polish gentry was Teodor Żychliński's multipart opus '*Złota księga Szlachty polskiej*' published between 1879 and 1898 in Posen.

<sup>297</sup> W. Zurek, *Vorfahren und Nachkommen der adligen deutsch-polnische Familie Werner sowie deutsche und polnische Bürger und Adelsfamilien im Lauf der Jahrhunderte* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), p. 34.

<sup>298</sup> See 'Gesetz über die Aufhebung der Polizeilichen Beschränkungen der Eheschliessung' (4 May 1868), quoted in W. Hubbard, *Familiengeschichte: Materialien zur deutschen Familie seit den Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts* (München, 1983), pp. 47-48; Makowski, *Die Posener Familie*, pp. 122-123, 131. According to Krzysztof Makowski, the *Landrecht* required that a nobleman who wished to marry a woman of the lower bourgeoisie or peasantry must obtain the dispensation of the high court (if he could show the approval of three relatives of the same name), or from the monarch (if he did not have this approval or if it was contested by relatives).

unable to work, and who would ultimately be the heirs to his enterprise. This analysis of marriage in farming families is especially pertinent to the provinces of Posen and West Prussia, given that the majority of their respective populations earned a living in connection with agriculture.<sup>299</sup>

Rosenbaum has written that 'the rustic marriage was...in the first instance a work-partnership between two adults. Its purpose was to maintain and increase the estate and to secure its further existence through the "production" of an heir. The necessities and imperatives of the family economy dominated and the individual was subordinated to this.'<sup>300</sup> The wrong decision in the choice of partner could be economically disastrous. Accordingly, essential criteria governing the choice of partner were dowry, ability to work, and health; national identity per se was extraneous to such calculations. In fact such calculations transcended national criteria. Aside from such purely economic considerations, it was also the case that marriage was the only socially approved context for a sexual life. Nevertheless, over and above questions of sexuality, marriage was an economic necessity.<sup>301</sup>

Before the 1890s, mixed-confession marriage was far more contentious, socially and politically, than mixed-nationality marriage, the former being the more politicised referent of 'Mischehe'. Nevertheless, the two types of marriage were inextricably connected. In particular, the close nexus between nationality and confession in Posen and West Prussia resulted in denomination becoming the most powerful constraint upon the occurrence of mixed-nationality marriage in all social classes. Both the Roman Catholic and Evangelical churches resisted mixed-confession marriage, consequently affecting the rate of mixed-nationality marriages, insofar as the two coincided.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Constraints upon the choice of partner were also imposed on master craftsmen by guilds. H. Rosenbaum, *Formen der Familie: Untersuchungen zum Zusammenhang von Familienverhältnissen, Sozialstruktur und sozialem Wandel in der deutschen Gesellschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 52-53, 69-77, 149.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>301</sup> Social constraints were weaker in the towns and cities. For instance, industrialisation brought workers into employment in factories where they were freed of the ties associated with the agrarian family economy, and this had the effect of liberating individuals with respect to sexual behaviour. One consequence of this was the frequency of illegitimate children in the cities and towns. Rosenbaum, *Formen der Familie*, pp. 52-53, 69-77, 426-7.

<sup>302</sup> The common Catholic-Evangelical distinction should not be allowed to mask the denominational diversity within these categories. The 'Evangelical Church' was a Protestant church, whose formation in 1817, instigated by Frederick William III of Prussia, resulted from a union of the Reformed and Lutheran

In Germany as a whole, the confessional divide was deep-rooted and some initial distinctions should be made. Commitment to the Protestant religion declined within all social classes and in all regions in the second half of the nineteenth century, whereas the level of commitment to Catholicism continued to be high. For example, in 1880, 42 percent of members of the Protestant *Landeskirche* attended communion in Old Prussia, but by 1913 this had fallen to 30 percent. Comparable data for the Catholic Church in Germany during the same period is not available, but it is known that in 1915, the number of Easter communicants as a percentage of all Catholics in Prussia, stood at 57 percent. This was significantly higher than the level of observance noted for Protestants two years earlier. The levels of participation of Catholics also showed less regional variation overall than for Protestants. This brief comparison is important in order to highlight that although levels of religiosity appear to have been on the decline overall, levels of commitment varied between religious groups. It is therefore of significance to the issue of mixed marriage that the respective social influences of the two main denominations were unequal in strength, and it will be shown that in the popular imagination it was Catholicism which was perceived as the stronger force.<sup>303</sup>

The reason for the churches' aversion to mixed marriage was simple; both feared losses in numerical strength and influence. This concern applied not only to the churches, but also to states for which mixed marriage potentially bore risks to political stability. For instance, legal restrictions had been placed in Germany upon marriage between Christians and Jews, although these were relaxed by Frederick the Great and then again in 1848. Similarly, the reason for the imposition of legal constraints upon the marriages of aristocrats had been that marriage between members of different classes theoretically risked the attenuation of the ruling class's political power. Fears of

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Churches. Frederick had wished to build a united religion for Prussia in order to strengthen his rule and the state. This union was subjugated to the government and provided a stronger front against Catholicism. Despite unification, the Lutheran and Calvinist elements within the Evangelical Church maintained their own doctrines, and because of the existence of Lutheran and Calvinist strongholds within Germany and abroad, these two churches continued to exist simultaneously with the united Evangelical Church. Sectarianism occurred prominently at various times between the Protestant Churches. For instance, 'Old Lutherans' in Silesia and the Grand Duchy of Posen were persecuted, and in 1843 a royal decree made all Lutheran worship illegal. The 'Old Lutherans' eventually formed a separate Lutheran Church in Breslau and became designated as dissenters.

<sup>303</sup> H. McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe 1848-1914* (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 172, 179-180, 203-204.

subversion had also led to prohibitions of marriages between subjects and members of states with which there were no alliance treaties.<sup>304</sup>

For maintaining the integrity of the whole, the family unit was critical for both church and state. As one priest put it in his discussion of mixed marriage:

The institution of marriage is the most important element in human life. Out of it follow the formation of the individual, the family, the state. It is the profound source of the well being of the individual, as well as the entire human family, of its existence here on earth and also in the after life... Marriage is...not a human creation; rather, it is of divine origin, and this gives it a holy character.<sup>305</sup>

This religious ideal of an immutable and homogeneous family unit was also the root, and most basic unit, of nationalism. There was a distinct similarity between the spiritual sectarianism of the churches and the sectarianism of German and Polish nationalisms; both involved ideology, and both were based upon numerically defined communities which they sought to defend. For this reason both were concerned about sexual behaviour, child-rearing, and the institution of marriage. Therefore, beyond understanding the particular causal influences between religion and mixed-nationality marriage, there is also a comparison to be made between the national and religious meanings of marriage.<sup>306</sup>

Religious identities were generally more stable and immutable than national ones, mainly for the reason that they were intrinsically less hybridisable and more directly subject to external constraint. Mixed marriage was one case in which social interaction did challenge, and sometimes brought about, changes of religious status. According to the Prussian statistician Arthur von Fircks, the faster increase of one religious confession in relation to another or to the entire population could be attributed to four causes: a stronger natural population increase (surplus of births over deaths); migration; a disproportionate number of children from mixed marriage; religious conversion. Of

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<sup>304</sup> K. Hilfe, *Civil- und Misch-Ehe. Eine Untersuchung der Fragen wegen Einführung der Civilehe und Freigabe der Mischehen zwischen Christen und Juden* (Berlin, 1869), pp. 142-147.

<sup>305</sup> J. Wick, *Die gemischte Ehe-Ein seelsorgliches Wort* (Crefeld, 1876), p. 5.

<sup>306</sup> For recent comparative studies of religious and national communities and their interrelations in nineteenth century Europe, see C. Clark and W. Kaiser (eds.), *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, 2003); W. Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: Über Religiös Begründete Gegensätze und Nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des Deutschen Nationalismus* (Mainz, 1992); O. Blaschke (ed.), *Konfessionen im Konflikt: Deutschland zwischen 1800 und 1970: ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter* (Göttingen, 2002); H. Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany 1800-1914* (Oxford, 2001).

these four factors, the final two, of children and conversion, pertained specifically to the institution of marriage. Much of the significance of mixed marriage therefore was in its role as an exceptional challenge to religious demarcations; demarcations which helped maintain national divisions.<sup>307</sup>

A second reason for resisting mixed marriage, which concerned the Catholic Church particularly, was that mixed marriage contravened church doctrine. Matrimony was one of seven sacraments in the Catholic religion; in the Evangelical tradition it was not. Consequently, the closing of a mixed-confession marriage violated the holiness of the Catholic marriage sacrament. From the Catholic perspective, it was also commonly believed that a couple needed to be spiritually compatible in marriage by holding the same religious beliefs. A mixed marriage was held to endanger the spiritual health of the couple and of their children. Such a relationship could result in marital conflict, or in one or both partners becoming less religious. As a priest from the arch diocese of Cologne put it:

What the one believes, the other denies; their diverse beliefs are set in irreconcilable opposition. Consequently, the relationship between husband and wife, as the Apostle Paul conceives of it, is totally non-existent; it lacks the essential element, namely the unity of faith.<sup>308</sup>

For all these reasons, the Catholic Church prohibited mixed marriage. However, there was a dispensation which was applicable in certain circumstances and if particular conditions were met. Its use was intended for exceptional circumstances and in cases where it would hinder greater disadvantage for the Catholic religion. The power to grant dispensation was given over to bishops by the Pope. There were four main conditions which had to be met for dispensation to be approved. First, that the Catholic partner would be able to practise their religion and there would be no chance of them renouncing their faith; secondly, that the Catholic partner would endeavour as far as possible, to convert the Protestant partner; thirdly, that all children produced by the marriage would be raised and educated in the Catholic religion; and fourthly, that there would be a Catholic wedding (in the presence of a Catholic priest and two

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<sup>307</sup> A. v. Fircks, 'Ueber die Ursachen der ungleich starken Zunahme der evangelischen und römisch-katholischen Bevölkerung im preussischen Staate', *Zeitschrift des königlich preussischen statistischen Bureaus*, 29 (1889), 129-138 (p. 129).

<sup>308</sup> Wick, *Die gemischte Ehe*, p. 9.

witnesses).<sup>309</sup> In the case that some or all of these conditions were not met, the church could impose sanctions including the refusal of the holy sacraments and the refusal of a church funeral. But despite the possibility of dispensation, all such marriages remained officially disapproved of.<sup>310</sup>

The Evangelical Church resisted mixed marriage for similar reasons to the Catholic Church, although an important difference was that the former always recognised mixed marriages as legitimate, without usually requiring special dispensation. Most Protestant churches were generally much less explicit and resolute in their teaching than the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, resulting from the perception of a Catholic onslaught over the issue of mixed marriage, and more broadly, in the context of religious competition in fin-de-siècle Germany, it was important for Protestants to take the issue seriously. One of the means employed to try to win the battle over marriage was the dissemination of pamphlets and leaflets.

In the Eastern Marches, it was the Evangelical Press Association in Silesia which was at the centre of this work. It published booklets, some in the form of short stories, which aimed to deter the reader from entering into mixed marriage by highlighting its hazards for the faith. Their programmatic and symbolic style can be viewed as precursory to works of the *Ostmarkenromane* genre of the 1890s which depicted the nationally deleterious consequences of intermarriage between Germans and Poles. Examples of the Evangelical Press Association's output included: *Die Mischehen. Eine Erzählung in Briefen* by Emil Brenning (1884) and *Hüte dich vor der Mischehe!* by Adolf Fauth (1885).<sup>311</sup> In the latter work the author tells the reader: 'We admit it openly and honestly that so many children are lost to the Catholic Church as a result of mixed marriage and it is mainly the negligible indifference and thoughtlessness of many Protestants which is to blame.'<sup>312</sup> In *Hüte dich vor der Mischehe!* the strategy was to alert the reader to the danger of mixed marriage as a route to conversion, and to the likelihood of children born being raised in the Catholic religion. The forceful measures

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-30. These stipulations were listed in a decree issued by the archbishop of Posen-Gnesen on 13 May 1868. Quoted in T. Trzciński, *Zbiór ustaw archidiecezyi gnieźnieńskiej i poznańskiej* (Poznań, 1906), pp. 130-32.

<sup>310</sup> H. Krueckemeyer, *Die Mischehe in Theorie und Praxis speziell in Preussen* (Hamm i. W., 1904), pp. 102-162; Wick, *Die gemischte Ehe*, p. 28.

<sup>311</sup> A. Block, *Roms Kampfweise auf dem Gebiete der Mischehen* (Prenzlau, 1886), p. 14.

<sup>312</sup> A. Fauth, *Hüte dich vor der Mischehe* (Breslau, 1885), pp. 5-6.

used by the Catholic Church to enforce its proscription of mixed marriage were also stressed.

The *Kulturkampf* period saw the introduction of a new piece of legislation which although not aimed directly against the interests of the Catholic Church, was nevertheless consequential for the institution of marriage and also potentially so for the confessional relationship. This was the introduction of civil marriage; in other words, the requirement for a marriage to be certified at a civil ceremony in a registry office (*Eheschliessung*), after which the couple had the option of proceeding to a church wedding ceremony (*Trauung*) if desired. Certification at a registry office was necessary for a marriage to be recognised as legally valid by the state. The bill was finally passed by the Landtag on 24 February 1874, after it had been returned with corrections from the Upper House. The act was signed by Wilhelm I on 9 March 1874. The new legislation effectively reduced the influence of both the Catholic and Evangelical Churches in individuals' private lives.<sup>313</sup>

This legislation could potentially have weakened the influence of the churches over marital affairs, namely allowing the possibility of marrying without the sanction of the church. In particular, it was feared by representatives of Catholicism that the introduction of civil marriage would lead to an increase in the rates of mixed marriage between Catholics and Protestants. The Catholic daily *Germania* reported in January 1890:

Since the year 1875, the number of mixed marriages, in relation to the total number of civil marriages, has increased constantly with little deviation; from 10.96% in 1875 to 12.58% in 1888, so that the genuine number of couples who were of different confessions were in 1888: Pomerania 2.14%, East Prussia 3.54%, Brandenburg (excluding Berlin) 5.49%, Saxony 6.05%, Posen 13.90%, Westphalia 14.21%, Berlin 15.22%, West Prussia 18.60%, Silesia 26.86%, Rhineland 27.48%. ... Mixed marriage is a cancer for Catholicism in Prussia, which slowly but constantly, spreads further. To the losses mentioned above, one must also count the losses through increasing and inherited religious indifference.<sup>314</sup>

The relative increase in mixed marriage in Germany between 1875 and 1888, suggested by *Germania*, is corroborated by the data in table X (above), where it is

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<sup>313</sup> L. Trzeciakowski, *The Kulturkampf in Prussian Poland* (New York, 1990), pp. 60-61; I. Weber-Kellermann, *Die Familie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1976), p. 37. Civil marriage was made obligatory in the whole of Germany on 1 January 1876.

<sup>314</sup> 'Zur Statistik der Mischehen', *Germania*, 8 Jan. 1890.



shown that in all four regencies of Posen and West Prussia, the percentage of mixed marriages increased between 1870 and 1880. But this increase was then followed in 1890, in all regencies, by a percentage decrease. The effects of civil marriage, as dramatically portrayed in *Germania*, appear to have been over-estimated in hindsight. Neither was the paper's alarmist tone universal. A more nonchalant attitude towards mixed marriage was found in an article in the Catholic weekly *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, shortly after the passing of the new law, which had claimed that in so far as Catholics were concerned, the number of couples who only attended the civil ceremony remained very small. But the author added: 'still it is a great misfortune, if an entire family, through renunciation of the church blessing of marriage, puts itself outside Christendom, renounces all its grace and exposes itself to the danger of an unfortunate eternity'.<sup>315</sup>

The data in tables XI and XII show that mixed marriage was consistently more common in the towns and cities than in rural communities in all four *Regierungsbezirke*. This is attributable to the prevalence of greater religiosity and social conservatism on the land than in the towns and cities. Greater religiosity in rural areas was characteristic of Germany as a whole. For instance, from the fragmentary evidence available upon which to base a rural-urban comparison, Hugh McLeod has shown that in the states and provinces of Germany in the years 1891-5, there was a strong positive correlation between the rate of participation in Protestant communion and the proportion of the population living in rural locations. There was also a positive correlation, albeit weaker, between the Protestant communion rate and the proportion of the population that was employed in agriculture. Church attendance was generally lower in towns and cities, and in those settlements which were industrialised, in relation to predominantly agricultural areas. These tendencies were found to be most pronounced in Protestant areas, although they also applied in Catholic regions, but to a lesser degree.<sup>316</sup>

<sup>315</sup> B. Rive, 'Die Civilehe', *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach* (8, 1875), 161-180 (p. 161).

<sup>316</sup> McLeod, *Secularisation*, pp. 185-186. See also H. McLeod, 'Protestantism and the working class in Imperial Germany', *European Studies Review*, 12 (1982), 323-343 (p. 325). Lucian Hölscher has also argued for an 'urban-rural gradient' of religious commitment in Imperial Germany, based upon the Evangelical communion figures for the years 1862, 1880/1, 1895, and 1913. L. Hölscher, *Weltgericht oder Revolution: protestantische und sozialistische Zukunftsvorstellungen im deutschen Kaiserreich*

The consequences of mixed marriages for the churches extended well beyond the lives of the bride and groom. According to the data in table X, 6.46 percent of all marriages in Posen and West Prussia in 1880 were mixed-confession marriages, and it may reasonably be inferred that the majority of these were also mixed-nationality marriages. With the frequency of this institution being replicated at a comparable rate year on year, it is clear that the national and confessional demarcations were intrinsically unstable on this basis alone. For this reason, the child of a mixed marriage was of particular concern to the churches and nationalists, since the particular national-confessional identity of such a child was only ever a contingency and not something that could be predetermined or easily controlled.

In practice, the institution of mixed marriage not only produced generational changes of national and confessional identity, but also liminality. This ambiguity problematized the rationalisation of nationality aimed at by Prussian statisticians. Hence, the director of the Royal Statistical Bureau, Dr Ernst Engel, wrote:

To establish the latter [nationality] of each inhabitant is utterly impossible. Who can say whether the children of a Polish father and of German mother in the formerly Polish parts of the Prussian state are of Polish or German nationality? [...] The truth of the matter is decided on the basis of the linguistic relationship. The question is posed of which language is mainly spoken in the family, so that one can be certain to establish by the answer also the nationality.<sup>317</sup>

Statistical evidence to indicate the national status adopted by the children of mixed marriage does not exist, but such indications do exist for confessional relationships. The data in table XVII (below) show the confessional statuses adopted by the children of mixed marriage between Catholics and Protestants in Prussia on 1 December 1885.

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(Stuttgart, 1989), p. 142ff. For data showing levels of urbanisation in relation to rates of communion attendance (based upon the years 1896, 1891-5, 1880-4, 1862, and 1897), see P. Pieper, *Kirchliche Statistik Deutschlands* (Freiburg, 1899), pp. 109, 232.

<sup>317</sup> E. Engel, *Die Methoden der Volkszählung, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der im preussischen Staate angewandten* (Berlin, 1861), p. 13.

*Table XVII: Confessional Status of the Children of Catholic-Protestant Marriage in Prussia on 1 December 1885\**

	Evang. Father/Cath. Mother						Cath. Father/Evang. Mother					
	Evang.		Catholic		Other		Evang.		Catholic		Other	
	B.	G.	B.	G.	B.	G.	B.	G.	B.	G.	B.	G.
E'Prussia:	1,159	929	894	1,056	-	-	2,013	2,269	1,212	969	-	-
W'Prussia:	2,859	2,341	2,941	3,409	-	-	2,799	3,348	2,966	2,504	-	4
Berlin city:	4,490	4,297	939	1,173	-	-	6,454	7,073	2,405	2,168	-	-
Brandenb'g:	2,216	2,018	733	847	2	1	4,159	4,535	1,729	1,537	5	6
Pomerania:	489	462	250	289	-	-	1,061	1,203	404	355	-	-
Posen:	2,187	1,803	1,143	1,617	-	3	2,013	2,517	1,765	1,343	-	-
Silesia:	17,193	15,894	9,787	11,902	-	5	13,280	15,395	18,319	16,783	3	6
Saxony:	2,950	2,844	1,528	1,698	-	1	4,329	4,724	2,763	2,578	-	-
Schleswig-												
Holstein:	357	353	130	152	-	-	984	1,044	424	374	-	-
Hanover:	2,252	2,042	1,686	1,763	-	-	2,710	2,857	2,871	2,734	-	2
Westphalia:	4,978	3,979	5,159	5,619	-	-	4,137	4,427	7,164	6,636	-	-
Hessen-												
Nassau:	5,998	5,720	2,685	2,890	1	3	4,354	4,535	5,178	4,886	3	7
Rhineland:	10,682	9,108	11,133	12,447	2	-	9,478	10,254	10,625	9,607	2	-
Hohenzollern:	52	49	120	129	-	-	23	36	50	74	-	-
State:	57,862	51,839	39,128	44,991	7	13	57,794	64,217	57,875	52,548	13	25

*\*Based upon children under the age of sixteen, living in the parental household. This data excludes the children of parents of other Christian denominations.*

*Source:* A. v. Fircks, 'Die konfessionellen Mischehen im preussischen Staate und das Religionsbekenntniss der diesen Ehen entstammenden Kinder', *Zeitschrift des Königlich Preussischen Statistischen Bureaus*, III/IV (1887), p. 176.

The data in table XVII show that in the Prussian state as a whole, as well as in the individual provinces of Posen, Silesia, East Prussia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, Hessen-Nassau, and the city of Berlin, the *majority* of children from mixed-confession marriages were, in the year 1885, Protestant, whereas in the remaining provinces, they were Catholic. As a percentage for the entire state, the percentage of children from mixed marriages becoming recorded as Protestant stood at 54.35 percent; the figure for children recorded as Catholic stood at 45.63 percent.

A comparison of results between individual provinces shows a picture of diversity with the numerical relationship between Catholic and Protestant offspring usually finely balanced. There is no obvious general trend in favour or against one particular religion. However, it is evident that in the cases of marriage between a *Protestant man and Catholic woman*, the majority of boys and girls in West Prussia, Westphalia, Rhineland and the province of Hohenzollern, as well as girls in East Prussia, adopted the religion of their mother, whereas in the other provinces, the majority became Protestant in these circumstances.

In the cases of a marriage between a *Catholic man and Protestant woman*, the majority of boys and girls in East Prussia, Berlin, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Posen, Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein, as well as girls in West Prussia, Hanover and Rhineland, followed their mother's religion; whereas in Silesia, Westphalia, Hessen-Nassau, and Hohenzollern, the majority of children (of both genders), and the majority of boys in West Prussia, Hanover and Rhineland, had adopted their father's Catholicism.<sup>318</sup> Given the proportion of marriages that were of mixed-confession, not only in Posen and West Prussia, but in the Prussian state as a whole, it is clear that the question of which religion the children of these marriages would be raised in, was of considerable significance for both the Catholic and Evangelical churches.

The Catholic Church expected that children from mixed marriages be baptised and educated as Catholic. It was the first duty of the parent to raise his or her children in the faith. Consequently, it was a sin if a child of a mixed marriage was raised as a Protestant, or distinctions should be made according to gender, so that, for instance, the boys would take the religion of the father and the girls that of the mother. It was also a sin to leave the religion of the children to chance. Moreover, there were risks for the church associated with the premature death of a parent and the subsequent remarriage of the surviving partner.<sup>319</sup> Catholic strictures could come into conflict with civil law. One of the most important examples was how according to a royal declaration of 21 November 1803, all children of a mixed-confession marriage had to be raised in their

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<sup>318</sup> A. v. Fircks, 'Die konfessionellen Mischehen im preussischen state und das Religionsbekenntniss der Ehen entstammenden Kinder', *Zeitschrift des Königlich Preussischen Statistischen Bureaus*, III/IV (1887), 165-188 (pp. 176-178).

<sup>319</sup> Wick, *Die gemischte Ehe*, pp. 15-19.

father's religion, and this applied up to their fourteenth year. This decree modified the existing terms of the Prussian *Allgemeines Landrecht* (1794), according to which sons were raised in the religion of their fathers and daughters in that of their mothers.<sup>320</sup> The exception existed, however, that if the parents were in agreement, they could raise their child in a religion other than the father's. In such cases, the law banned the practice of the church requiring promises or contracts from one parent to raise the child in the faith, and if these were provided voluntarily, they were not legally binding. In cases where this exemption was used, it was made conditional by government decree upon the presentation of a declaration made in advance to a Landrat, district court, or notary.<sup>321</sup>

In practice, procedures in the eastern dioceses were characteristically inconsistent, largely resulting from the existence of contradictory laws and stipulations; some priests required children to be raised in the Catholic religion, some only recommended it strongly, whilst others did neither but nevertheless openly sanctioned mixed marriages with a church wedding.<sup>322</sup> In the cases where it was insisted that a child be raised in the Catholic religion, it was normal that before a marriage could be approved, a written promise was required from the couple that any children born would be raised and educated as Catholic.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> For a detailed discussion of the terms of the declaration of 21 November 1803 and *Allgemeines Landrecht* in respect of mixed marriage, see B. Hübler, 'Die religiöse Erziehung der Kinder aus gemischten Ehen im Gebiet des Preussischen Allgemeinen Landrechts' in *Festgabe für Rudolf von Gneist zum Doctor-Jubiläum am XX. November MDCCCLXXXVIII* (Berlin, 1888), pp. 219-250.

<sup>321</sup> Krueckemeyer, *Die Mischehe*, pp. 7-45; 'Das geltende Recht in Mischehen', *Westpreussisches Volksblatt*, 12 Jan. 1904; A. Plath, *Die Not der Evangelischen in der Westpreussischen Diaspora und ihre Helfer* (Barmen, 1892), pp. 30-32; K. Bachem, *Vorgeschichte, Geschichte, und Politik der deutschen Zentrumsparthei*, 9 vols (Köln, 1927-32; repr. Aalen: Scientia-Verlag, 1967), I, pp. 174-5. Subsequent governments had promulgated that any deviation from this principle had to be approved by a *Landrat* (sub-prefect) or court. According to Karl Bachem, the law of 21 November 1803 represented a deliberate attempt by the government to use mixed-confession marriage as a means of Protestantization, particularly in respect of Protestant bureaucrats stationed in predominantly Catholic regions such as the eastern provinces and the Rhineland and Westfalen.

<sup>322</sup> 'Die gemischten Ehen in Ermland', *Pastoralblatt für die Diözese Ermland*, 8 (1875), 86-91.

<sup>323</sup> APP. Kreuzkirche Poznan, No. 69. This folio contains promises by parents, collected by their parish priest, and sent to the Kreuzkirche Pfarramt, that they would undertake to baptize and raise their children as Catholics.

### (iii) Mixed Marriage, Nationalism, and Race

During the reign of Wilhelm II the phenomenon of mixed marriage entered a distinctly new phase. The long-standing issues of confession remained, but the significance of mixed marriage as a specifically national issue increased as the national conflict in the Prussian East became more acute, and came to figure more prominently in political discourse and public consciousness. The depiction of mixed marriages between Germans and Poles became based upon typologies of race and culture; in other words, represented as transgressions of two divides: one cultural and one racial. Both typologies were of German origin and invariably premised upon assumptions of German superiority.

The principal mode for the representation of mixed marriage in this period was a literary genre known as the *Ostmarkenromane* (Eastern Marches novels). Although mixed marriage was considered from time to time in studies of the Polish question as one facet of the demographic problem, the works of literature which dealt with this issue were more consistent in their representativeness of period perceptions and attitudes. The typologies of culture and race, although conceptually distinct, became merged together in this genre. The precedent for this had been set several decades before.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, at the time when, according to George Mosse, 'racism and nationalism began to fuse', there appeared in Germany a novel which appeared to make this fusion manifest, and which, at the same time set a precedent for many of the racial and cultural stereotypes of the Poles used decades later in the *Ostmarkenromane*.<sup>324</sup> The novel was Gustav Freytag's *Soll und Haben*, first published in 1855. This was one of the best-selling German novels of all time, with more than 100,000 copies having been sold by the end of the nineteenth century. It continued to exert a wide influence after the turn of the century with the publication figure reaching 500,000 by 1925. The novel tells the story of Anton Wohlfahrt's

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<sup>324</sup> G. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution. A History of European Racism* (London, 1978), p. 34. Mosse suggests that it was only by the mid-nineteenth century that 'the ideal human stereotype was made complete' although the foundations for it had been laid much earlier, for instance, with the establishment of anthropology, phrenology, and physiognomy in the eighteenth century.

journey, both spatial and formative, to the attainment of bourgeois German identity and values. Wohlfahrt travels to Breslau where he takes an apprenticeship at a major import-export firm. He ends up as a successful businessman, engaged to his employer's sister. As Jürgen Lieskounig has put it: 'the text reflects the desires, aspirations, and hopes of the bourgeois class which was in unstoppable ascendancy around the middle of the nineteenth century, as well as its fears, projections, and stereotypes'.<sup>325</sup> These bourgeois values and ideas, represented by the person of Wohlfahrt, are defined by Freytag through their juxtaposition with three principal (inferior) 'others': Poles, Jews, and German aristocrats.<sup>326</sup>

Freytag's racialization of the Poles is exemplified in the following conversation between Wohlfahrt and his employer T.O. Schröter:

There is no race which is so lacking the means to progress and to acquire through its capital of humanity and cultivation as the Slavic. What the people there have brought together in idleness through the pressure of their brute mass, they squander in fantastic amusements. With us this occurs only with the privileged classes, and the nation can bear it if need be. With them, the privileged claim to represent the people. As if nobles and bonded farmers could form a state! These people have no more entitlement to it than the sparrows in the trees. The only regret is that we must pay for their failures with our money. 'They have no bourgeoisie', said Anton in keen agreement. 'That is to say they have no culture', added the businessman. 'It is remarkable how unable they are to produce the class which represents civilisation and progress, and which raises a crowd of scattered peasants to a state'.<sup>327</sup>

It is significant that Freytag, in his aim to portray Poland as an uncultivated and primitive territory, in need of German colonization, merged racial and cultural categories in his depiction of the Poles; the Poles are classified as constituting a 'Slavic race', whose cultural level is directly related to that particular racial identity. Through

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<sup>325</sup> J. Lieskounig, "'Branntweintrinkende Wilde'" Beyond Civilisation and Outside History: the Depiction of the Poles in Gustav Freytag's Novel "Soll und Haben", in Bullivant (ed.), *Germany and Eastern Europe: Cultural Identities and Cultural Differences* (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 133-147 (pp. 133-4). Lieskounig provides a detailed analysis of the racial depiction of the Poles in *Soll und Haben*. See also H. Kaiser, *Studien zum deutschen Roman nach 1848: Karl Gutzkow, Die Ritter vom Geiste; Gustav Freytag, Soll und Haben; Adalbert Stifter, Der Nachsommer* (Duisburg, 1977).

<sup>326</sup> The publication figure of *Soll und Haben* reached one million just prior to 1960. K. Kopp, 'Contesting Borders: German Colonial Discourse and the Polish Eastern Territories' (doctoral thesis, University of California, 2001), pp. 1-3.

<sup>327</sup> Quoted in Kopp, 'Contesting Borders', pp. 25-26. This passage was in fact used to exemplify the definition of 'Rasse' in Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*: 'mit wissenschaftlichem Klange...: rassen der menschen, der völker: es giebt keine race, welche so wenig das Zeug hat, vorwärts zu kommen...als die slavische' (vol. VIII, 1893).

the use of recurrent tropes Freytag portrayed the Poles as a discrete and visually discernible race.

The authors of the *Ostmarkenromane* genre, of whom there were more than forty, utilised many of the racial and cultural categories found in *Soll und Haben*, and in particular the subject of a sexual relationship, to thematise the problematic of German-Polish social interaction.<sup>328</sup> More than ten novels belonging to the genre deal with the subject of sexual relationships between Poles and Germans, making it one of the most characteristic subjects. The relationship was usually between a German man and Polish woman; only one novel contains a plot involving a romance between a Polish man and German woman.<sup>329</sup> The genre emerged during the early 1890s, at a time of widespread controversy over Leo von Caprivi's relatively conciliatory policies towards the Poles. The conservative backlash which ensued against Caprivi aimed for more stringent measures against Polish nationalism. This political climate no doubt inspired the authors of the *Ostmarkenromane*, often public officials who had held posts in the eastern provinces.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> M. Wojtczak, *Literatur der Ostmark: Posener Heimatliteratur (1890-1918)* (Poznań, 1998). A list of authors is provided in the appendix of this work.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid., p. 101. Works which deal with the theme of mixed marriage include: Klara Hofer, *Das Schwert im Osten* (Stuttgart & Berlin, 1915); H. v. Poncet, *Unvereinbar: Erzählung aus den deutschen Ostmarken* (Lissa, 1908); K. Viebig, *Das Schlafende Heer* (Berlin, 1904); J. Höffner, *Das Moor* (Berlin, 1916); T. Pilf, 'Rauhreif' and 'Sehend geworden', in *Geschichten aus der Ostmark* (Lissa, 1908); A. Liepe, *Die Spinne* (Berlin, 1902); C. Busse, *Deutsche und Polnische Liebe* (Stuttgart, 1903); C. Busse, *Jadwiga* (Stuttgart, 1899); A. Sieg, *Der deutsche Michel und sein Weib* (1905); E. Fliess, *Die Drei Erinnyen* (Berlin, 1896); C. Busse, *Im polnischen Wind* (Stuttgart & Berlin, 1906). It was Poncet's *Unvereinbar* which featured a relationship between a Polish female and German male.

<sup>330</sup> Maria Wojtczak has researched the backgrounds of the authors, and has found that the majority originated from teaching families, some were sons of pastors and estate owners, some sons of military doctors, actors and writers. Most were male, or women writing under male pseudonyms, and many had been born in the eastern provinces. Most worked as teachers, but others were academics, librarians, officers, priests, lawyers, journalists, doctors, and prefects. Many authors held responsible positions in Posen around 1900 and some are known to have been members of the Eastern Marches Association such as M. von Witten and Friedrich Paarmann. Of the numerous German publishers which published the Eastern Marches novels, two were particularly notable: the Oskar-Eulitz Verlag in Lissa and the Verlag Engelhorn, based in Stuttgart. The first of these also published the regional journal *Aus dem Posener Lande*. The firm's proprietor, Oskar Eulitz, was one of the most active members of the Eastern Marches Association, eventually sitting on the association's provincial committee. In 1912, Eulitz received a grant of 16,000 marks from the association's central committee to publish a major monograph on the Eastern Marches. This work entitled *Die deutsche Ostmark* appeared in 1913 and included numerous articles concerning regional history, politics and culture, including some by leading scholars such as Dietrich Schäfer and Otto Hoetzsch. From 1912, Eulitz also published the *Ostland-Jahrbuch*. Wojtczak, *Literatur*, pp. 28-29, 40-41.



In so far as it is possible to gauge, this literary genre appears to have achieved a high degree of popularity. An official survey of the most frequently loaned works from folk libraries in the province of Posen shows that of the 125 most popular authors issued from 606 library issue points (of a total of 727) in 1909/10, ten were of the *Ostmarkenromane* genre. Overall, Gustav Freytag was found to be the sixth most popular author of fiction.<sup>331</sup> Works of the *Ostmarkenromane* genre also gained official endorsement. They were recommended by the provincial mobile-library authority to the folk libraries as works for acquisition.<sup>332</sup> The genre was also patronised by the local German nationalist press. Karl Busse's tales, short stories and poems appeared frequently in the journal *Aus dem Posener Lande* and the organ of the Eastern Marches Association, *Die Ostmark*, where such literary works were regularly discussed. In 1914, the year of its twentieth anniversary, the Eastern Marches Association announced a competition for a new Eastern Marches novel. The novel was required to 'describe the difficult tasks which lay before the courageous German pioneers in the East, or which were solved through German diligence and tough German perseverance in the past.' The competition's purpose was 'to stimulate interest in this most important national question in circles which until now have shown no understanding and participation'.<sup>333</sup>

The literary construction of German-Polish difference upon cultural and racial categories was primarily a technical necessity. For the depiction of the national relationship which was at the core of the *Ostmarkenromane* genre, its authors needed to textually construct a national demarcation. But whereas for the social scientist, as has been shown, this demarcation had been based upon statistical data, for the novelist it had to be created through the use of tropes and iconography. Given the ambiguities of national identity in the Prussian East, which even statisticians struggled to rationalise, the demarcation necessarily relied upon the construction of an exaggerated dichotomy. This dichotomy depended upon the invention of a 'racial typology', which was based upon exaggerated, even fictional, physiognomic and behavioural distinctions, and secondly, upon a 'cultural typology' based upon cultural stereotypes. These stereotypes

<sup>331</sup> R. Focke, *Das staatlich organisierte Volksbibliothekswesen und die Zentralstelle für Volksunterhaltung in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1911), pp. 12-13. These rankings are based on a total of 123 fiction authors whose works were borrowed from 100 to over 1000 times.

<sup>332</sup> *Heimatliteratur der Provinz Posen. Auswahl für Volksbibliotheken* (Posen, 1911).

<sup>333</sup> *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 1 (1914), 42.

had to emphasise divergence over the reality of a largely shared heritage based upon centuries of participation in a common intellectual tradition, a shared Christian heritage, and comparable economic and political institutions. Migration and the shifting of territorial borders had also ensured the mutability of ethnic identities and relationships. Consequently, reality offered a dubious basis for the dichotomization of the German-Polish relationship.

The racial dichotomy invented by the authors of the Eastern Marches novels was essentially a chromatic one. In the majority of novels, Poles were rendered as 'non-white'. The over-determination, even falsification, of difference was required because of the Poles' true cultural and racial proximity. Kristin Kopp, in a study of German colonial discourse, has situated this practice within the broader context of German colonialism which had brought Germans into contact with indigenous peoples whose racial difference was strongly marked and so could easily be viewed as outside their own civilisation. The depiction of Poles as racially different could be used to generate a sense of 'colonial otherness'. For instance, Polish peasants were frequently depicted as having dark skin, akin to Gypsies or North American Indians. In comparison, aristocrats became portrayed as having ailing and pasty complexions as well as dark features. Physiognomic distinctions were also made in order to emphasise the racial disparity, typically with Poles depicted with high cheek bones and broad foreheads.<sup>334</sup>

Examples of these techniques are common currency in the Eastern Marches novels, including in one of the most accomplished and renowned examples of the genre, Clara Viebig's *Das schlafende Heer* (1904). This work told the story of Peter Bräuer and his Catholic family who migrated from the Rhineland to settle a parcel of land in Posen as beneficiaries of the Prussian colonization programme. Among Bräuer's children was a son, named Valentin, who fell in love and eventually married a local Polish girl called Stasia. Among the hardships experienced by the Bräuer family in the East, including the uncultivated land, harsh climate, and alienation among the indigenous population, it is this relationship which represented the greatest difficulty.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> The first German colonial administrations were established in 1884 in Cameroon, Togo, and German East Africa. Kopp, 'Contesting Borders', pp. 76-78.

<sup>335</sup> Analysis of the Eastern Marches novels reveals an archetypal narrative form. Typically, a young and naïve German male arrives in the eastern provinces from his home in the German heartlands, where he

Valentin becomes progressively and irretrievably drawn into his wife's Polish milieu; through this marriage, the spectre of Polonization was brought to bear upon the reader. The marriage gradually broke down as Valentin became subjected to the cultural degeneracy of his wife's Polish milieu, and not least the deleterious effects of her affair with her Polish lover. In truth, Stasia had deviously married her husband for nationalist purposes, and his Polonization ensued. His ultimate fate would be to meet his death, a broken man, in a bog in the vicinity of Stasia's house. Viebig's racial depiction of Stasia has a greater degree of complexity than is usual in the Eastern Marches novel: Stasia is in fact of mixed descent. Her father is really German, having changed his name from 'Frölich' to 'Freilikowski'. Her liminality is manifest in her appearance: 'Germanic' blond hair combined with the black eyes of a 'Pole'. Stasia herself was a product of Polonization through mixed marriage.<sup>336</sup>

*Das Schlafende Heer* was a bestseller in Germany and undoubtedly influential. It was, however, but one of many other works which deployed chromatic techniques to construct the national interface. The binary chromaticism so characteristic of the Eastern Marches novel is also exemplified by Johannes Höffner's novel *Das Moor*, in which a German teacher fell in love with a *Polin*:

He was affected by her beauty. The loose black hair, the black eyes, heavy and passionate, and with large gold earrings in half-moon form gave her something of Italian or gypsy style. She wore a red silk blouse with dark trim and a black skirt. ... She made a big impression on him. ... He loved her as a rose in a foreign garden.<sup>337</sup>

Traugott Pfl's novellas were also typical of this genre. In one of these, entitled *Raureif*, the theme of Polonization is treated simultaneously with that of Germanization. Pfl tells the story of a soldier named Waliczek, who, having joined the army, returned after three years to his home village where he meets his old friend,

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falls hopelessly in love with a native *Polin*. In his pursuit of the young Pole, the German loses his former rationality and sense of responsibility, and ultimately his German identity as he becomes polonised through involvement with her social milieu. In addition to the seduction of the *Polin*, the German is also exposed to the machinations of another recurrent persona, the Catholic priest. The *Polin* is depicted as steadfast in her loyalty to her religion and nationality, which she hopes to impose upon her German lover. The narrative is essentially one of progress towards doom as the German loses control over the course of events. When his downfall finally comes, it is invariably his death or financial ruin.

<sup>336</sup> C. Viebig, *Das Schlafende Heer* (Berlin, 1904); Kopp, 'Contesting Borders', pp. 41-87.

<sup>337</sup> Wojtczak, *Literatur*, pp. 86-87. Quotation from J. Höffner, 'Das Moor', in *Der Sinn des Lebens* (Berlin, 1908), pp. 30-32.

Franz Seidler. By this time, Waliczek, largely through joining the military, had become assimilated to German nationality and had turned his back on his Polish roots. Conversely, his friend Franz, or 'Franciszek' as he was now called, was a German by birth, but had entered into marriage with a Polish girl, 'the small black Bronislawa'. He had ended up earning a living as a downtrodden, poverty-stricken peasant farmer, on whose toil his wife, child and parent-in-law's livelihoods depended. He had one daughter named Pelagia, who, it was noted, miraculously had 'blue eyes' and had been baptised as a Catholic as a result of promises made to the church. Not only he, but his offspring, had passed into the Polish nationality. The despair of this existence and neglect of his wife eventually led him to hang himself from a pine tree.<sup>338</sup>

In the *Ostmarkenromane* a racial typology was built upon physiognomic and chromatic signifiers. The contemporary understanding of race, however, was complex and variable, not least in reference to nationalism and the German-Polish relationship. The eminent racial hygienist, Alfred Ploetz, had outlined the contemporary polysemy of the term as follows:

The word race is used in different ways. One speaks quite simply of the human race and means by it the totality of mankind. Moreover, one uses the word for further sub-classifications, according to which one has divided the species *homo sapiens*. One speaks, for instance, of the Caucasian and Mongol races. But one also uses the word for further divisions, such as for the Germanic and Romance peoples. And last of all, the term is applied to the racial mixtures of the present day, which now appear as unities owing to common language or political government, such as with the French and British race etc.<sup>339</sup>

Similar definitions of 'race' rarely appeared in period discourse pertaining to questions of nationalism and the German-Polish relationship. Those which were given came predominantly from right-wing commentators. According to the Pan-German theorist, Ernst Hasse, 'the concept of race classifies men merely according to their descent without consideration of their place of residence and state membership or religious denomination', and he identified the Jews as a prime example. In comparison, a 'nation' was 'a collective of men of common descent which speak one and the same language, have undergone a common political and cultural development and possess a

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<sup>338</sup> T. Pilf, 'Raureif', in *Geschichten aus der Ostmark* (Lissa, 1908).

<sup>339</sup> A. Ploetz, *Grundlinien einer Rassen-Hygiene* (Berlin, 1895), pp. 1-2.

consciousness of common identity'. For Hasse, the meanings of 'race' and 'nation' overlapped, although were not synonymous.<sup>340</sup>

A similar perspective was held by the racial theorist, Friedrich Gernandt, writing in the *Politisch-anthropologische Revue*. He characterised race as 'the common blood descent' distinct from a 'Volk' which was a 'cultural concept that denotes the political-historical development of a race or of a number of combined races'. Consequently, the 'German Volk' was not identical to the 'German race'. While a 'Volk' was a specifically cultural entity, a nation was distinguished as being a political community, 'an independent politically organised cultural community'. Gernandt therefore offered a tripartite model involving three stages of development. Gernandt's conception of race, like Hasse's, was essentially one of 'biological descent'.<sup>341</sup>

The more moderate conservative, Dietrich Schäfer, came to a more sceptical judgement in his consideration of the degree to which nationality was based upon race as a community of descent. According to Schäfer: 'There are no racially pure cultural nations [Kulturvölker]...the present-day nationalities are based upon spiritual [geistig] characteristics which find their expression above all in language and the culture this produces. The transition out of primordial sharp divisions has occurred not only through the course of centuries, but millennia.'<sup>342</sup> This recognition of the heterogeneity of German and Polish stock was also made by the economist of the Eastern Marches, Wilhelm Wendorff, for whom the Germans were 'a Volk which has come into existence from the mixing of German and Slavic blood in the Mark, Pomerania, Silesia, and the province of Prussia and which continually mixes further', and the Poles, 'a tribe [Stamm] of Slavs which for a thousand years has absorbed German blood'.<sup>343</sup> For both Schäfer and Wendorff nations could *not* be racially based.

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<sup>340</sup> E. Hasse, *Deutsche Politik* (München, 1905), p. 10.

<sup>341</sup> According to Gernandt, although Jews and Poles were individually identified with a particular 'nationality', neither formed nations. F. Gernandt, 'Rassengefühl und Nationalismus', *Politisch-anthropologische Revue*, 8 (1902), 608-611 (pp. 609-610). Emperor Wilhelm had described the nature of the nation as being 'the demarcation of that which is extrinsic, its folk personality corresponding to it racial characteristics'. Speech to the Kommandos des Korps Borussia in Bonn on 24 April 1901, quoted in E. Hasse, *Deutsche Politik* (München, 1905), p. 29.

<sup>342</sup> Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Die deutsche Ostmark* (Lissa, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>343</sup> W. Wendorff, *Der Kampf der Deutschen und Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1904), p. 14.

With each of the definitions discussed race is defined as being primarily a community of descent; cultural and political factors are secondary. It follows from this that a race or races may produce a culture, but a culture cannot produce a race: *cultural difference is the function of racial difference*. Indeed, this logic commonly informed the interpretation of the German-Polish relationship in the East; cultural difference (inferiority) was invariably accounted for by differences of 'blood'.

Racial categories of thought found a wide audience in Imperial Germany through their propagation by leading cultural figures like Julius Langbehn, Paul de Lagarde, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Otto Weininger, and Richard Wagner.<sup>344</sup> But in specific reference to the national question in the Prussian East, and other cases of minority politics, the occurrence of 'race' as an explanatory category was generally confined to the fringes of the intelligentsia, occurring sporadically in academic journals like Ploetz's *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, and the *Politisch-anthropologische Revue*.<sup>345</sup> In the discourse of the Polish question, the concepts of 'nationality' and 'nation' were more mainstream, no doubt sometimes used according to vague notions of 'racial difference' or 'descent'.

The concept of racial difference was usually only used explicitly to interpret the German-Polish relationship in the eastern provinces by *völkisch* writers. For instance, the influential anti-Semite, Theodor Fritsch, in the *völkisch* journal *Hammer*, used the idea that Poles were of a different race to try to explain the perceived failure of

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<sup>344</sup> In 1899, Houston Stewart Chamberlain's opus *The Foundations of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* was published and established the author's reputation as a champion of Social Darwinism. The advent of Racial Hygiene was marked with the publication of Alfred Ploetz's *Grundlinien einer Rassenhygiene* in 1895. Ploetz, who advocated eugenics, founded the 'German Society for Racial Hygiene' in 1905.

<sup>345</sup> Material pertaining to the Polish Question and minority politics is, for instance, found in the following editions: *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, 3 (1912); *Politisch-anthropologische Revue*, 5 (1902), 12 (1908). The champion of German nationalism in the Eastern Marches, the Eastern Marches Association, rarely employed racial terms in its propaganda, although some of those associated with the association did. One of the most prominent cases was of Max Weber who had joined the association at its inception and attributed the lower standards of Poles in parts of Posen to 'physical and psychical racial qualities'. R. Tims, *Germanizing Prussian Poland: the HKT Society and the Struggle for the Eastern Marches in the German Empire 1894-1919* (New York, 1941), pp. 269-270. See also P. Walkenhorst, 'Der "Daseinskampf des Deutschen Volkes": Nationalismus, Sozialdarwinismus, und Imperialismus im Wilhelminischen Deutschland', in Echternkamp and Müller (eds.), *Die Politik der Nation: Deutscher Nationalismus in Krieg und Krisen, 1760-1960* (München, 2002), pp. 131-148; S. Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im deutschen Kaiserreich* (München, 2006), pp. 139-67.

government policies aimed at the Germanization of the Poles. He argued that it was a difference of blood and race which made assimilation impossible:

Our *Polenpolitik* is based upon a false premise. The present-day classically educated intelligentsia adheres to the idea that the essence of a man is carried above all by language; one views spirit and language as almost synonymous and believes that it is possible to change the spirit through language. Consequently, the means necessary to Germanize the Poles appeared simple: one had to force them to learn German at school. This naïve language politics has fundamentally hit the rocks, for the Poles have learnt German and yet are still Poles. ... Blood and race have shown themselves to be more potent than language, and so have the fanatically stirred-up national spirit and the religious army of the Catholic-Polish nation [*Polenthum*]. ... The spirit lives in blood and as we can give the Poles no other blood, so we will not be able to make them into Germans.<sup>346</sup>

Such terms were even given credence by the mainstream conservative daily, the *Posener Tageblatt*, which described how ‘the struggle of the Poles against the German nation concerned a struggle between two races, which will only be settled with the defeat of one of the parties’.<sup>347</sup>

The racialization of the German-Polish relationship received its most radical treatment, however, in the work of the racial hygienist Willibald Hentschel. Hentschel not only theorised race, but related his research specifically to the demographic problem at the heart of the Polish question. He had studied with Ernst Haeckel in Jena and also worked with the chemists Ostwald and Johannes Wislicenus (the latter was a founder of the Pan-German League). In 1904, he published a book entitled *Mittgart* which was a plan for an Aryan racial utopia of the same name. The book was published by the anti-Semitic publisher Theodor Fritsch at his ‘Hammer Verlag’. In this work, Hentschel offered a plan for the renewal of the German race which he believed was threatened by Social Democracy, urbanisation, and the propagation of inferior races like the Poles and Jews.<sup>348</sup>

To regenerate the German race, Hentschel believed it necessary to raise the rural birth rate. To this end he advocated breeding colonies which would be constituted on the principle of a ratio of 1000 women to every 100 men, with inhabitants all selected according to the criterion of having the best physiques. In these communities polygamy

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<sup>346</sup> Hammer (No. 196), quoted in *Politisch-anthropologische Revue*, 9 (1910), p. 490.

<sup>347</sup> *Posener Tageblatt*, 4 May 1905, in GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, II, No. 2306.

<sup>348</sup> P. Weindling, *Health, Race, and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 136-137; U. Puschner, *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich: Sprache, Rasse, Religion* (Darmstadt, 2001), pp. 187-201.

(thought to multiply the chances of producing desirable offspring), under the supervision of medical experts, would be practised to upgrade the German race. In regard to the Polish question, Hentschel backed the government's strategy of 'internal colonization' to counter Polish demographic gains. But he regarded government colonization initiatives such as the founding of the Colonization Commission as having been unsuccessful.<sup>349</sup> Alluding to the Polish population explosion and also to the succumbing of German women to racially inferior (Slavic) stock, Hentschel wrote in his treatise on racial hygiene, *Vom aufsteigenden Leben* (1910):

That much-boasted birth surplus originates, as one recognises through careful examination, from the lowest ethnic stratum; the Slavic east is strongly involved in it. German women rave and wail instead of giving birth; they become giddy in our ruin, in the increasing cultural drunkenness.<sup>350</sup>

Hentschel appeared to be suggesting, in terms evocative of the ideas of Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, that the demographic gains of the Polish population over the Germans were, in large measure, the consequence of procreation between Germans and Poles.<sup>351</sup> Moreover, he portrays German women as having been dehumanised as a result of their social contact with Slavs. Through his exoteric, albeit eccentric writings, Hentschel hoped to raise popular consciousness of the issue of race and to eradicate indifference to its implications. Germany, in his view, was surrounded by Romanic and Slavic peoples who threatened to overwhelm a 'culturally debased Germany'. Hentschel's ideas were marginal, and his ideas of uplifting the German race were highly criticised at the time, especially by other members of the Racial Hygiene

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<sup>349</sup> W. Hentschel, *Vom aufsteigenden Leben* (Leipzig, 1910), pp. 100-107.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>351</sup> A. Calinicos, *Social Theory. A Historical Introduction* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 75-77; P. Weingart, et al. (eds.), *Rasse, Blut und Gene: Geschichte der Eugenik und Rassenhygiene in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), pp. 94-7. For Gobineau, whose masterwork *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* appeared in 1853-55, the decline of every civilisation was inevitable. He rejected the idea of human equality and classified mankind according to three fundamental races: the 'white', 'yellow' and 'black' (in descending order according to intellectual and physical quality). Civilisational decline was attributed to the tendency for members of the different races to mix. A master or colonizer race will most often have fewer members than the race over which it rules. Therefore, intermarriage was inevitable. Whilst this revitalizes the master race's civilisation at first, it eventually saps its vigour, resulting in its degeneration. Such was the ultimate fate of imperial Rome, and such was the inevitable fate of Aryan Europe.



Society. But his work is nevertheless significant in offering the most explicit conceptualisation of the German-Polish relationship as a specifically racial problem.<sup>352</sup>

The cultural typology upon which depictions of German-Polish marriage were based in Wilhemine Germany had its origins at least as far back as the eighteenth century, in the stereotype of *polnische Wirtschaft* ('Polish Economy'). One of the earliest appearances of the term was in the travel writing of Georg Friedrich Forster (1754-1794), who used it several times to characterise his impressions of Poland. Subsequently, the term was employed in *Soll und Haben* and the Eastern Marches novels.<sup>353</sup> Hence, the Poles were not only rendered recognisable to the reader by reference to their physical attributes, but also through the depiction of the socio-economic space in which they supposedly lived. This typically involved an iconography of squalor, wildness, and economic incompetence, usually juxtaposed with depictions of German work, diligence and steadfastness. For instance, Traugott Pils described the returning Waliczek's perception of his home village thus:

Nothing had changed, only it perhaps looked still worse and more dilapidated, and still more neglected than usual. No more than two windows had the builder afforded to the single-storey huts. Each one on either side of the decrepit door looked with dull and broken panes miserable in the cold winter, and here and there stood a hut with only one window, hardly a metre square, where still sacking wall and cardboard replaced part of the fallen out panes.

This was the Polish Economy out of which Waliczek had escaped by embracing German culture and nationality, and which had led to the downfall of Franz through a 'reverse' process of Polonization.<sup>354</sup>

The German nationalist depiction of *polnische Wirtschaft* was strongly tinged with a sense of cultural superiority. Typical were the words of Emmanuel Ginschel, editor of the conservative daily, the *Posener Tageblatt*: 'This once-German land, which under Polish rule sank into misery and neglect, has been conquered for the German people by sword and plough. It has been fertilized by German blood and sweat, and owes its culture to Germans. For these reasons, we are the masters here.'<sup>355</sup> Such ideas of cultural superiority entered popular consciousness. The actress Anna Löhn-Siegel, on

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<sup>352</sup> Weindling, *Health*, pp. 136-137.

<sup>353</sup> E. Połczyńska, *Im polnischen Wind* (Poznań, 1988), pp. 240-250.

<sup>354</sup> Pils, 'Raureif', pp. 5-6.

<sup>355</sup> *Posener Tageblatt*, 14 Jan. 1914, quoted in W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews; the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914* (Chicago, 1980), p. 271.

her way to perform at Franz Wallner's theatre in Posen, recalled the words of one of her fellow passengers as they passed through a derelict Poznanian village: 'You should have seen how the province looked before Prussia's civilising spirit came to rule. This is now a paradise in comparison to the former Polish economy. If only the population would accept the good intentions of the government more! But that is still not always the case.'<sup>356</sup> Siegel herself had remarked how on this journey from the German heartlands, 'the railway station buildings and their grounds had been German oases in a Polish desert.'<sup>357</sup>

Common to all these depictions of Polish culture was the view of its historical indebtedness to, and dependence upon, superior German culture. It followed from this that the Poles were denied the capacity for an autonomous development and, hence, forfeited their right to it. The cultural stereotype of Polish Economy also involved particular character traits specific to the Polish nationality, invariably contrasted with German characteristics. Typically, the prefect Otto Steinmann made the distinction thus: 'The German population distinguishes itself especially by its industriousness, energy, and independence. The Pole is docile, obedient, and of cheerful and frugal temperament.'<sup>358</sup> Therefore the Pole was naturally suited to be subservient to the German, a view to which Prussian-Polish history seemingly gave credence.<sup>359</sup> Accordingly, the concept of *polnische Wirtschaft* had temporal connotations, being associated with the period of the Polish Commonwealth, when, as one writer put it, 'came the time of inescapable decline and decay. The holders of power in the land exercised it in such a manner that devastation, impoverishment and ignorance took hold, in connection with robbery and death and anarchy, right up to the brink of the end of all culture.' This state was only ended with the partitions of Poland.<sup>360</sup>

<sup>356</sup> A. Löhn-Siegel, *Wie ich Schauspielerin wurde* (Berlin, 1880), p. 16.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>358</sup> O. Steinmann, *Der Kreis Thorn. Statistische Beschreibung* (Thorn, 1866), p. 45.

<sup>359</sup> For further examples of Polish-German cultural stereotypes of this kind, see C. Meyer, 'Die Cultur- und Bevölkerungs-Verhältnisse der Provinz Posen seit deren Anfall an Preussen', *Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Landeskunde der Provinz Posen*, 3 (1884), pp. 28-29; J. Rosenberg, *Endlich gelöst!: Die Ostmarkenfrage, die Landarbeiterfrage* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 7; W. v. Massow, *Die Polen-Not im Deutschen Osten: Studien zur Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1903), pp. 137-145.

<sup>360</sup> F. Winterstein, *Die Polenfrage* (Gautzsch bei Leipzig, 1908), pp. 4-5.

Such depictions of Polish cultural conditions were supported by the 'objective' matter-of-fact accounts provided by academic surveys. Christian Meyer, state archivist of the province of Posen, quoted an account given of Polish living conditions in a statistical survey of Schubin in his study of provincial culture: 'the internal specification of the rural housing of the farm owners and families of day-labourers is frequently very poor with barely any evidence of adequate space, air and light'. Similarly, a survey of Wongrowitz had reported how 'the houses of the farmers and cottagers contain as a rule one or two rooms, often only a living room and a small chamber, with the latter often used as a cattle pen. The floor exists as a clay threshing floor, stoves are absent almost always and the windows are so small that the daylight can hardly enter. The warmth of the room is provided by the great fireplace or a coal basin in the middle of the room.'<sup>361</sup>

A particularly vivid account of the cultural contrast between Germans and Poles was given by a German ethnographer named Karl Russ of a trip made in 1863 to a Polish village situated in the Tuchel Heath in West Prussia. In this village, afflicted by the usual symptoms of Polish Economy, 'an upright German tailor with his dutiful wife' had settled some thirty years before in search of a better living. The reporter described how in the 'hard life struggle for their daily bread they have introduced and spread German custom and German culture, at least among the immediately neighbouring villagers.' The couple's children had also married local Poles. In stark contrast to the poverty of the surrounding Polish living conditions, their living space was more sanitised, their garden lovely, with flowers in the windows, the house walls and shutters well kept, and even the street in the vicinity of the house was well kept. Russ left no room for doubt in his account that these were emissaries of the German cultural mission in the East.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> C. Meyer, 'Die Cultur- und Bevölkerungs-Verhältnisse der Provinz Posen seit deren Anfall an Preussen', *Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Landeskunde der Provinz Posen*, 3 (1884), pp. 32-33.

<sup>362</sup> K. Russ, 'Ein polnisches Landdorf in der Tuchler-heide', *Globus: Illustrierte Zeitschrift für Länder- und Völkerkunde*, 4 (1863), 343-346 (p. 345). Russ describes vividly the journey made through the desolate heath to the village, through which he establishes a spatial demarcation between German and Polish cultures: 'As far as the eye could see there was nothing but monotonous coniferous forest, barren sand, and above, the blue-grey sky of the heath. There was no colour in the landscape, no activity as in a deciduous forest, not a single bird, not one living thing was in sight for miles. And when we came upon an open space in the forest, we did not take pleasure in thriving crops...the entire region appeared to us a monotonous and indescribably desolate. The songs of the warbling birds high in the ether sounded so

The 'backwardness' of the Polish economy was, according to the stereotype, largely due to the anachronistic roles in Polish society of the clergy and the nobility. A journalist, writing in the conservative *Grenzboten* typified this conception:

The Slavic tenacity in maintaining the ancestral language and associated ethnic characteristics, as well as its aversion to cultural progress, cannot be overcome through individual orders and laws. The ruling classes, the nobility and the clergy, represent ever great, powerful, and impenetrable bodies, whose influence stretch right to the Prussian throne, and the common people will not free itself, despite exceptional cases, of the influence of both for years to come; it will continue to view German language and custom with repugnance as heretical and the priests will strengthen this idea.<sup>363</sup>

German attitudes towards 'Polish Economy' were, however, ambivalent and not always condemnatory. This was because by the 1890s commentators could not ignore the economic advantages gained by Poles following the region's period of unprecedented prosperity which lasted from the 1890s up to the outbreak of war. During this phase, Poles took advantage of the thousands of new jobs which became available in industry and commerce, including in western Germany. As has been shown, the proportion of Poles among the self-employed also increased, and numerous Polish owned firms, workshops and commercial enterprises were launched. The increasing size of the Polish middle class as well as its significance as a political constituency is suggested by its collective tax contributions. Between 1895 and 1910, the business taxes paid by Poles, as a percentage of the total collected from the towns of the Posen regency (excluding the provincial capital), rose from 18 percent to 27 percent.<sup>364</sup> 'Polish Economy' had changed, and even German conservatives and liberals recognised the economic success of the Poles. By 1907, the mayor of Posen, Richard Witting could pronounce 'of the old "Polish economy" one finds nothing in the Eastern Marches, or as good as nothing more. The Poles have become diligent, sober, thrifty, and they rival the Germans in all areas of commerce, trade and also art and scholarship'. A cultural stereotype still existed but had changed in tone.<sup>365</sup> An article in

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melancholic, as there they never rejoice in the joy of spring, but lament over the poverty, the grief and sorrow of life.'

<sup>363</sup> E. Kattner, 'Stärke und Vertheilung des deutschen und des polnischen Elements in Posen', *Grenzboten*, I (1873), 415-421 (p. 416). The attainment of cultural supremacy was vital to winning the national conflict: 'with Catholicism, at least Ultramontanism, stands and falls Polenthum, and conversely, with high culture, stands and falls the Deutschtum of this borderland of Germany' (p. 421).

<sup>364</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 223-224.

<sup>365</sup> R. Witting, *Das Ostmarken-Problem* (Berlin, 1907), pp. 27-28.

the conservative *Posener Tageblatt* (13 Nov. 1903) even attributed this success to the racial effects of sexual contact:

Without the influence of Germans, who are so often alienated from the Polish folk, the Polish would never be so economically strong that they would be able to wage their struggle against the Germans offensively. The in-pouring of German blood has had the effect of strengthening and ennobling them.<sup>366</sup>

Wegener even went so far as to write: 'The blood-mixing is so great that one can absolutely no longer identify purely typical Slavic racial features in the province of Posen. Probably in every middle class Pole there is some German blood'.<sup>367</sup> Another commentator on the Polish question noted how as a consequence of the seasonal migration of foreign nationals into Germany to work, 'many Polish women marry in our land with the natural consequence that Polish blood becomes strengthened by us'.<sup>368</sup> These admissions suggest a number of ironies. First, that 'Polish blood' was in fact infused with 'German blood', and secondly, that Germans, through their social interaction with Poles, had made their opponents more formidable. Culture and blood were entwined, and in both cases, the national dichotomy threatened to collapse. The mixing of blood, principally through the institution of mixed marriage, had effectively made the national conflict harder for the German state and its allies to win.

It was because of this adverse effect that the Eastern Marches novel had emphasised the importance of mixed marriage as a locus for national transformation. Because it was feared that such transformations invariably worked to the advantage of Polish nationalism, the practice of mixed marriage was negatively portrayed, and implicitly discouraged. It was through their emphasis upon 'transformation' that the Eastern Marches novels were most representative of the perceptions expressed outside of the literary mode. In almost all cases it was the function of marriage as a mediator of assimilation which was stressed by commentators on the Polish question. One academic writer warned in his treatise:

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<sup>366</sup> *Posener Tageblatt*, 13 Nov. 1903, quoted in B. Balzer, *Die preussische Polenpolitik 1894-1908 und die Haltung der deutschen konservativen und liberalen Parteien* (Frankfurt am M., 1990), p. 38. For similar examples, see 'Die Sicherung der Ostmark', *Posener Tageblatt*, 6 Dec. 1905, and 'Klagen der deutschen Katholiken', *Posener Tageblatt*, 4 May 1905.

<sup>367</sup> Wegener, *Der wirtschaftliche Kampf*, p. 37.

<sup>368</sup> Rosenberg, *Endlich gelöst!*, p. 21.

A great number of men with German names, namely those who have married a Polish woman, declare themselves to be Polish even though their parents are not at all competent in the Polish language. But these men prefer to speak Polish, to teach their children Polish and to keep, if possible, only Polish servants. These are facts which the nationally conscious German can only consider with the greatest regret.<sup>369</sup>

In discourses of this kind the national fate of the off-spring was frequently emphasized. The historian of Posen, Max Bär, maintained that as a rule, in the mixed-nationality areas, the nationality of the child followed that of the mother, and it was characteristic of the province that

...the German man who marries a Polish woman has Polish offspring; the Polish man who marries a German woman usually also has Polish children. The Polish wife in a mixed marriage is compelled by the church to demand concessions from the husband in respect of the children's education; the German wife is, if a Catholic, already less adverse towards the Polish nation. If a German wife is Protestant, then the national indifference of the Germans and the indifference of the Protestant church have their consequences.<sup>370</sup>

The German Catholics were at the centre of this predicament because of their frequently close ties with Polish milieus. As the Polish deputy and historian of Prussian Poland, Jozef Buzek, rightly noted, it was the close parochial relationship between German and Polish Catholics which largely accounted for the occurrence of mixed marriage:

The close-knit parochial relations between the two nationalities is salt in the eye for the Prussian government, since this contact is conducive to the closing of marriages between Catholic Germans and Poles, while the children descending from such marriages easily become Polonized in the predominantly Polish communities and in predominantly German communities they become Germanised.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> C. Fink, *Der Kampf um die Ostmark. Ein Beitrag zur Beurteilung der Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1897), p. 252.

<sup>370</sup> M. Bär, *Die 'Bamberger' bei Posen zugleich ein Beitrag zur geschichte der Polonisierungsbestrebungen in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1882), p. 14. Treitschke did his part to popularise this understanding among a wider audience. In his Berlin lectures he had advised his audience to 'observe how many marriages are contracted in this region; in Posen it is the rule that the wife is Polish, the husband German. ... Now Germans marry Poles, but the mother takes care to remain Polish, and so it goes on'. For Treitschke, this occurrence of mixed marriage was but one prime example of the German people's weak 'power of national resistance', a quality which they shared with the ancient Greeks. He went on to implicate the Catholic Church in these processes: 'The attitude of the Church is important in these processes of amalgamation. The Catholic Church is always on the side of the language of the inferior civilisation. They love the dialect of the people better than the speech of the educated, for they find more support among the former; hence it comes that the clericals on our eastern frontier are out-and-out Polish in sympathies. In Belgium they take the Flemish part, for there the French are the Freemasons.' Treitschke, *Politics*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>371</sup> It was because of this affinity that the government began during the Wilhelmine period to create new parishes for German Catholics, as well as striving to increase the number of Protestant parishes so as to improve their clerical provision. In addition to the founding of 37 new Protestant parishes by the Colonisation Commission by 1906, the Prussian government allocated in the budget of 1902, 500,000

Admonishments against the effects of mixed marriage also occurred in the Polish press.

The following example appeared in *Przyjaciół* in 1899:

Those very Germans who affiliate themselves to us through the same religion and belong to the Catholic Church, hate the Polish nation, and despise it as folly and madness that we Poles hold so constantly to our language. They can harm us most because the German Catholics have the opportunity to interact with us, especially through marriage. Accordingly, it is so much easier to denationalize us and rob us of our national spirit as well as our mother-tongue. Would they dare, as fellow believers, to commit so harmful a deed? Absolutely! The German Catholics, convinced of the superiority of their race and German civilisation, are able to work most effectively for the destruction of the Polish language, which they regard as the language of a stupid and uncivilised people.

The same paper also claimed that usually the Catholic Church lost 60 percent of those entering into mixed marriage, and for Poles entering into marriage with German Catholics, the loss for the Polish nationality was at least 80 percent if not even more. It was ironic that such claims were diametrically opposed to the claims made on the German side.<sup>372</sup>

The vilification of the Polish woman was characteristic of German discourse. Georg Cardinal von Widdern, who had named his treatise after Klara Viebig's classic *Das*

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Marks to be distributed as aid to German Catholic and Protestant communities through the building of churches and parsonages in the Eastern Marches. In the six years between 1902 and 1907, 3,000,000 marks were spent on this project. J. Buzek, *Historia polityki narodowościowej Rządu Pruskiego wobec Polaków od traktatów wiedeńskich do ustaw wyjątkowych z r. 1908* (Lwów, 1909), p. 495.

<sup>372</sup> *Przyjaciół* (Nos. 143-147, 1899), quoted in L. Mueller, *Nationalpolnische Presse, Katholizismus und Katholischen Klerus. Ein Kirchen- und Zeitungsgeschichtlicher Ausschnitt aus den Tagen des Grosskampfes zwischen Deutschland und Polen in der Jahren 1896-1899* (Breslau, 1931), pp. 31-33. See also *Wiarus Polski* (No. 122, 12 Oct. 1899). There were numerous other examples. For instance, *Die Ostmark* published the following Polish newspaper article: 'Marriages between Poles and German Catholics are a misfortune not only for our nationality, but also for our holy faith. Our subjugated nation is accustomed to humiliation. It carries this burden with endurance, carrying it without complaint, and kneeling before its enemy. Hence, the Polish woman who offers her hand and her heart to a German man, one who should fight for her fatherland, but sells out to the enemy instead, is a disgrace. Shame also on the Polish youth who takes a German girl as his wife, and thus becomes a common servant of our enemy!' *Die Ostmark* (supplement), 5 (1900), p. 3. In the Polish women's twice-weekly *Gazeta dla Kobiet*, guidance against mixed marriage appeared in the printing of the so-called 'Wanda-Legend' which read: 'Wanda lies in the Polish land, because she did not want to marry a German man. One should always only take a compatriot as a husband and not a foreigner'. *Gazeta dla Kobiet*, 21 Sept. 1903, p. 146, quoted in R. Jaworski, 'Polnische Frauen im Nationalitätenstreit der Provinz Posen um die Jahrhundertwende', *Studia Historica Slavo-Germanica*, XVIII (1994), 87-100 (p. 91). Poetic propaganda against mixed marriage also appeared in the Polish press. One such case was a poem published in *Praca* (No. 8, 20 Feb. 1898), entitled 'To the Polish Girl'. Its last lines read: 'Pride forbids you to choose for a husband a bad Pole, a German or Russian.'

*Schlafende Heer*, was a typical case. Widdern set out to positively demonize the *Polin* and her part in the national struggle:

The Polish women wield great influence over their men's national and political activity. They, like the clergy, incessantly stir up their men against everything German; they indoctrinate their children with hatred against the German nation, elevating it to a holy obligation, and keenly appoint themselves to the task of watching over the strict separation in society of themselves from their fellow citizens of German nationality. ... For the widespread boycotting and struggle against German trade and business, stand responsible, first and foremost, the Polish women.<sup>373</sup>

It was no surprise that such appraisals led some to the extreme conclusion that the fate of the nation lay in the fate of its women, a view endorsed by no one less than Bismarck himself who had declared: 'So long as there is still a Polish woman, there will also be a Polish question'.<sup>374</sup> In this vein, one delegate at the second East German Women's Conference in the West Prussian city of Elbing pronounced:

He, who has the women of the nation for himself, has the future. The mother maintains the Fatherland for her children through the mother-tongue. If the woman remains nationally unconquerable, neither will the nation be conquered in the struggle for existence. We women of the Eastern Marches must especially bear these principles in mind.<sup>375</sup>

This kind of faith in the German woman as the key to the salvation of the German nationality even came to expression in a poem which was published in the regional journal of 'German cultural work', *Aus dem Posener Lande*:

#### *Mischblut*

*From my father have I Polish blood,  
That flows quickly through my veins.  
Of ever new splendid gemmation  
Was I conceived in the lovers' garden.  
Yet my German mother gave to me  
Her timid German modesty,  
Which put my blood's broad defence  
Into her good hands,  
So that its flood may bring the flowered land  
Forever blessed life,  
And not ever drown a tender bloom in its wild swirls.*<sup>376</sup>

<sup>373</sup> G. v. Widdern, *Das 'Schlafende Heer' der Polen (leider kein Roman)* (Berlin, 1912), p. 52.

<sup>374</sup> Quoted in v. Widdern, *Das 'Schlafende Heer'*, p. 52.

<sup>375</sup> V. Schoultz, *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Ostmarkenvereins* (Berlin, 1908), p. 95.

<sup>376</sup> Peer Thorolf, 'Mischblut', in *Aus dem Posener Lande*, 10 (1913), p. 476.



The stereotype of the *Polin* was a particularly important one. As the examples given show, Polish women were invariably portrayed in German propaganda, both literary and prose, as seductresses, possessing devious, flawed characters, and devoted to their nation and religion. This image was often advanced in conjunction with representations about the decisive influence of the Polish mother over the national and religious upbringing of her children. Such stereotypes had some basis in reality. The importance of Polish wives in the Polish national movement stemmed essentially from her traditional control over the private sphere of family life, the family being the only institution into which the Germanization apparatus of the state did not penetrate. In the family, the wife, mother, and grandmother were traditionally responsible for the early education of children, particularly in respect of religion, customs, and language, and the dissemination of Polish national traditions and historical consciousness. This applied particularly in rural communities. The centrality of the mother's role in the upbringing of the children was increased by the fact that many of their husbands worked long hours on the land (sometimes 12-14 hours including travelling times) or were employed as seasonal workers further afield between the spring and late autumn. Women also had the greatest control, in their traditional role as housekeepers, over whether German or Polish shops and services were patronised. The significance of this for the external national conflict was clear.<sup>377</sup>

The belated industrialisation of the Eastern Marches which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century had changed the social role of women in the region as more women entered into employment. Between 1882 and 1907, the proportion of the total female population of Posen and West Prussia in full-time employment rose from 14.6 to 90.5 percent. In the same period, the proportion of women who worked in industry increased from 12.5 to 24.1 percent of all women working full-time.<sup>378</sup> One consequence of this was the levelling-out and democratisation of society. In these new conditions, the traditional social role of women came under pressure, although by the

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<sup>377</sup> J. Benyskiewicz, 'Rola Rodziny w Zachowaniu Narodowosci w Warunkach Zaboru', in Kubiak and Trzeciakowski (eds.), *Rola Wielkopolski w Dziejach Narodu Polskiego* (Poznań, 1979), pp. 178-180.

<sup>378</sup> 'Die Ergebnisse der Berufszählung vom 5. Juni 1882 im preussischen Staate', *Preussische Statistik*, 76, III, (1885), pp. 240, 242; 'Berufs- und Betriebszählung vom 12. Juni 1907', *Statistik des Deutschen Reiches*, 206 (1910), pp. 222-231.

same token, the contrast between the public sphere and the private family sharpened.<sup>379</sup> The politicisation of Polish wives also ensued from their increasing participation in associational life during the 1890s. As well as church-led associations like the *Marienvereine* and *Müttervereine*, women also associated in secular organisations, albeit often under the influence of the clergy. Two important examples were the network of reading rooms for women (*Czytelnie dla Kobiet*) and the *Warta* ('Guard') women's association which had been founded in Posen in 1894.<sup>380</sup>

The national-political significance of Polish women in respect of mixed marriage even came to influence the formulation of government policy, namely colonization policy. It was a recognised problem that on death, a property, considered as German land, could theoretically pass through inheritance to a Polish relation. This problem was raised during the Landtag debates before the passing of the colonisation bill in 1886 when Bismarck had gone so far as to promise parliament that Germans with Polish wives would not be settled. The veteran Progressive, Rudolf Virchow, however, had questioned the arbitrariness and very legitimacy of the state designating national status, especially given the levels of intermarriage. Rhetorically he had asked whether one is 'a German, who, for instance, has a Polish wife?' Bismarck's view had implicitly been no, since such a man would not qualify for settlement. Virchow went further, posing the question: 'a German who has Polish relatives-is he a German? Consider if such a colonist dies and the inheritance, which is the estate which he acquired in Posen because of this law, passes to a relative who belongs to the Polish nationality. That

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<sup>379</sup> Jaworski, 'Polnische Frauen', 87-100. For further discussion of the role of women in the Polish national movement, see, for instance: W. Jakóbczyk, 'Ruch kobiecy i rola prasy w Wielkopolsce na początku XX wieku', in *Studia i Materiały do Dziejów Wielkopolski i Pomorza*, III (1957), 251-254; A. Zarnowski and A. Szwarc (eds.), *Kobieta i społeczeństwo na ziemiach polskich w XIX w.* (Warszawa, 1995); F. Vossberg, *Die polnische Frauenbewegung* (Lissa, 1912). The industrialisation of the Eastern Marches had also brought female unionisation. One of the first unions of this kind was formed by female factory workers in Posen in 1889, followed soon after by organisations of clothes manufacturers, domestic workers and shop assistants. By 1906, most of these trade associations had been combined under the leadership of the Polish clergy in the 'Union of Associations for Employed Women' based in Posen. In 1911, this union had a total of 26 associations and 5,782 members.

<sup>380</sup> By 1913, 32 women's reading associations in Posen had joined to form the Union of Women's Education Associations, with 3173 members. These associations held meetings and discussion circles, collected Polish books, and performed an important role in maintaining Polish culture. The *Warta* had 363 members in 1913, drawn mainly from the nobility and Polish intelligentsia. One of its main objectives was to counter the anti-Polish colouration of Prussian school policies by providing private education to Polish children, particularly the teaching of the Polish language. Jaworski, 'Polnische Frauen', 87-100.

must ... be impermissible; the law should not allow it that anyone who has Polish relatives, could pass to them the ownership of such an estate through inheritance. Such a man must be declared from the time when he has such a relative to be no longer German'. For Virchow, who opposed the bill, the law was for this reason unviable.<sup>381</sup>

#### (iv) Conclusion

In sex and marriage between German and Pole the paradigm of synthesis found its profoundest expression. These practices effected not only changes of consciousness and behaviour, but also of 'racial' identity. The national interface was, as it has been shown, primarily defined by linguistic criteria. In respect of mixed marriage and sex, however, it became structured further by the 1890s according to 'racial' and 'cultural' typologies. These became manifest principally in the Eastern Marches novels and in the German national press. Accordingly, sex and marriage between Germans and Poles were depicted as transgressions of distinct, yet unstable, racial and cultural divides. Moreover, such interactions were widely perceived and represented as producing individuals who were racially hybridic.

Before the 1890s, however, the more prominent typology was 'denominational'. The German concept of *Mischehe* equally denoted intermarriage between persons of different religions, and it was marriage across this divide which had been historically most contentious. There were, therefore, two principal narratives after 1871: one national and one religious. Despite shifts in prominence, these narratives remained inextricably linked, even sometimes conflated, throughout the period.

The institution of marriage was critical to the integrity of church and nation; mixed marriage constantly threatened to subvert this integrity. Consequently, the representatives of both made efforts to minimise its occurrence. The Protestant and

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<sup>381</sup> Speech of Bismarck, 28 January 1886, Landtag, HdA; Speech of Virchow, 7 April 1886, Landtag, HdA. There was no specification in the 'Law for the Promotion of German Settlements in the Provinces of West Prussia and Posen' (26 April 1886) that mixed-nationality couples should be excluded from the settlement programme. The law aimed to strengthen the German element against Polish nationalism through the settlement of German farmers and workers. However, the question of who counted as a 'German' farmer or worker was not specified. The law is reproduced in *Gesetz-Sammlung für die Königlichen Preussischen Staaten 1886* (Berlin, 1886), pp. 131-134.

Catholic churches imposed prohibitions, and German and Polish nationalists disseminated deterrent propaganda, either through prose or the mode of fiction. However, statistical data has shown clearly that these efforts failed; the rates of mixed-nationality and mixed-confession marriage changed little between 1871 and 1914. Similarly, it may be concluded that fallout from the national conflict had little or no effect upon the rates of mixed marriage. Neither did the erosion of religious social authority, indicated by falling levels of religious commitment and the introduction of civil marriage, have any lasting impact upon its frequency. In sum, mixed marriage, both confessional and national, was a normal and consistent feature of life in the Posen and West Prussia.

Despite the churches' inefficacy in preventing, or even reducing the frequency of mixed marriage in this period, it was still the case that confessional distinctions were the greatest constraint upon mixed-nationality marriage, given the close nexus between national and denominational identities existent in Posen and West Prussia. Religious identities were relatively more stable than national ones for the reason that they were intrinsically less hybridisable than national identities and more subject to external constraint. Other social and economic factors such as the need to marry within one's own class cannot be shown to have had any direct bearing upon the frequency of such relationships. Nationality was extraneous to such considerations.

The mutational processes mediated by mixed marriage occurred within the private domain of the family, largely beyond the range of the government's *Polenpolitik*, and hence could not be prevented or easily controlled. Moreover, their outcomes, in terms of national identity and behaviour, were contingent and defied predetermination. Each occurrence brought the critical question of the new family unit's national identity and allegiance, in particular that of off-spring. The foundational social role of the family unit in imperial society, and the actual frequency of mixed marriages occurring in the Eastern Marches, meant that the institution's significance to the national question was considerable; the net result was that it made more difficult for the Prussian state to win the national conflict.

## Part III

# The Politics of Transnationalism

## Chapter 5

### The Politics of the 'Catholic-Polish Axis'

#### (i) Origin and Ethos

The political spectrum in Posen and West Prussia was one which appeared to have become polarised by the end of Bülow's chancellorship between 'German national' elements and the representatives of Polish nationalism. The national conflict, of which this was symptomatic, had gradually intensified since the Bismarckian era. Discriminatory and oppressive *Polenpolitik* had been ratified during the 1870s and then again in the late 1880s. The sharpening of anti-Polish legislation which occurred during the reign of Wilhelm II, together with increasing mass participation in political life, caused the national conflict in the Prussian East to reach a peak of intensity after 1900. But the polarisation in political life of 'German' and 'Polish' national interests, which has structured much of the historiography in this field, can obscure the specifically transnational forms of consciousness and behaviour which had been developing between Germans and Poles in party and associational life. This was mediated in the Eastern Marches particularly by Catholicism and its various political formations. The principal phenomenon of this kind was the way in which confessional allegiance led German Catholics to support Polish candidates electorally.<sup>382</sup> This political phenomenon was a corollary of the general semantic conflation of religious and national identities existing in the Prussian borderland. As the *Thorner Zeitung* reported on 19 February 1871:

Since the great majority of Catholics, both of German and Polish nationality, are attached more strongly to their priests and their church than to their nationality, not only Polish Catholics, but also a great

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<sup>382</sup> A comparable example of transnational political behaviour was identifiable in the case of the Masurians in East Prussia who, despite their Polish ethnicity and heritage, consistently supported the Prussian state and voted for German party candidates. It was not until the vote in 1893 that a Polish candidate won a Reichstag seat in East Prussia. This mandate was won in the constituency of Allenstein-Rössel. F. Specht and P. Schwabe, *Die Reichstags-Wahlen von 1867 bis 1903* (Berlin, 1904); R. Blanke, *Polish-speaking Germans?: Language and National Identity among the Masurians since 1871* (Köln, 2001).

number of German Catholics, are willing to vote for a Polish party candidate, provided he is a zealous defender of Catholic interests and is recommended by their priest.<sup>383</sup>

This account dates from the early years of the *Kulturkampf*, a campaign which, during the 1870s, politically bolstered the national-confessional conflation in the Eastern Marches by effecting the conjoining of religious and national issues. From this point, the Polish national cause increasingly became aligned with that of Catholicism. The *Kulturkampf* brought a transfer of political influence to the clergy.<sup>384</sup> As the Polish deputy Czarlinski put it: ‘nothing has clarified and strengthened the Polish question as much as the *Kulturkampf*. Its principal merit has been to unite all, from the poorest man to the richest, and they in turn are united with the Church’.<sup>385</sup> Similarly, the Centre parliamentarian, Matthias Erzberger, commented retrospectively that the laws of the *Kulturkampf* created much bad blood in the Polish communities and that from here dated, among the mass of the Polish population, ‘the understanding that German=Protestant and Polish=Catholic for the German faced the Pole almost only as an opponent of the Catholic Church’.<sup>386</sup> A consequence of these developments was that the existing division within Polish milieus between secular and clerical factions was reduced. In sum, a Catholic-Polish axis began to form, which enveloped German Catholics and in doing so, cut across the national divide.<sup>387</sup>

A political struggle emerged, centred on the axis, between the forces of German nationalism and those of Catholicism, at the centre of which were the German

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<sup>383</sup> Quoted in K. Wajda, ‘The Poles and the Germans in West Prussia Province in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’, in Sziling and Wojciechowski (eds.), *Neighborhood Dilemmas; the Poles, the Germans and the Jews in Pomerania along the Vistula River in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century* (Torun, 2002), p. 13.

<sup>384</sup> The primary objectives of the *Kulturkampf* in the former Polish territories had been to undermine the Polish character of the Archbishopric of Posen-Gnesen and to Germanize education in Polish areas. The May Laws of 1872 abolished the Catholic section of the Prussian Ministry of Religion and Education and replaced priests with state-appointed inspectors of elementary schools.

<sup>385</sup> Speech of 27 January 1882, Reichstag.

<sup>386</sup> M. Erzberger, *Der Kampf gegen den Katholizismus in der Ostmark* (Berlin, 1908), p. 7.

<sup>387</sup> Lech Trzeciakowski, in his history of the *Kulturkampf* in Prussian Poland, has similarly argued that ‘The battle of the state with the church and with Polish culture was, on the one hand, to subjugate the Polish clergy to the state, and on the other to educate the broad mass of Polish society in a spirit of loyalty. The methods employed brought contrary results. The germanization of the school system, the administration, and the judiciary was most onerous for the mass of the people. The persecution of the church was experienced not only by the clergy, but also by congregations. All that led to firm resistance by almost the whole Polish society in Prussian Poland.’ In sum, the *Kulturkampf* increased Polish national consciousness. L. Trzeciakowski, *The Kulturkampf in Prussian Poland* (New York, 1990), pp. 185-6.

Catholics. For German nationalists the national ambivalence of the German Catholics represented a point of weakness; a dangerous subversion of the German nation. This analysis was endorsed by Heinrich von Treitschke who had affirmed that ‘the whole point of the conflict is that Protestantism and Germanism are held there to be synonymous, and that an attempt is being made to infuse Polish sympathies into the German Catholics.’<sup>388</sup> In a similar vein, the political commentator Wilhelm von Massow claimed ‘that in the confederation of the Polish nationality [*Polentum*] with the world force of the Roman Catholic Church is contained the greatest difficulty of the entire Polish question’.<sup>389</sup> The main participants in this conflict were the Catholic Centre Party, the Polish parliamentary factions, the Union of Associations of German Catholics, and the Catholic Church. Other interested parties included the Eastern Marches Association and the Royal Colonization Commission.<sup>390</sup>

The critical significance of the axis for the integrity of the German nation is suggested by the size and distribution of the German Catholic population it potentially enveloped. In 1890, German Catholics accounted for no less than seven and sixteen percent of the populations of Posen and West Prussia respectively or eleven percent of the populations of both provinces combined.<sup>391</sup> As the following table shows, the Catholic-Polish axis had been growing markedly since unification.

*Table XVIII: Population Change of Catholics and Protestants in the Regencies of Posen and West Prussia, 1871-1900*

	Catholic			Protestant		
	1871	1900	% change	1871	1900	% change
Posen:	696,149	881,932	+26.6	280,520	293,590	+4.6
Bromberg:	313,699	421,053	+34.2	330,673	275,974	-16.5
Danzig:	250,419	320,313	+27.9	258,373	329,611	+27.5
Marienwerder:	391,153	480,082	+22.7	375,176	401,074	+6.9

<sup>388</sup> H. v. Treitschke, *Politics*, ed. by Hans Kohn (New York, 1963), p. 129.

<sup>389</sup> W. v. Massow, *Die Polen-Not im Deutschen Osten: Studien zur Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1903), p. 179.

<sup>390</sup> Other organizations on the Axis included the bi-national ‘Catholic Workers’ Association in the Diocese Gnesen-Posen’ and the ‘Union of Polish-Catholic Worker’s Associations in Germany’. The union of Polish-Catholic workers only had associations in Breslau (Silesia) and Stettin (Pomerania) by April 1910. There were a total of 45 associations across Germany at this date. See APP.

Polizeipräsidium, No. 2696, pp. 4, 11, 12, 89, and APP. Polizeipräsidium, No. 2681.

<sup>391</sup> See table II.



Source: Leszek Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten im preussischen Staat 1815-1914: die preussische Sprachenstatistik in Bearbeitung und Kommentar* (Marburg, 1998).

It is clear from these figures that the population increase of Catholics was greater than for Protestants in all four regencies. In Posen, Bromberg and Marienwerder, population increases were considerably greater than for Protestants. Of all groups, only the Protestant population of Bromberg had decreased in absolute terms, and sharply: by 16.5 percent. On the basis of these statistics, the population of the Eastern Marches had become significantly Catholicised between 1871 and 1900. The retreat of the Protestant 'diaspora' in the eastern borderlands was campaigned against by organisations such as the 'Evangelical Union'. The union had published numerous reports from the Eastern Marches of the 'retreat' of the Protestant population. The following report from Sierakowitz in West Prussia from the late 1880s was typical in its description of these trends:

The district of Carthaus, which occupies a territory of 24,850 square miles is inhabited by 15,912 Protestants and 40,221 Polish Catholics, has up to now only seven Protestant next to twenty Catholic churches. Romanism united with fanatical Polonism presses and antagonises the numerically small German flock here... the German nationality has increasingly been pushed back in the last decades. While 18,607 Protestants and Germans still lived next to 32,740 Polish Catholics in Carthaus in 1861, by 1871 the number of Protestants had sunk to 15,912 while the number of Catholics had risen to 40,221... thanks of course to the eager propaganda of the Polish-Catholic priests and teachers, which the former promote through mixed-marriage, the latter through the *Simultanschulen*, and both with characteristic eagerness.<sup>392</sup>

It is easy to see why within this context the national-political status of Catholic Germans became such a sensitive issue for Polish, German, and Catholic political factions alike. The transnationalism of German Catholic milieus made them critically important to the stability of each of the two national communities. The political ground of the German Catholics represented one of the most contested in the politics of the region. As such, this constituency was not only central to the vested interests of particular parties and factions, but also to the political development of the region.

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<sup>392</sup> O. Hermens, *Die gemeinsame Gefahr der evangelischen Kirche und der deutschen Nationalität in der Diaspora der deutschen Grenzmarken* (Leipzig, 1895), p. 40.

(ii) Structure of the Axis

The *Kulturkampf* had brought Polish political leaders together with the Catholic Centre Party, which was to become a long-standing ally of the Poles in the Landtag and the Reichstag. In return for this support, the Poles did not contest the strong position of the Centre among Polish-speaking Catholic voters in Silesia. Elsewhere in the Prussian East, the presence of the Centre remained weak until much later on.<sup>393</sup> One reason for this was that the Polish Provincial Election Committee had created during the 1880s an electoral alliance with the Catholic Centre Party. Accordingly, only Centre candidates were to be supported in those constituencies where the majority of Catholics were German-speakers, such as in Danzig and in the west of the district of Marienwerder; conversely, Polish candidates for seats in the imperial and the Prussian parliaments were to be supported by German Catholic voters in those constituencies where Polish-speaking Catholics were predominant. Consequently, the voice of the Centre was weak in much of Posen and West Prussia, where many constituencies were considered to have Polish-speaking majorities. Moreover, in those constituencies which did possess German-speaking majorities, the Centre Party was subject to the extra disadvantage that it could not necessarily count on the support of German Catholics, who, under the influence of their priests, might still choose to vote for Polish candidates.<sup>394</sup> The following tables (XIX-XXII) indicate the Reichstag and Landtag mandates held by each of the main parties (mandates held by the axis (Centre and Polish) are shown in bold type).

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<sup>393</sup> The Catholic Centre Party gained its first Reichstag seat in West Prussia in the constituency of Danzig-Land at the 1878 election.

<sup>394</sup> J. Kulczycki, *School Strikes in Prussian Poland 1901-1907: the Struggle over Bilingual Education* (New York, 1981), p. 18.

*Table XIX: Reichstag Mandates-Posen, 1871-1912*

Key: P=Polish; K=Conservative; NL=National Liberal; Z=Centre; RP=Reichspartei (Free Conservatives); I=Independent; RefP=Reformpartei; Fr=Freisinn; S=Socialists.

Mandates	K	RP	NL	Fr	Z	P	RefP	S	I	Total
1871	1	1	3	-	-	10	-	-	-	15
1874	1	1	2	-	-	10	-	-	1	15
1877	1	1	2	-	-	11	-	-	-	15
1878	2	2	1	-	-	10	-	-	-	15
1881	1	1	-	1	-	12	-	-	-	15
1884	2	2	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	15
1887	2	2	1	-	-	10	-	-	-	15
1890	2	3	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	15
1893	1	2	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	15
1898	-	2	-	1	1	11	-	-	-	15
1903	2	2	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	15
1907	2	2	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	15
1912	2	1	-	-	1	11	-	-	-	15

Sources: P. Schwabe and F. Specht, *Die Reichstag-Wahlen von 1867 bis 1907* (Berlin, 1908); *Statistik des deutschen Reiches*, 250 (1913).

*Table XX: Reichstag Mandates-West Prussia, 1871-1912*

Key: P=Polish; K=Conservative; NL=National Liberal; Z=Centre; RP=Reichspartei (Free Conservatives); I=Independent; RefP=Reformpartei; Fr=Freisinn; S=Socialists.

Mandates	K	RP	NL	Fr	Z	P	RefP	S	I	Total
1871	4	1	5	-	-	3	-	-	-	13
1874	3	-	6	-	-	4	-	-	-	13
1877	3	-	5	-	-	3	-	-	2	13
1878	5	1	2	-	1	4	-	-	-	13
1881	3	1	2	-	1	6	-	-	-	13
1884	5	2	-	1	-	5	-	-	-	13
1887	4	3	2	1	-	3	-	-	-	13
1890	2	3	-	1	1	6	-	-	-	13
1893	3	3	-	1	-	6	-	-	-	13
1898	2	5	2	1	-	3	-	-	-	13
1903	1	5	1	1	-	4	1	-	-	13
1907	3	3	2	1	-	4	-	-	-	13

1912	1	6	2	1	-	3	-	-	-	13
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Sources: P. Schwabe and F. Specht, *Die Reichstag-Wahlen von 1867 bis 1907* (Berlin, 1908); *Statistik des deutschen Reiches*, 250 (1913).

*Table XXI: Landtag Abgeordnetenhaus Mandates-Posen, 1867-1913*

Key: K=Conservative; RP=Reichspartei (Free Conservatives); NL=National Liberal; Fr=Freisinn; Z=Centre; P=Polish; S=Socialists; X=Other.

Mandates	K	RP	NL	Fr	Z	P	S	X	Total
1867	4	5	7	1	-	12	-	-	29
1870	4	4	9	-	-	12	-	-	29
1873	3	1	10	-	1	14	-	-	29
1876	5	3	9	-	-	12	-	-	29
1879	6	4	3	1	-	15	-	-	29
1882	5	6	1	3	-	14	-	-	29
1885	6	6	1	4	-	12	-	-	29
1888	5	7	2	3	-	12	-	-	29
1893	3	8	2	3	-	13	-	-	29
1898	8	4	1	6	-	10	-	-	29
1903	7	5	1	6	-	10	-	-	29
1908	10	3	1	6	-	9	-	-	29
1913	9	3	3	5	-	9	-	-	29

Source: T. Kühne, *Handbuch der Wahlen zum preussischen Abgeordnetenhaus. Wahlergebnisse, Wahlbündnisse und Wahlkandidäten 1867-1918* (Düsseldorf, 1994), p. 67.

*Table XXII: Landtag Abgeordnetenhaus Mandates-West Prussia, 1867-1913*

Key: K=Conservative; RP=Reichspartei (Free Conservatives); NL=National Liberal; Fr=Freisinn; Z=Centre; P=Polish; S=Socialists; X=Other.

Mandates	K	RP	NL	Fr	Z	P	S	X	Total
1867	5	2	8	3	-	4	-	-	22
1870	2	-	10	2	1	7	-	-	22
1873	3	-	12	4	-	3	-	-	22
1876	2	1	12	4	-	3	-	-	22

1879	2	5	7	4	-	4	-	-	22
1882	-	7	4	6	1	4	-	-	22
1885	5	8	2	4	-	3	-	-	22
1888	4	8	2	4	1	3	-	-	22
1893	6	6	3	3	-	4	-	-	22
1898	6	7	1	5	-	3	-	-	22
1903	5	7	3	4	-	3	-	-	22
1908	7	8	3	1	-	3	-	-	22
1913	5	8	1	4	1	3	-	-	22

Source: T. Kühne, *Handbuch der Wahlen zum preussischen Abgeordnetenhaus. Wahlergebnisse, Wahlbündnisse und Wahlkandidäten 1867-1918* (Düsseldorf, 1994), p. 59.

The ambivalent position of the Catholic Centre Party in Prussian Poland was reflected in the relatively late formation of party organisations in Posen and West Prussia: in 1907 and 1909 respectively. Police reports suggest the existence of a small Centre organisation operating in the Poznanian town of Schneidemühl in 1907, but it was not until 1 March 1909 that the first Centre event took place in the city of Posen. In the same year, a West Prussian organisation was launched at a party conference held at Konitz on 24 November 1909. This conference was attended by Karl Bachem, who spoke on the subject of the 'position of the Centre and the Poles'. The second party conference in West Prussia occurred at Dirschau. Numerous other meetings were also held at towns including Schlochau, Neustadt, Flatow and Danzig.<sup>395</sup>

The belated assertion of Centre interests in the East was attributable to the party's increasing differences with the Polish parliamentary faction, and to the growing influence of the Union of Associations of German Catholics in the East (founded in 1900) among Catholic voters. Despite the late emergence of regional party organisations in Posen and West Prussia, the Centre had already made its mark by this time on the politics of the Prussian East. It had consistently opposed discriminatory government policies against the Polish-speaking population (especially the exceptional laws) and the activities of radical German nationalist organisations such as the Eastern Marches Association. Despite the support it gave in parliament for Chancellor Bülow

<sup>395</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium, No. 4223, pp. 198, 145; B. Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik 1894-1908 und die Haltung der deutschen konservativen und liberalen Parteien: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Provinz Posen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), pp. 46-47.

between 1900 and 1907, its tendency to undermine the government's attempts to legislate against the Poles began to compromise this relationship. With the creation of the 'Bülow Bloc' after the Reichstag elections in January 1907, which lasted until 1909, the Chancellor turned to a majority of National Liberals, Progressives and Conservatives for parliamentary support. Although the Centre had criticised the practical means employed by the government, it nevertheless defended the integrity of the empire within its existing borders. This was perhaps one important reason why the party was of limited appeal to many Polish voters.<sup>396</sup>

With the presence of the Catholic Centre Party minimised in Posen and West Prussia, at least until 1907, the main political representative of Catholic and Polish national interests in the Prussian and Imperial parliaments was the Polish faction, *Koła Polskie*, which consistently won great swathes of seats in Posen and West Prussia. This parliamentary faction had had a presence in the Prussian parliament since 1849, its traditional aim having been to gain greater autonomy for the Polish provinces, although for the leading aristocratic parties, the 'Hof' and 'National' parties, the ultimate aim was a Polish state led by the gentry and clergy. The faction's initial purpose had been to unify Polish deputies in the Landtag, following the dissolution of the Polish League. From the 1850s, the Polish faction had collaborated with the Catholics in the Landtag, since the national interests of the Poles and those of Catholics were interconnected. This affinity would continue throughout the century. The Polish deputies were generally sympathetic towards the programme of the Catholic Centre Party, since they opposed liberal policies concerning the state schools, which they saw as instruments of Germanization.<sup>397</sup>

*Koła Polskie* had represented conservative values throughout its early history, keeping in check democratic tendencies within its ranks. Despite being apparently representative of Polish society in Prussia as a whole, it was markedly classist, being heavily influenced by the landed gentry, whose interests it principally represented; the faction's guiding principle was constantly that the social issues of Polish society must

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<sup>396</sup> Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, pp. 44-47.

<sup>397</sup> v. Massow, *Die Polen-Not*, p. 62 ff; D. Fricke (ed.), *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte: die bürgerlichen und kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland (1789-1945)*, 4 vols (Leipzig, 1983-86), III, 258-267.

be subordinated to the national question. This elitism would eventually lead to the masses' alienation from the faction. *Koła Polskie* had come into existence in order to secure a unified front for Polish deputies in the Prussian parliament. Throughout its history, it mainly collaborated with the Centre, rarely with the Conservatives, and never with the National Liberals.<sup>398</sup>

The rise of a Polish middle class from the 1870s brought the formation of Polish political parties which challenged the political hegemony of the aristocratic parties. Roman Dmowski had identified the origins of this shift in the Polish insurrection of January 1863:

After 1864 a phase of internal work in variously changed conditions followed in Polish society... The main features of this change were the transfer of the essential means of national life to the masses, the incorporation of those elements of the population which had been passive, an increase in the economic productivity of the people, the growth of mass education, democratic society, and the development of national feeling among the peasant class. Against this background of change, a new consciousness of the masses of their political and national power began to develop....<sup>399</sup>

The populists (People's party), representing the Polish bourgeoisie, challenged the Hof candidate in Posen, Cegielski, in the 1893 Reichstag election. But their candidate, Dr Roman Szymański, was defeated heavily by the incumbent loyalist deputy, backed by the gentry-dominated electoral associations.<sup>400</sup> After the populists came the National Democratic movement, propounding radically democratic principles and a more holistic conception of Polish nationalism. National Democrats hoped to develop the political institutions necessary for modern statehood. National Democracy emerged in the train of a rift which had opened up in the Polish national movement ever since the early 1890s and the demise of the politics of loyalism. The first major parliamentary success for the National Democrats came in 1901 at the Reichstag by-election for the constituency of Posen City, which was won by their leader Bernard von Chrzanowski. This win was made with the backing of Szymański's populists.<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

<sup>399</sup> R. Dmowski, *Niemcy, Rosya i kwestya polska* (Lwów, 1908), pp. 11-12.

<sup>400</sup> W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews: the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 228-9.

<sup>401</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4225, pp. 57-60; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 231-36; R. Blanke, 'The Development of Loyalism in Prussian Poland 1886-1890', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 129 (1974), 548-565.

The National Democrats made further progress in the Reichstag elections in 1903 and 1907, and by 1909 the strength of the movement had increased such that it established itself as a formal party. The 'Polish Democratic Association' was founded on 25 May 1909, and from 1910 the party was known as the *Towarzystwo Demokratyczno-Narodowe* (Democratic National Society or 'TDN'). In 1912, the party's membership, composed of members of the bourgeoisie, workers, peasants, and landowners, numbered a mere 500 (mostly in the province of Posen). The majority of members came from the propertied middle class and intelligentsia, and were concentrated in the towns and cities. Nevertheless, by 1914 National Democracy was an influential, albeit minority force, within the Polish national movement, which had cut into the political dominion of the gentry. But the characteristic ethos of the Poles remained conservative, and nationalist activism developed slowly, particularly outside the social jurisdiction of the clergy. The generally weak uptake of the National Democrats' brand of secular nationalism attested to this.<sup>402</sup>

In addition to the political factions of gentry-led conservatism and National Democracy, the Wilhelminian period witnessed the crystallization of a third political camp within Polish society of 'clerical populism'. The movement principally comprised of associations belonging to the *Związek Katolickich Towarzystw Robotników Polskich* ('Union of Polish Catholic Workers' Societies' or ZKTRP), although another important organisation was the *Katolickie Stowarzyszenia Kobiet Pracujących* ('Catholic Societies of Working Women'). These associations, which drew their memberships predominantly from the rural working class, operated under clerical control, and through their social support networks and newspapers, consolidated the fusion of Polish national consciousness and Catholic religiosity among the masses. By 1914 there were

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<sup>402</sup> Leading members and supporters of the Polish Democratic Association included Bernhard von Chrzanowski, the Silesian populist Wojciech Korfanty, the West Prussian populist leader Wiktor Kulerski, and the editor Marian Seyda, who became National Democracy's principal ideologist in Prussia. The new party aimed to provide a voice to a broader section of the Polish bourgeoisie. At its founding meeting around seventy people attended from Posen, West Prussia, Upper Silesia and the provinces of Polish settlement in the West of Germany. Among them were five deputies and twelve editors, clergymen, and representatives of the working class. Around forty people joined the new association with Bernard von Chrzanowski elected as chair. From 1895 the National Democrat organ *Pzegląd Wszechpolski* (All-Polish Review) had been published in Lwów, and disseminated the ideas of Polish nationalism in all three partitions of Poland. APP. *Polizeipräsidium Posen*, No. 4225, pp. 57-60; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 231-36; R. Leslie, *The History of Poland since 1863* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 26-35.



271 associations belonging to the Union with a membership of 31,140; this was the largest Polish occupational organisation. The ZKTRP published on a weekly basis a journal called *Robotnik* ('Worker'). As well as providing social support and aid, the ZKTRP also represented workers' economic interests through its negotiations with estate owners. In this role the union represented a clerical counterpoise to the influence of the secular unionism of the Free Trade Unions, although it naturally opposed the concept of class struggle. The brand of popular Catholic-Polish nationalism propagated by *Robotnik* was matched by another weekly, the *Przedownik Katolicki* ('Catholic Guide'), published from 1895 under the aegis of the archdiocese of Posen-Gnesen, which also worked to elevate the national-political consciousness of the Polish masses.<sup>403</sup>

### (iii) The 'Confessional Conflict'

The relatively stable relationships between Catholic Germans, Poles and their traditional political representatives, began around 1900 to come under strain. This was due not only to the escalating 'nationality conflict', which was being fuelled by the government, but also to the existence of a 'confessional conflict'. The Catholic Germans were situated at the intersection between these two conflicts; their 'transnational' consciousness and behaviour was of critical significance for both.

The perception and reality of civil discrimination against Catholics was at the core of the confessional conflict, and the principal reason for a programme of expansion of Centre politics in the East from 1907, the so-called 'Zentrumsritt nach dem Osten'. This new political programme was prompted by the Prussian government's Germanization policies, which became construed as tantamount to 'Protestantization'. A case in point was the apparently disproportionate number of Protestant Germans who were settled by the Colonization Commission in Posen and West Prussia in relation to the numbers of Catholics. Matthias Erzberger, in a polemical work against government *Polenpolitik*,

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<sup>403</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 238-244; J. Staszewski, 'Rola kleru katolickiego w ruchu robotniczym na terenie Wielkopolski i Pomorza (1891-1914)', *Zeszyty naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu Nauki humanistyczno-społeczne*, 1 (1957).

called for all Catholics to unite against the deleterious consequences of government *Ostpolitik* for Catholicism in Germany. According to Erzberger, Protestantization of the East had the support of the government which used public money for this purpose. As evidence of deliberate Protestantization, he presented the following figures: of the 13,617 settlers in the East between 1886 and 1907, only 537 were Catholics, whereas 13,080 were Protestant; in other words 96 percent of settlers were Protestant. This needed to be considered in relation to the fact that roughly two-thirds of Prussia's (and Germany's) population was Protestant.<sup>404</sup>

The Centre's concerns over Protestantization inevitably connected with the already sensitive question of the national and confessional status of the Catholic Germans. This was one of the most critical issues which developed among the parties, and was reflected in the press. A political struggle emerged over this critical constituency, which involved the Centre, the Polish faction, the 'German national' parties, and political organisations such as the *Verband der Vereine der deutschen Katholiken* and the *Volksverein für das katholische Deutschland*, which strove to support the 'national' interests of Catholic Germans against Polonization. The Catholic Centre Party's 'Ride to the East' resulted in further collaboration with the Polish faction, causing widespread criticism in the conservative and liberal press (which were usually Protestant and nationalist in tone) for being an act of betrayal against the German nation. The policy of the Centre was portrayed as aiding the denationalisation of German Catholics. On the other hand, the German Catholic press typically expressed the view that the presence of

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<sup>404</sup> Of the 13,617 colonists settled by the Colonization Commission up to end of 1907, 13,080 were Protestant and 537 Catholic. Moreover, up to the end of 1906, 242 new Protestant and eleven Catholic villages were founded, with plans in the pipeline for a further 77 Protestant and eight Catholic villages. The Commission only settled, in principle, Protestants, or occasionally Catholics in areas which German Catholics already inhabited so as to bolster the population against the threat of Polonization. M. Erzberger, *Der Kampf*, pp. 56-60; J. Buzek, *Historia polityki narodowościowej Rządu Pruskiego wobec Polaków od traktatów wiedeńskich do ustaw wyjątkowych z r. 1908* (Lwów, 1909), pp. 326-327; R. Morsey, 'Der politische Katholizismus 1890-1933', in Rauscher (ed.), *Der Soziale und Politische Katholizismus: Entwicklungslinien in Deutschland 1803-1963*, 2 vols (München, 1981-82), I, 110-164. The perceived magnitude of the confessional conflict was also attested to in a letter (16 Sept. 1901) sent to the Centre deputy Richard Müller from Karl Bachem, in which the latter went so far as to assert that the 'Hakatists hate the Poles mainly because they are Catholics; that is my deep conviction, and therefore we must fight the Hakatists to the end.' Quoted in H. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton, 1995), p. 194.

the Centre in Posen and West Prussia would effect better relations between the nationalities.<sup>405</sup>

The most symbolic act of Centre-Polish collaboration was the practice of electoral compromise. One consequence of this was that German Catholics became obligated in certain circumstances to vote for Polish candidates. One of the most notorious instances of this was at the by-election for the Reichstag seat in the constituency of Meseritz-Bomst in the north-west of Posen, on 12 December 1908. The political importance of the constituency of Meseritz-Bomst was in part due to the fact that it was one of only two constituencies in the regency of Posen in which German national candidates had won Reichstag mandates between 1874 and 1907 (see table A1). Meseritz-Bomst had been controlled continually by the Reichspartei and, since 1903, by the Conservatives. The constituency was a rare German foothold in a Polish wilderness, and therefore of great symbolic significance.<sup>406</sup>

The 1907 Reichstag election had been won by a German 'bloc' candidate, but following his election there was serious concern within the German press about the likelihood of a repeat win for a German candidate.<sup>407</sup> At the by-election in 1908, Poles were expected, according to the terms of compromise, to vote for the Centre candidate,

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<sup>405</sup> 'Ansiedlung katholischer Deutscher in der Ostmark', *Der Tag*, 24 Dec. 1908; 'Die deutsche Gefahr in den Ostmarken: Eine Zentrumssorge', *Königlich privilegierte Berlinische Zeitung*, 13 Dec. 1908; APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223, pp. 4, 5, 7, 85.

<sup>406</sup> The other constituency which had been controlled by German parties between these years was Fraustadt.

<sup>407</sup> Despite their differing priorities and constituencies, the German parties collaborated on the regional level electorally in order to form a 'national front' against the Poles. The conservative parties collaborated with the National Liberals and Progressive parties in the German associations, at which German candidates were nominated to stand against Poles at elections. The Catholic Centre Party never joined these associations and it was generally the case that the policies of the Centre were opposed by the National Liberals in parliament. The National Liberals left the German association in Posen following the Reichstag election in 1907. The parliamentary tradition of collaboration between liberals and the Polish faction in Berlin finally came to an end in 1907 with the creation of the 'Bülow bloc'. From 1907, electoral compromises among German parties against Polish candidates became characteristic of political life on Reichstag, Landtag, and local government levels. In response to this, the strategy was adopted by the Polish electoral authorities that Polish voters would support only Polish candidates on first ballots, but then in runoffs between German candidates, Polish voters should aim to tip the balance in favour of the candidate most favourable to the Polish cause. B. Grześ, *et al.*, *Niemcy w Poznanskiem wobec polityki germanizacyjnej 1815-1920* (Poznań, 1976), p. 252; *Handbuch für die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1901), pp. 191, 207, 209; Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, pp. 153-154; Balzer, *Die Preussische Polenpolitik*, pp. 40-52.

Father Roenspiess. Roenspiess, however, failed to win the seat, with the vote for the 'bloc' candidate in fact rising from 11,380 to 11,506.<sup>408</sup>

Knowledge of an electoral compromise in Meseritz-Bomst was officially denied at the time of the election, with the principle only being accepted some time later in a statement issued by Matthias Erzberger and Hans Oppersdorff. As a response to the electoral compromise on the Polish side, the *Gazeta Gdańska*, noting its failure, argued that despite the agenda of the political elite and intelligentsia in the province, the Poles generally succumbed to the mistaken belief that the 'German Catholics' were led in politics by their religion.<sup>409</sup> Despite such cynicism, the Centre campaigned at this time with a message of transnational unity. One of its electoral slogans was: 'The German Catholics for the Poles, the Poles for the Centre'. The Poles were also described in campaign material as 'our German brothers of Polish tongue'.<sup>410</sup>

The failure of the compromise strategy at the Meseritz-Bomst by-election was attributable, according to the Polish newspaper *Dziennik Poznański*, to the number of incidences where Catholic Germans (of which there was estimated to have been 4000 in total), associating the Centre candidate with the Poles, maintained their support for the candidate of the German national bloc, rather than opting for the Centre. The theory was supported by the result that in the by-election, the Centre candidate received roughly the same number of votes, which in the 1907 Reichstag election had gone to the Poles (8424) and Centre (1682), although the German bloc candidate had gained 126 votes.<sup>411</sup> Whether some German Catholics were led to vote against the Centre, because of its closeness to the Poles, and out of concern for their national interest, remains a matter for speculation.

The strategy of the Centre in Posen and West Prussia, intended to defend Catholicism, was conceived as providing a necessary political alternative to the 'national Catholicism' represented by Catholic state officials, who were portrayed in the socialist and Centre press as being in the 'Hakatist' camp. Government *Polenpolitik* in general and the German 'national' parties were also labelled as 'Hakatist', and so

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<sup>408</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223, pp. 35, 52.

<sup>409</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223, pp. 101, 122, 137.

<sup>410</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223, p. 35.

<sup>411</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223, p. 52.

was a new organisation which was founded specifically in response to the Centre: the *Verband der Vereine der deutschen Katholiken*. The Centre press branded the *Verband* as 'National Catholicism'. But others saw the founding of this organisation as signifying an important change in the identity and politics of German Catholics in favour of their 'nationality'; a reawakening of national consciousness.<sup>412</sup>

The *Verband der Vereine der deutschen Katholiken* was founded in 1900, constituted from a loose network of previously existing German Catholic associations, to 'promote the religious life and to cultivate good German consciousness'.<sup>413</sup> Its formation was a direct response to the perceived anti-national posture of the Centre. It aimed, through its organisation, to reinforce the national identity of German Catholics, and was therefore decidedly sectarian. One of its activities was to campaign for state money for the support of churches designated for German Catholics.<sup>414</sup> The *Verband*, whose influence centred mainly on the province of Posen, published from 1 April 1905 its own organ, the *Katholische Rundschau*, published in Krotoschin. By 1903, the *Verband* had 697 members in the province of Posen, spread between 14 associations.<sup>415</sup> By September 1909, the union's membership had risen to 2,760, and by 1912 it had risen again to 3,200, still scarcely 3 percent of the German Catholic population.<sup>416</sup>

The attendance records of a delegates' meeting held on 9 October 1904 in Inowrazlaw, reveal the *Verband's* membership profile, as well as its political connections. At this meeting, the *Oberpräsident* and *Regierungs-Präsident* of Bromberg were represented by a councillor named Dr Waschow and the prefect Dr Buresch, from Inowrazlaw. The various delegates and guests present included mainly

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<sup>412</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, p. 393.

<sup>413</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, p. 33.

<sup>414</sup> There were also equivalent organisations in existence, working to sustain Protestant communities in the so-called 'Diaspora'. These included the *Gustav-Adolf-Vereine*, the *Evangelische Bund* (300,000 members in 1906) and the *Evangelische Arbeitervereine* (Evangelical Workers' Associations). By 1913, the network of *Evangelical Workers' Associations* had 30 local branches in the province of Posen, including branches with between 300 and 600 members in the towns of Posen, Bromberg, Lissa, Fraustadt, Schneidemühl, and Schönlanke. The Protestant associations and support groups played an important role in the colonization project, by providing a bulwark against the Polonizing influence of Catholicism. It was common for pastors to participate in political activity aimed at Germanization and the provincial authority valued greatly the positive contribution which the Evangelical Church could make to the national conflict, giving monetary rewards to those pastors who were most active in this kind of activity. *Handbuch für die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1901); Grześ, *Niemcy*, pp. 320-325.

<sup>415</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, pp. 44-68.

<sup>416</sup> Grześ, *Niemcy*, p. 321.

priests, subaltern officials, teachers and police officers. It is also a curious fact that the Centre candidate for Meseritz-Bomst in 1908, Father Roenspiess, was present.<sup>417</sup>

At this meeting, the Inowrazlaw branch association tabled the motion: 'The Royal State Government should be asked to consider more the German Catholics with regard to settlement in the Eastern Marches'. The essential question of this motion concerned the proportion of Catholic settlers in the East in relation to those of Protestant religion. Conclusive explanations for the seemingly disproportionate number of Catholics were not forthcoming, although the common belief that Catholics were discriminated against by the Colonization Commission was generally dismissed. The opinion was expressed by some delegates that increasing the numbers of German Catholic officials such as teachers, and railway- and post-officers, was most important to bolster the interests of German Catholics in general.

For the reason that German Catholics under the influence of the Polish clergy could not be relied upon to vote for the German candidates, it was argued that it was more important and effective to raise the national consciousness of the German Catholics by introducing more German Catholic officials into the region so that German Catholics would not become culturally and institutionally excluded by being pushed further into the Polish milieu. Part of the blame for the predicament of German Catholics was attributed by some members to there not being enough priests available for the German Catholics. In order to solve this problem, it was suggested that appeals should be made to the bishops, rather than the government. The meeting was concluded with the passing of a modified motion: 'The Royal State Government should be asked to pay more attention to German Catholics with the settlement in the Eastern Marches, especially in the regions where German Catholic worshipers are existing, and to appoint more Catholic officials and teachers of German nationality in the East.'<sup>418</sup>

This agenda, however, with its particular emphasis on the importance of German Catholic officials, was not seen so positively by the Centre press. Thus, the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* reported in May 1907:

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<sup>417</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, pp. 33, 37, 335-337.

<sup>418</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, pp. 289-311.

It is very common in the Eastern Marches that one speaks politically of 'Catholics' and not of the 'Centre', as with the *Katholische Rundschau*, which pointedly emphasises the word 'Catholic', but unfortunately is 'national Catholic', and an outspoken government organ. Accordingly, the leaders of the 'Catholics' are almost exclusively officials, namely government officials, gymnasium and elementary school teachers and post office officials etc. Now and then these people represent themselves as 'Centre people'. But if a Centre member from the Rhineland, Westphalia, or Bavaria speaks to such a person, he believes that he is conversing with a National Liberal or Conservative. Our task therefore is to liberate the German Catholics of the Eastern Marches from the misguided leadership of these 'national-Catholic' officials.

Instead of the leadership of the 'officials', it was suggested in this article that Centre organisation in the East must be based upon a body of activists composed of farmers, business people and selected priests.<sup>419</sup>

At the Inowrazlaw meeting of the *Verband* the theme of the long-standing susceptibility of German Catholics to the influences of their priests, and the related problem of their voting for Polish candidates, was also raised. This point threw into doubt the desirability of creating new Catholic German settlements at all. One delegate from the town of Samter reported:

If we create German Catholic communities, it happens that when it comes to an election, not the German, but the Polish candidate is elected. We had nominated a Centre candidate and encouraged the German Catholics to give their votes to him, but then the Polish clergy intervened. Admittedly, they did not claim that our candidate was Protestant, but what was the result of their agitation? The German Catholics did not vote for the German candidate and the Polish candidate won.<sup>420</sup>

The tendency of German Catholics to vote for Polish parliamentary candidates was remarked upon in the press and in the discussions within political factions. In particular, the conservative publicist Hans Delbrück remarked upon this phenomenon in his influential study of the 'Polish Question' (1894). He noted 'at the last [Reichstag] election, a section of the colonists, those specially sent out as pioneers of *Deutschtum*, voted Polish.'<sup>421</sup> He attributed this occurrence to the low level of national consciousness among Germans in the mixed provinces, and added: 'but it is still even more characteristic, that the German press and public opinion in Posen did absolutely nothing to put this occurrence sufficiently to the pillory, and to deter, to some extent, the traitors in the future.'<sup>422</sup> As a solution to this problem, Delbrück advocated the 'self-

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<sup>419</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223a, p. 140; APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4223, p. 2.

<sup>420</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, p. 291.

<sup>421</sup> H. Delbrück, *Die Polenfrage* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 33-34.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*

help' of the German people in the East, for instance, through the formation of 'defensive' national associations. It was the Eastern Marches Association which eventually took the leading role in these efforts.<sup>423</sup>

Similarly, the influential Hakatist, Leo Wegener, noted it as being one of the characteristic features of the German Catholics that they 'feel drawn in all districts until recently, as a result of the *Kulturkampf*, more to confessional solidarity than national solidarity'.<sup>424</sup> He cited the example of the Reichstag by-election of 1900 in Meseritz-Bomst, where the German Catholics were instructed by the clergy and the Centre to elect the radical Polish lawyer von Czarnowski, rather than the German Catholic priest Krzesinski. Moreover, Wegener cited the Reichstag election results for the region as evidence 'that the German Catholics are inclined to give their allegiance politically to the Poles'.<sup>425</sup> For instance, in the constituency of Fraustadt-Lissa a Pole became elected twice (1881 and 1893), although the district of Fraustadt was only one-quarter Polish and Lissa only one-third Polish; both districts, however, were three-fifths Catholic. In addition, he suggested that the electoral victories of Polish candidates in majority-Catholic Wirsitz-Schubin in 1898, 1884, 1881 and 1877, were only achieved with the support of the Catholic Germans, and that in Meseritz-Bomst the Poles would not have presented such a formidable minority without the help of the Catholic Germans.<sup>426</sup> German Catholics were also identified as supporters of Polish candidates in the case of the 'Bamberger' who lived in the wool-combing villages in the environs of Posen. Their foremost historian Max Bär, writing in 1882, reported that at the last Landtag election, of the 165 votes cast in the German village of Ratai, 162 were for the Polish and only three for the German candidate. This behaviour was characteristic of the other Bamberger villages.<sup>427</sup>

Discrepancies between the electoral successes of Polish candidates and the size of the Polish population in their respective constituencies were not so striking in the

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<sup>423</sup> Ibid.

<sup>424</sup> According to Wegener, the Catholic clergy actively promoted the doctrine that 'Polish and Catholic are the same'. L. Wegener, *Der wirtschaftliche Kampf der Deutschen mit den Polen um die Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1903), pp. 23, 206.

<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>427</sup> M. Bär, *Die 'Bamberger' bei Posen zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Polonisierungsbestrebungen in der Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1882), p. 52.



constituencies of West Prussia, where Poles were in the majority of cases a sizable minority. Most Polish mandates had been won in the heavily Polish-speaking Kashubian constituencies in the north-west of the province such as Konitz, Neustadt-Carthus and Berent-Stargardt. One constituency where the support of German Catholics for the Polish candidate appears probable however, was the constituency of Graudenz-Strassburg. Here, the Pole, v. Rozycki, defeated the German candidate in second ballots with narrow margins in the Reichstag elections of 1890 and 1893. Despite the districts of Graudenz and Strassburg being only 47.5 percent Polish, their combined Catholic population stood at 54 percent (see table A1).<sup>428</sup>

In forging confessional allegiance among Catholic Germans at election times, the influence of the Catholic clergy was decisive. Indeed, the influence of the clergy was generally strong in the social life of Catholic communities, particularly in the provision of school education. As one Catholic workers' newspaper put it: 'The priest should be, as it is the will of Jesus Christ, who has given you the clergy, the trustee of your conscience in all aspects of your life, in health and illness, in fortune and misfortune, in joy and sorrow'.<sup>429</sup> Moreover, the joint attack made by the *Kulturkampf* on confession and nationality had stimulated a campaign by the Catholic clergy against Bismarck's anti-Catholicism. During the period of the *Kulturkampf*, influential priests such as Florian von Stablewski and Ludwig von Jazdzewski belonged to *Koła Polskie*. The clergy also formed the basis of the Polish intelligentsia and many Polish deputies were priests. The popular image of Catholic priests as national representatives had been enhanced by the imprisonment of the Archbishop of Posen-Gnesen, Mieczysław

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<sup>428</sup> Rozycki won 10,628 votes against 10,310 for the German candidate in 1890 and 10,556 against 9,865 in 1893. Cases of transnational allegiance were not confined to German voters. For instance, one of the leading National Democrat activists, Karol Rzepecki, reported how a 'secession' had occurred in the constituency of Fraustadt-Lissa, where even members of the district Polish electoral committee, campaigned in 1912 for the election of the German Centre politician Hans Oppersdorff. This secession had, it was claimed, cost the Poles 800 votes. Polish allegiance to German parties was evident elsewhere in the East. Josef Buzek noted how at the Reichstag election of 1907 two-fifths of Polish voters in Upper Silesia voted for a non-Polish candidate, and in the Polish Diaspora in western Germany, the figure was significantly more than half of Polish voters. K. Rzepecki, *Naprzód czy wstecz?* (Poznań, 1912), p. 43; Buzek, *Historia*, p. 565; P. Schwabe and F. Specht, *Die Reichstags-Wahlen*; L. Belzyt, *Sprachliche Minderheiten im preussischen Staat 1815-1914: die preussische Sprachenstatistik in Bearbeitung und Kommentar* (Marburg, 1998).

<sup>429</sup> 'Die Bedeutung des Priestertums', *Feierabend* (supplement of *Der Arbeiter*), 1 Aug. 1909.

Ledóchowski in 1876, as well as many other priests, following his resistance to the government controls over the Church brought by the May laws of 1872.<sup>430</sup>

Catholic priests were not, however, exclusively affiliated to Polish nationalism. Some had also joined the ranks of the *Verband der Vereine der deutschen Katholiken*. But this move turned out to be controversial, and not only because the *Verband* existed, in part, for the purpose of keeping in check the influence of the Catholic clergy over the German Catholics. As a lay organisation, the *Verband* was criticised by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church for not being authorised to represent Church interests, and for its criticisms and propaganda against the Church authorities. As a consequence, the Archbishop of Posen-Gnesen, Stablewski, decreed that all priests should leave the Catholic associations belonging to the *Verband*. On 12 March 1906, the bishop Likowski, representing Stablewski, again wrote a letter directed to the seven Catholic priests who belonged to the Posen Social Association of German Catholics, in which he ordered the withdrawal of priests from this organisation, because it was expected to join the *Verband*.<sup>431</sup>

A curious twist in the progress of the 'confessional conflict', which co-existed with the 'nationality conflict', was the coming into being of what the *Dziennik Poznański* labelled pejoratively in one of its headlines as 'New pseudo-reformation attempts in Poland undertaken by the Prussian Pastors'.<sup>432</sup> Indeed, on 11 June 1908, an 'Evangelisation Society for Catholic Poles' was founded in Kempen in Posen. The aim of this society was plainly to convert Catholic Poles to Protestantism, which it was (perhaps naively) believed would, given the removal of the deleterious influence of the Polish-Catholic priests, help bring about harmony between the two nationalities. According to the society's founding constitution, Protestantism had the power to bind the nations together lastingly. It was not 'Germanization' which was needed but 'Protestantization'. But the success of this society in its aims is doubtful, especially since it was commonly asserted, or at least insinuated, in the Polish and Catholic press that the organisation was backed by the government as part of its package of Germanization policies. In general, the numbers of Polish Protestants were small and

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<sup>430</sup> Hagen, *Germans, Poles and Jews*, p. 128.

<sup>431</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4669, pp. 597, 550.

<sup>432</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4670, p. 5.

only significant in the south-eastern region of the Posen regency. The society issued, from 1 October 1908, a Polish newspaper, the *Przewodnik Chrzesciowski* (*Christian Leader*). A free copy of issue number 9 was distributed to every household in Posen.<sup>433</sup>

The activities of organisations such as the 'Evangelisation Society for Catholic Poles' and the *Verband der Vereine der deutschen Katholiken* reinforced the perception that politico-national affiliation followed from confessional status; in other words, that religion preceded and underpinned political nationalism. In Prussian Poland, where nationalism was closely connected to confession, this perception closely matched reality, with German Catholics being the prime case in point. This was the reason why control over confessional relationships was of concern to so many parties, including the churches, the government, and national associations.<sup>434</sup> Therefore, the notion of a 'national conflict' masks a pluralism of conflict, the underlying structure of which was substantially religious. The dynamic of the so-called 'nationality conflict' in the Eastern Marches was, to a large extent, religious.

#### (iv) Conclusion

The 'national conflict' in Prussia's eastern provinces co-existed and intersected with a potent 'religious conflict'. Between 1871 and 1914, Catholicism served as an effective mediator of political integration between the German and Polish nationalities in the Eastern Marches. During the 1870s, the *Kulturkampf* strengthened the popular association of Catholicism with the Polish national cause. This political phase established the main points of reference for a 'Catholic-Polish axis' which transcended the national divide. The salient feature of integration between Germans and Poles along the axis was the political incorporation of German Catholics into Polish politics. The

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<sup>433</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 4670, pp. 2, 5, 15. Similar aspirations had been held by a contemporary movement called 'Los von Rom' which had as its goal the conversion of nationally-conscious German Catholics in Cisleithanian Austria to Protestantism: ultimately the creation of a 'Protestant Pan-Germany'. One of the movement's leaders, Friedrich Meyer, had sought to bring Los von Rom to the German Reich, although his efforts largely failed. For an account of the Los von Rom movement, see Smith, *German Nationalism*, pp. 180, 206-32.

<sup>434</sup> Protestant organisations such as the Gustav-Adolf Verein and Evangelische Bund highlighted in numerous papers and booklets the insecurity of the Evangelical 'Diaspora' communities: those in the outlying border regions of the Reich such as the Eastern Marches and Alsace-Lorraine. See Hermens, *Die gemeinsame Gefahr*.

principal phenomenon of this was the choice made by significant numbers of German Catholics to prioritize their religion by voting for a Polish candidate. This confounded the assumption that a German 'national' would naturally support a German party candidate or be guided by national categories of thought. A transnational consciousness had come into being which transgressed the logic of nationalism and determined political behaviour.

After 1900, and particularly as a result of the Centre's 'Ride to the East' from 1907, the problematic relationship between religion and nationalism entered into a new phase of politicization. This turn in events was manifested in the emergence of new religiously-defined pressure groups such as the 'Evangelisation Society for Catholic Poles' and the 'Union of Associations of German Catholics'. Such political negotiations were symbolic of the continual flux and re-adaptation between religious and national groups, characteristic of daily life in Posen and West Prussia. Within this contest for religious and political power, attempts were being made by German and Polish factions to establish national stability. This objective was worked for on the German side through the initiation of electoral compromises among the German parties in 1907, which were intended to create an electoral united front against the threat from Polish nationalism, led by the National Democrats. The success of the 'bloc' candidate at the Reichstag by-election in Meseritz-Bomst in 1908 showed that such attempts could be successful.

The Catholic-Polish axis exemplified how the complexities of social and political engagement between members of each nationality caused the national interface to be transgressed in the name of religion. A significant proportion of German Catholics chose to prioritise their religion over a national allegiance. In doing so they subverted the integrity of the German nationality in the East and hampered the efforts of the state and its agencies such as the Union of Associations of German Catholics to promote German national interests. German Catholicism had mediated the formation of intrinsically transnational categories of political thought and behaviour.

## Chapter 6

### Germans, Poles, and the Socialist Movement

In the political landscape of the German-Polish provinces, the formation of specifically transnational forms of consciousness and behaviour found a second source in the Social Democratic movement. The first weak flickers of socialism had appeared in Posen and West Prussia during the 1870s. Its most important representatives were the German Social Democrats (SPD) and, after 1892, the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). This chapter examines the juncture between nationalism and transnationalism within the local context. It is to be argued that at grass-roots level, transnational organisational structures and behaviours came into existence in the Eastern Marches which were, above all, the consequence of an 'internationalist' ideology. It is therefore necessary first to examine the ideological discourses within the Social Democratic movement which had a bearing upon the national question in the Prussian East.<sup>435</sup>

#### (i) Ideology

The development of Social Democracy in Posen and West Prussia, as elsewhere in the German Empire, had been boosted by the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Laws in 1890. Until then, socialist organisation and agitation had been slow to develop in the Prussian East, partly as a consequence of these laws.<sup>436</sup> The Erfurt Programme, promulgated at

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<sup>435</sup> Social Democratic discourse vis-à-vis the Polish question developed on two main levels. The first was the critique of the state's *Polenpolitik*; the second related to the prospect of the establishment of a Polish state. In respect to the first, it is noteworthy that the SPD possessed no mandates in the Landtag until October 1908. Consequently, the party's role was principally one of 'critic', unable to bear any great influence upon the formulation and course of *Polenpolitik* in the Prussian parliament. In regard to the reconstitution of a Polish state, the SPD's position, particularly in Reich-level politics up to 1914, had long been coloured by the prospect of war with Tsarist Russia. Social Democrats saw the Tsardom as an enemy, and were generally supportive of the resurrection of Poland at Russia's expense. H-U. Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie und Nationalstaat: Nationalitätenfragen in Deutschland 1840-1914* (Göttingen, 1971), pp. 104, 108, 167.

<sup>436</sup> For this reason, the source material pertaining to Social Democracy in Posen and West Prussia mainly dates from after 1890, when its activity became a considerable matter for the police to survey and record. Socialists had been active however in the Eastern Marches during the period of illegality. Newspaper reports tell of strikes and covert socialist meetings held in the city of Posen during the 1870s and 1880s. And the first trial of Polish socialists in Posen began on 15 February 1882. A report of the trial in the

the SPD party conference during the following year, established a doctrinal basis for political activity. This programme was essentially Marxist, but marked by elements of political opportunism; challenges to the Gotha programme, the ideological consequences of imperialism within the working class, and the influx of members of the petite bourgeoisie into the SPD had each had important effects upon the course of Social Democratic ideology.<sup>437</sup> In addition to the Erfurt Programme, critical ideological developments began to take shape during the early 1890s in respect of the Polish question.

The Polish question came to prominence within the SPD in the ideological debates which preceded the Polish secession marked by the founding of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) in 1893.<sup>438</sup> The principal demand of the PPS was, from the outset, the reconstitution of Poland according to the pre-1772 boundaries. Polish national independence was regarded as prerequisite for achieving the social emancipation of the Polish working class. A separatist current in the Polish socialist tradition had long predated the formation of the PPS. But from 1892, 'patriotic socialism' won the upper

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*Orędownik* newspaper lists the defendants. They were Stanisław Mendelson (medical student from Warsaw, aged 24), Wrocisław Truszkowski (Catholic medical student, aged 25, from Russian Poland), Maria Jankowska (aged 31, Catholic), Józef Konstanty Janiszewski (bookbinder, aged 25, from Grätz in Posen), Julian Bujakiewicz (machine operator from Posen, aged 30), Stanisław Goryszewski (Catholic, aged 25, from Russian Poland), and Antoni Kosobudzki (tobacco worker from Posen, aged 37). *Orędownik*, No. 26, 1882. See W. Jakóbczyk, *Wielkopolska 1851-1914: wybór źródeł* (Wrocław, 1954), p. 80 ff.

<sup>437</sup> As with the Eisenacher (1869) and Gotha (1875) programmes, there had not been any reference to the Polish question in the Erfurt Programme. H. v. Zitzewitz, *Das deutsche Polenbild in der Geschichte: Entstehung-Einflüsse-Auswirkungen* (Köln, 1991), pp. 199-200; B. Danilczuk, *Działalność SPD i PPS Zaboru Pruskiego w Poznanskiem w Latach 1891-1914* (Toruń, 1962), pp. 23-24; S. Berger, *Social Democracy and the Working Class in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Germany* (Harlow, 2000), pp. 79-80.

<sup>438</sup> In 1892, separate Polish parties were established in Germany and Austria. The Polish Socialist Party (PPS) was formed when these parties were amalgamated, and joined with representatives from Russian Poland. At a conference held in Paris in autumn 1892 (17-23 November) of representatives of all Polish socialist unions, it was agreed to found in London the *Związek Zagraniczny Socjalistów Polskich* ('Foreign Union of Polish Socialists') as a centre for the organisation of Polish Social Democracy. The Union renamed itself the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) in the newspaper *Przedświt* in July 1893. The *Polska Partya Socjalistyczna zaboru pruskiego* ('Polish Socialist Party of the Prussian Partition' or 'Prussian PPS') was founded on 10 September 1893. This new party became a subsidiary of the SPD. Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 119-121; R. Wistrich, 'Rosa Luxemburg, Leo Jogiches and the Jewish Labour Movement, 1893-1903', in Rapaport-Albert and Zipperstein (eds.), *Jewish History. Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky* (London, 1988), pp. 529-545 (p. 530); J. Lim, 'Labour and the national question in Poland', in Berger and Smith (eds.), *Nationalism, Labour and Ethnicity 1870-1939* (Manchester, 1999), pp. 121-144 (p. 128).

hand, led by the PPS, over earlier, though still existing, internationalism.<sup>439</sup> At this time, articles appeared in the Social Democratic press which attempted to justify this course of action. Georg Ledebour had argued that the main justification for the establishment of a Polish sister organisation (still under the auspices of the SPD), was the need to fight the Prussian government's oppressive Germanization policies, like those concerning elementary school education. It was argued that to advance most effectively the struggle against national oppression and at the same time to further the socio-economic agenda of Social Democracy, it was necessary for Poles to organise and agitate in their own language; only then could socialist politics be disseminated effectively. This argument was not uncontested within the party ranks.<sup>440</sup>

An enduring rift opened up within the Social Democratic movement over the Polish question. One feature of this was the secession of Rosa Luxemburg and other Polish exiles in Zurich from the PPS in 1893 to form a new party, the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland (SDKP), led by Luxemburg and another Polish socialist, Leo Jogiches.<sup>441</sup> This party operated only within the Russian Empire, and so officially only within the Russian partition. The party incorporated a Lithuanian faction, consisting of workers in the regions of Grodno and Vilnius, in 1899, following which it became known as the 'Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania' (SDKPiL).<sup>442</sup> Moreover, in the autumn of 1893, the left wing of the German socialist press launched a campaign against the PPS leader, Pepesowski, and his organisation over the issue of nationality and the restoration of Poland. This campaign, led by the leadership of the SDKP, particularly Rosa Luxemburg, criticised the PPS for being unnecessary and harmful to the workers' struggle. It was also argued that the PPS was a

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<sup>439</sup> The 'internationalist' doctrine in the Polish socialist tradition had been represented by Waryński and his party, 'Proletariat', founded in 1882; the 'patriotic socialism' of the PPS was heir to the latter theories of Bolesław Limanowski, who had sought to combine 'patriotism' and 'socialism'. W. Feldman, *Geschichte der politische Ideen in Polen seit dessen Teilungen (1795-1914)* (Berlin, 1917), pp. 313-322; Lim, 'Labour', pp. 124-5.

<sup>440</sup> G. Ledebour, 'Die Sonderorganisation der polnischen Sozialdemokraten', *Vorwärts*, 29 Oct. 1893.

<sup>441</sup> Rosa Luxemburg, Leo Jogiches, Julian Marchlewski and Adolf Warszawski were the leading personalities in the SDKP from its foundation.

<sup>442</sup> The SDKPiL was incorporated subsequently into the Russian Social Democratic Party as its branch for the Polish and Lithuanian territories within the Russian Empire. Rosa Luxemburg's views concerning nationalism put her and her party, the SDKPiL, in direct conflict with the right-wing of the PPS. Luxemburg's refusal to accept the right of self-determination was, in part, responsible for the secession of the SDKPiL in 1903 from the Russian Social Democratic Party.

financial liability to the SPD and that it had not been able to make any great headway politically, either in Posen, Upper Silesia or West Prussia.<sup>443</sup>

The Polish scholar, Witold Łukaszewicz, has identified three main positions or tendencies in relation to the ideological conflict between the SPD and PPS as it existed in the period 1897-1903. First, there were the 'conciliators', represented by the German Social Democrats August Bebel, Georg Ledebour, Karl Kautsky, and the Polish socialists Franz Morawski, Stanisław Rybicki, and August Berfus. Second, were the 'liquidators', including Rosa Luxemburg, and the German Social Democrat August Winter, as well as some other representatives of the SPD leadership. Individuals in this category were hostile to the existence of the PPS. Finally, there were the 'chauvinist-nationalists', represented by Ignaz Auer and Josef Gogowski (of the SPD) and Georg Haase, Franz Merkowski, Stanisław Wierbinski, and Podemski (of the PPS).<sup>444</sup>

On a purely ideological level, Rosa Luxemburg had argued the most fervent and unequivocal case for the doctrine of international workers' solidarity in respect of the Polish question. She represented this model in its most 'ideal' form. Luxemburg was also of special significance to the Eastern Marches because she was not only an expert on Poland and the Polish question, becoming established as the SPD authority on Polish affairs, but had also worked as an activist in the region. For these reasons, she must take centre stage in an analysis of ideology and internationalism in the Polish provinces. It will then be possible to compare this ideology with the political practices found in the region.<sup>445</sup>

Rosa Luxemburg's thesis was that a general proletarian revolution in Germany, Poland and Austria necessarily preceded national self-determination. This thesis was supported by a number of arguments. Firstly, socio-economic conditions rendered the aspiration for independence utopian and futile. In her doctoral thesis *Die industrielle Entwicklung Polens* (1898), Luxemburg had demonstrated how the development of capitalism in Poland had bound Poland economically to Russia. The main markets of

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<sup>443</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, pp. 46-48.

<sup>444</sup> W. Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy w Wielkopolsce i na Pomorzu Gdanskim 1890-1907* (Toruń, 1961), p. 39.

<sup>445</sup> Norman Davies has gone so far as to describe Luxemburg as 'the single most influential theorist in the history of Polish communism.' N. Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* vol. II (Oxford, 1981), p. 542.



Polish industry were in Russia. The resurrection of Poland would consequently be contrary to the economic processes of development existent in Poland. Moreover, capitalism had produced an urban working class in Russia whose militancy challenged the power of Tsarist rule and heralded the possibility of its overthrow.

Secondly, she argued that there was no social class in Poland that had the interest or the ability to effect the restoration of Poland, except for the intelligentsia. Independence would require an intervention by an imperialist state. Thirdly, Polish independence would mean the creation of another oppressive and expansionist capitalist state. Solidarity between workers in the new state and those of the partitioning states would disintegrate and the workers' movement would become threatened by petite-bourgeois nationalism. The struggle over national rights and borders would only divert workers from the class struggle which ultimately united them. Ultimately, the very concept of a 'right' of national self-determination was extraneous to the logic of the dialectic. With the establishment of socialism, and the realisation of the unity of humanity and freedom from all oppression, the criterion of national self-determination would no longer apply.<sup>446</sup>

Luxemburg's response to the immediate predicament of the Polish nation was to campaign for an extension of political democracy and the end to national discrimination, supporting the complete provision in social and political life for the use

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<sup>446</sup> Karl Kautsky had challenged these arguments in an article entitled 'Finis Polonae?' published in the *Neue Zeit* (July 1896). Kautsky took a more flexible approach to the nation-state concept, believing that the goal of the establishment of a Polish nation-state should not be abandoned as an aspiration on the grounds that it appeared presently unrealistic. Like Friedrich Engels, Kautsky believed that socialism would be able to flourish in an independent Poland and that it was unrealistic to ignore or deny the allegiance of Polish workers to their nationality. Consequently, Kautsky supported the resolution of the PPS for a free Poland submitted at the international Socialist congress, convened in London on 27 July 1896 (although with some reservations about its formulation). Other prominent critics of Luxemburg's analysis included Victor Adler and Leonhard Bernstein. Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 127-8; O. Zimmer, *Nationalism in Europe, 1890-1914* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 113-4. For Luxemburg's analysis of the economic position of Poland, see R. Luxemburg, *Die industrielle Entwicklung Polens* (Leipzig, 1898). For her critique of Polish nationalism, dubbed 'social patriotism' in reference to the PPS, see the articles 'The Polish Question at the International Congress in London' (1896) and her 'Foreword to the Anthology' (1905), both of which are reproduced in H. Davis (ed.), *The National Question-Selected Writings by Rosa Luxemburg* (New York, 1976). See also her essays published on this subject in *Neue Zeit*, including 'Der Sozialpatriotismus in Polen' and 'Neue Stromungen in der polnischen sozialistischen Bewegung in Deutschland und Österreich'. See R. Luxemburg, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Günter Radczun, 5 vols (Berlin, 1970-75), I/I (1970). For a critical assessment of Luxemburg and Kautsky's theories of nationalism, as well as other theorists of the Second International, see E. Nimni, *Marxism and Nationalism: Theoretical Origins of a Political Crisis* (London, 1991), p. 44ff.

of minority languages; in turn, this would help to advance the road to socialism. Her most important statement on this point was her essay 'In Defence of Nationality' (*W obronie narodowości*). In opposition to the demand of the PPS for an independent Poland, Luxemburg advocated the creation of an autonomous Poland, whereby Russian Poland would be autonomous within a future democratic Russian republic.<sup>447</sup>

Rosa Luxemburg's steadfast commitment to the prioritization of international class solidarity over nationalism was at one end of a spectrum of opinion within the German Social Democratic movement. Internationalist ideals normally underlay German Social Democratic approaches to the Polish question, and were indeed, enshrined in the Erfurt programme, authored by Karl Kautsky. Kautsky had written in the section on the 'Internationalität der Sozialdemokratie' that 'Social Democracy has the double obligation to stress its international standpoint decidedly' and that 'international solidarity must, of course, be formed most sincerely between those workers of the different nations who aim for the same goals and pursue them with the same means'.<sup>448</sup> It was with regard to the *means*, if not the ultimate goal, that the major divergences had developed both within the German party and between the SPD and PPS.

Luxemburg's position represented an unequivocal rejection of a school of thought supporting the independence of a Poland whose origins reached back to the arguments advanced by Marx and Engels concerning Tsarist Russia at the time of the Revolution of 1848. Central to this tradition was the concept of Poland as a 'firewall' defending European democracy against Russian reaction and imperialism.<sup>449</sup> This important theory was perpetuated in Social Democratic discourse right up to the First World War. For instance, Wilhelm Liebknecht in 1885 had declared in the Reichstag that a free

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<sup>447</sup> R. Luxemburg, *W obronie narodowości* (Posen, 1900).

<sup>448</sup> K. Kautsky, *Das Erfurter Programm* (Stuttgart, 1892), pp. 249, 252.

<sup>449</sup> Marx and Engels had espoused internationalism in the Communist Manifesto, although Marx did not believe that support for the resurrection of Poland contravened the internationalist doctrine. He had stressed that 'there is absolutely no contradiction in the international workers' party striving for the establishment of the Polish nation.' Similarly, the principle of national self-determination had been defended by Engels who had maintained in the Communist Manifesto that 'a sincere international collaboration of the European nations is only possible if each of these nations is entirely autonomous in its own house' (Preface to the 1892 Polish edition of the Communist Manifesto). Zimmer, *Nationalism*, pp. 113-17; T. Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 260-61.

Poland 'would be the best firewall between Germany and Russia'.<sup>450</sup> The resurrection of Poland, however, meant more than an instrument of defence: it also represented a rectification in moral terms.

Liebknecht's sympathy for the Poles' 'national rights' represented an enduring ethical current within Social Democratic discourse, and one which would condition attitudes towards the Polish Socialist Party. Liebknecht, on his part, became a genuine supporter of the PPS and maintained an 'officially' conciliatory party position.<sup>451</sup> This position was also broadly supported by other prominent Social Democrats including Georg Ledebour, Simon Katzenstein, Konrad Haenisch and August Bebel.<sup>452</sup> In the years following the founding of the PPS, the tone within the party, however, was increasingly influenced by the younger generation of party functionaries, whose programmes and agendas gave greater weight to trade unionism and the class struggle, while marginalising the old *Polenideal* and affirming a more German-national political colouration. This tendency was influenced in part by the nationalistic ambience and integrative processes occurring within the German Empire. Within this context it would have been politically deleterious for the SPD to have campaigned unreservedly after 1890 for a Polish state.<sup>453</sup>

The ideological conflict within the Social Democratic movement over the Polish question remained unresolved throughout the 1890s and 1900s, and recurred as a salient theme in the socialist movement at all levels during those years. An important juncture in this conflict had been the London Congress of the Second International, held on 27 July 1896, where the PPS reaffirmed its aim for the resurrection of Poland, submitting the resolution that 'the independence of Poland represents an imperative political

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<sup>450</sup> Speech of 24 November 1885. Reichstag. Liebknecht added that such a state would be 'a better guarantee of peace than international alliances. A free Poland, which resists the infringements of Russia, would ensure lasting peace, world peace...'

<sup>451</sup> Wilhelm Liebknecht's views towards Poland had also been affected by the revolutionary period of 1848/49, having been influenced by the Polish sympathies widely held by German liberals at that time. Liebknecht, whose beliefs had been influenced by his deep hatred of the Tsardom, had petitioned for the resurrection of Poland. Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 102-3, 142.

<sup>452</sup> One of Bebel's key tenets had been his support of the principle of the right of self-determination with regard to the national minorities in the German Empire. Werner Jung has written that Bebel 'appears to have attached greater importance to the principle of national self-determination than was usual in German Social Democracy on the whole.' Bebel argued that oppressed peoples must first of all struggle for national independence. Accordingly, he supported the resurrection of Poland. W. Jung, *August Bebel: deutscher Patriot und internationaler Sozialist* (Pfaffenweiler, 1988), p. 141.

<sup>453</sup> Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 102-3, 142, 164-5.

demand, both for the Polish proletariat, and for the international labour movement as a whole'.<sup>454</sup> The Foreign Union of Polish Socialists had hoped to win the support of the Second International for the PPS programme of an independent Poland. The resolution appealed to the 'firewall' argument against Russian Tsarism, arguing that this goal should be one for the entire international proletariat. This motion was later replaced with a resolution which endorsed the absolute right of nations to self-determination.<sup>455</sup>

The national question, particularly the issue of Polish secession, was dealt with on the regional level in numerous regional members' meetings. One such occasion was at the first Social Democratic conference held in the province of Posen, at Kolmar on 10 September 1899. Twenty-three delegates were present, including three representatives of the PPS from Berlin: August Berfus, Franz Morawski, and Franz Merkowski. Here, Merkowski and a delegate from Gnesen, Stanislaw Wierbinski, expressed their secessionist aspirations vis-à-vis the SPD. The issue of the organisational separation of the workers of the PPS was the main item on the agenda at the second provincial conference held in Bromberg (attended by 21 delegates). It was proposed by Luxemburg at this meeting that members of the PPS should be excluded from the SPD. This action had been provoked by the attempt made by the PPS in Posen to challenge Marcin Kasprzak's candidacy to the Reichstag, advocating for this candidature, the Polish nationalist Franz Morawski. It was also argued that the PPS had underperformed in its attempts to mobilise workers. The net result of this dissent was to seriously weaken the Social Democratic movement in Posen.<sup>456</sup>

By May 1898, Rosa Luxemburg, having completed her doctorate, had relocated to Germany, and after working as a publicist for a number of socialist newspapers and as an agitator for the SPD, she collaborated with Josef Gogowski and Marcin Kasprzak in founding a trade union cartel in Posen. However, she soon redirected her activism to Upper Silesia where she agitated among the Polish miners with the support of August Winter.<sup>457</sup> Luxemburg's importance in the Eastern Marches continued in the years to come. At the SPD party congress in Mainz (17-21 September 1900), she and Gogowski

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<sup>454</sup> Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, p. 126.

<sup>455</sup> Ibid.

<sup>456</sup> Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, pp. 17-20, 26.

<sup>457</sup> Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 138-139.

had entered a petition concerning the Poles' use of their native tongue in civic life and the *Polenpolitik* aimed against this, rendering them effectively as second-class citizens. At Mainz, Luxemburg had come as the delegate for Posen, Schlehen, and Bytomia.<sup>458</sup> Out of this period came two resolutions submitted by followers of Luxemburg to the fifth party conference of the PPS held at Easter 1900. These were fiercely critical of the nationalist propaganda of the PPS, and demanded the dissolution of the party.<sup>459</sup>

During the years 1900-1903 Luxemburg frequently addressed public meetings in the Eastern Marches, in both Polish and German, especially in the run up to elections. According to the local Social Democratic press, she had personally addressed no less than five of the fifteen meetings of the Social Democratic electoral association held in Posen during 1902.<sup>460</sup> Luxemburg, in a letter to Franz Mehring in 1903, had expressed some trepidation before her attendance at one such meeting, suggesting something of the hostility locally felt towards Social Democratic politics: 'I'm supposed to go to Posen to a meeting of the Polish People's Party to open the discussion, seeing that we can't have any meeting hall for ourselves. Nice prospect-in several such meetings our people have been beaten up and pretty thoroughly...I'm very curious whether I shall stop a few blows myself'.<sup>461</sup>

On 11 March 1902, Luxemburg addressed a well attended meeting of the PPS in Posen with a speech concerning 'The Polish Question and the Working People in Posen'. The argument which she advanced at this meeting was that German and Polish workers essentially had a common interest in struggling against the ruling system. She contended that the Social Democratic deputies in the Reichstag were fighting against the oppressive politics of the Prussian government against the Poles, and entreated the Poles to support Social Democrat candidates at the next Reichstag election, so as to advance the common cause. In the same speech she attacked the Polish faction in the Imperial and Prussian parliaments, for consisting of nobles, for its loyalism towards the government, and its failure to defend the interests of working people. Following this

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<sup>458</sup> At the party congress at Munich in 1902 Luxemburg had represented Posen and Bromberg. T. Cieślak, 'Statystyka ruchu socjaldemokratycznego na ziemiach pomorskich w latach 1890-1917', *Przegląd Zachodni*, 3-4 (1956), p. 365.

<sup>459</sup> Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, p. 139.

<sup>460</sup> *Posener Volkszeitung*, 8 Jan. 1903.

<sup>461</sup> Quoted in J. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg* (abridged version) (Oxford, 1969), p. 118.

speech, some criticisms were raised from among the gathered that adherence to the clergy was necessary for the people's morale. Concerns were also raised over the importance of asserting Polish nationalism. Nevertheless, in conclusion the following resolution was passed:

The gathered agree with the propositions of the speaker, Dr R. Luxemburg, and consider the solidarity of the Polish population with the workers of Germany as the only effective means for the defence of the Polish nation, for the struggle for the defeat of the present system of society, and for the introduction of a society based upon the principles of freedom, equality and fraternity.<sup>462</sup>

Similar conclusions were reached at a builders' and carpenters' meeting held on 26 April 1903 in Tremessen, where the topic of discussion was the 'purpose and benefits of trade union organisation'. At this meeting a local branch of the German Builders' Union for Tremessen was founded consisting of 22 members. Here too the principle was affirmed unanimously that despite the German-Polish distinctions which existed politically, 'Poles and Germans commonly must work together in the trade union struggle'.<sup>463</sup>

It was one of the most important lessons of the Polish question within the Social Democratic movement that internationalism and nationalism were not mutually exclusive doctrines. Indeed, as exemplified by the reasoning of leading Social Democrats and in the programme of the PPS, national self-determination could be a prerequisite for the ultimate goal of an international communion of workers. Although the ideological debate over Polish nationalism would remain unresolved right up to the First World War, a standard in respect of internationalist doctrine had been established against which to judge grass-roots activity in the eastern provinces. The aim will now be to evaluate its influence in practice.

## (ii) Organisational Structure and Political Experience

Socialism emerged slowly in the provinces of Posen and West Prussia. In the province of Posen the first signs of Social Democratic activity are identifiable during the early

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<sup>462</sup> 'Polnisch-Sozialdemokratische Volks-Versammlung', *Posener Volkszeitung* (supplement), 11 March 1902.

<sup>463</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2684, p. 4.

1880s. Then, at the beginning of the 1890s, the local party organisations of the SPD in Posen and Silesia were combined, so as to utilize to the best advantage the more experienced staff and party press facilities in Wrocław. The first meeting of the Silesian and Poznanian SPD took place in Wrocław on 1 February 1891 with the participation of 67 delegates from both provinces. A provisional agitation committee with 12 members was then elected and it was subsequently decided to make concerted efforts to increase the party membership, particularly in the towns of predominantly Polish areas. A second meeting followed in Wrocław on 26-27 December 1891, where a new committee was formed with nine members. One of these came from the Poznanian town of Rawitsch, where Social Democracy was relatively strong, having attracted the attention of activists from Berlin.<sup>464</sup>

German-led Social Democracy in West Prussia first began to emerge weakly during the 1870s. Earlier attempts at Social Democratic organization in the provincial capital, Danzig, had been disrupted by the police. In 1875, a carpenter named Dorowski had formed a workers' electoral association in the city. The association recruited 45 members, but was forcibly dissolved by the police some time during 1876. The first Social Democratic votes in West Prussia were won at the Reichstag election in 1874. These were for the 'Eisenacher', who gained just 83 votes in the entire province.<sup>465</sup> Following the 'unity congress' in Gotha in 1875, the Social Democrats were able to increase their votes gradually in West Prussia. They won 182 votes in 1877; 314 in 1878; 236 in 1881; and 683 in 1884.<sup>466</sup> In the Reichstag election of 1878, 114 of the 314 votes for August Bebel in the province, came from the constituency of Danzig. In the election of 1881, which took place under the Anti-Socialist Laws, Bebel received 43 votes in Danzig. At this time, however, the majority of workers in the city were still indifferent to the politics of Social Democracy. Danzig, as a centre of trade and industry, was a stronghold of liberalism, which according to the SPD party secretary for

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<sup>464</sup> The Silesia-Posen organization was subsequently split, with the first party conference of the Poznanian movement having taken place in Kolmar on 10 September 1899. Danilczuk, *Działalność*, pp. 26-27; GStA PK, 1, HA. Rep. 77, CB, S, No. 698, p. 1.

<sup>465</sup> 'Eisenacher' was the name given to Bebel's 'Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei', founded in 1869.

<sup>466</sup> AFES. Nachlass Arthur Crispian. Undated manuscript: 'Pionierarbeit in Elbing', pp. 1-2.

West Prussia, Arthur Crispian, the workers of the city tended to support. This was especially so among state-employed workers.<sup>467</sup>

From the time that the repeal of the Anti-Socialist laws liberated the socialist movement in Posen and West Prussia, efforts were made by German and Polish Social Democrats to foster transnational consciousness and unity among workers. Most fundamentally, these concerned the organisational structure of the regional movement. The socialist movement was based upon local associations which typically held private, and some public, meetings where current social and political issues were discussed, following a presentation by a speaker. These were usually held in public houses, and frequently subjected to police supervision and chicanery.<sup>468</sup> In the Eastern Marches, the existence of nationally-mixed trade and professional associations had been commonplace during the 1870s and 1880s. As might be expected, Social Democratic associations followed in this tradition of inclusiveness.<sup>469</sup>

The sources available to reconstruct the grass-roots experiences of party life are limited and fragmentary, although it is possible to uncover suggestive evidence of how associational activity in mixed-nationality areas operated. Attempts were commonly made, within local organisations, to integrate members of both nationalities. This occurred, for instance, at the first members' meeting of Polish Social Democrats held at Inowrazlaw on 1 July 1900. Typically for a workers' meeting, this was convened at a public house. During the meeting, a comrade named 'Palm' from Bromberg spoke of the poor working conditions in the region, especially condemning the employment of female workers on canal construction. The speech was then translated into Polish by a

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<sup>467</sup> There had been an independent Social Democratic organization in West Prussia since 1899. Before then, one organization existed for both East and West Prussia. In 1910, the West Prussian organization had 2594 members and 38 local associations. AFES. Nachlass Arthur Crispian. Undated manuscript: 'Bezirkssekretär für Westpreussen', p. 13; GStA PK, 1, HA. Rep. 77, CB, S, No. 736, p. 2.

<sup>468</sup> Police surveillance records are one of the main sources of information about grass-roots activity in the region. These usually consist of newspaper cuttings from the socialist press, recording the occurrences of meetings and other activities, as well as lists of members of regional organisations and records of correspondence with other state agencies.

<sup>469</sup> For instance, the Craftsmen's Association in Kulmsee, a small town near Thorn, had 66 members in 1878, of which 39 were Germans, 19 Jews and 8 Polish. Similarly, self-aid associations for veterans (*Kriegervereine*) included many Polish members during the 1870s in Thorn. K. Wajda, 'The Poles and the Germans in West Prussia Province in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century', in Sziling and Wojciechowski, *Neighborhood Dilemmas: the Poles, the Germans and the Jews in Pomerania along the Vistula River in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Torun, 2002), p. 14.



comrade named Matthias Dutkiewicz for the benefit of the Polish-speaking members.<sup>470</sup> At other regional meetings the practice also occurred of singing the workers' '*Kampfslied*' at meetings in both German and Polish.<sup>471</sup>

A similar procedure took place, involving translations into Polish, at a meeting of the same branch on 17 July, when the issue of the inadequacy of safety and working conditions, particularly on building sites, for unskilled workers was discussed.<sup>472</sup> In Inowrazlaw, as in other towns, the attempts to form a local party association had been thwarted by inner conflict and small memberships. A formal local association was reconstituted in Inowrazlaw on 20 January 1901, but with only 14 members.<sup>473</sup> At the next meeting in Inowrazlaw, held in early March 1901, at the pub of 'Herr Wenzel', 250 people attended and an address was delivered by Franz Morawski for one and a half hours about the tariffs, the support for these of the '*Versöhnungsparteiler*' and its organ the *Dziennik Kujawski*, as well as an explanation of the goals of Social Democracy and the need for organisation. Questions were also answered concerning the use of Polish addresses on mail and Polish language in schools. A resolution against the tariffs was accepted unanimously.<sup>474</sup>

A similar meeting was convened on 24 June, again at Herr Wenzel's pub, during which a resolution was accepted protesting against the China and Transvaal war, and against nationalist oppression in the schools and by the bureaucracy. Significantly, it was affirmed that in respect of this latter issue, 'only the organisation of working people can bring liberation from this privation'. During this meeting, Marcin Kasprzak (from Posen) and Josef Gogowski had entered the hall. They were received with hostility and when Gogowski spoke he was heckled; Kasprzak was denied the opportunity to speak and had roused such indignation that he 'left the hall as quickly as possible and had to hide in a neighbouring pub'.<sup>475</sup> Polish hostility to these men was not surprising considering Kasprzak's association with Rosa Luxemburg, and Witold

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<sup>470</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 3.

<sup>471</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2681, p. 63.

<sup>472</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 4.

<sup>473</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 8.

<sup>474</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 11.

<sup>475</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 14.

Łukaszewicz's classification of Gogowski as belonging to the 'chauvinist-nationalist' tendency in the SPD.

At the end of February 1902, the association held another pub meeting, addressed by the Polish socialists Dr Estera Golde and Georg Hasse, in which 500-600 workers, farmers and members of the petite bourgeoisie participated. Among the topics on the agenda were the Poles in Upper Silesia, Prussian *Polenpolitik*, the *Zollfrage* in the Reichstag, and the undesirability of support in some sections of the Polish press for Tsarist Russia. The decidedly Polish complexion of the meeting on this occasion was confirmed at its close when the chairman pronounced: 'Cheer the free Polish nation! Cheer the Polish Socialist Party!'<sup>476</sup> This particular incident is significant in demonstrating the ambivalence of workers towards the issue of nationality, when contrasted with their contemporaneous affirmations and symbolic acts of transnational solidarity. By 1903, the Inowrazlaw branch had dissolved itself.<sup>477</sup> Similar instances of local associational activity are identifiable elsewhere. On 19 January 1908, at a meeting in Gnesen, the prominent PPS activist, Stanislaw Wierbinski, attacked the expropriation laws as well as electoral law and called upon Polish workers to join in solidarity with German workers against Prussian oppression.<sup>478</sup>

The integration of Germans and Poles within the Social Democratic movement was promoted by the publication of socialist propaganda material in both German and Polish. The regional socialist press included the principal organ of the joint Posen-Silesia SPD, the *Schlesische Volkswacht*, which had been published since October 1890 under the editorship of Fritz Kunert. In Posen, the area around Bromberg had been the main area for the distribution of the party and union press. Although output was usually in the German language, including *Vorwärts*, *Der wahre Jakob*, *Der Zimmerer*, and

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<sup>476</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 24.

<sup>477</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2680, p. 87.

<sup>478</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, p. 107; GStA PK, XVI. HA Posen, Rep. 30, I, No. 728. A request was made by the regency president of Bromberg on 1 December 1909 to the district prefects for information on all Social Democratic associations. The information received in early 1910 provides an overall impression of the scale of local Social Democratic activity. There were in total 48 Social Democratic associations in the regency with a total of 2877 members. Of 14 districts, 9 had Social Democratic associations. These included the *Deutscher Sozialdemokratischer Verein-Bezirksverband der Sozial-demokratischen Wahlvereine Posens*; *Wahlverein polnischer Sozialisten*; *Verband der Schneider und verwandter Berufsgenossen Deutschlands*; *Zentralverband der Maurer Deutschlands*; *Verband der Bau-, Erd-und gewerblichen Hilfsarbeiter Deutschlands*; *Deutscher Holzarbeiter-Verband*; *Verband der Stein-setzer, -Pflaster, -und Berufsgenossen Deutschlands*; *Zentralverband der Zimmerer Deutschlands*.

*Der Bauhandwerker*, many propaganda materials were published in both German and Polish. Concerted efforts were made during the early 1900s by the SPD leadership to further, through the publication of newspapers, the dissemination of Social Democratic ideas and to promote the fostering of ties between Germans and Poles. For instance, the Polish newspaper *Oświata* was distributed free of charge in Posen from April 1901; its publishing costs were met by the General Trade Union Commission. By 1903, *Oświata*, the *Posener Volkszeitung*, and another Polish paper, the *Gazeta Ludowa*, were controlled and subsidised by the central party leadership in Berlin.<sup>479</sup>

Attempts to establish a socialist press in West Prussia proved less easy than in Posen, with the result that a party organ came relatively late. The party secretary for West Prussia since 1907, Arthur Crispian, had emphasized the need for a regional Social Democratic newspaper to elevate the political consciousness and aspirations of the proletariat. The attempts made during the early 1890s to establish a newspaper for West Prussia failed on several occasions. None of the various efforts to establish a newspaper for the province were successful in attracting more than 400 subscribers. This was, perhaps, indicative of the generally sluggish growth of Social Democracy in Prussian Poland. The first issue of the paper envisaged by Crispian finally came off the press on 24 September 1910. This paper, named the *Volkswacht*, was described as ‘the organ of the working population of West Prussia and publication of the free trade unions’; a supplement called the *Die Neue Welt* was also issued with this paper.<sup>480</sup>

The PPS also had its own organ called the *Gazeta Robotnicza*, which was first published in 1891. The editor of the *Gazeta Robotnicza* announced to its readers in its first issue that it had been founded ‘for the defence of your interests against the capitalists, the Szlachta, and the clergy.’<sup>481</sup> Moreover, it declared its programme to be

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<sup>479</sup> Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, p. 21; Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, p. 152. The *Gazeta Ludowa* had been distributed in Prussian Poland under the auspices of Luxemburg, Gogowski, and Kasprzak between 1 July 1902 and 1 July 1904 to compete with the PPS’s *Gazeta Robotnicza*. But the *Gazeta Ludowa* had only won 37 subscribers by September 1903! The German-language counterpart was the *Posener Volkszeitung*.

<sup>480</sup> AFES. Nachlass Arthur Crispian. Undated manuscript: ‘Wir schaffen uns eine eigene Zeitung’, pp. 1-10.

<sup>481</sup> The 1897 programme of the PPS was a compilation of German and Polish party elements and markedly Marxist and internationalist, including the following paragraph: ‘the interests of the working class are identical in all countries with capitalist production. With the spread of world communications and production for the world market, the position of the workers of every country becomes ever more

that of the German Social Democrats, with whom the Poles had 'common interests and goals'.<sup>482</sup> This paper attracted considerable criticism after 1912 among the membership of the SPD, because of its cost to the party in subsidies. Between 1 January 1907 and the end of 1912, the SPD donated 80,000 marks to support the *Gazeta Robotnicza*; but during the same period, the newspaper had acquired only 300 subscribers. The paper folded in 1913.<sup>483</sup>

By the early 1890s a socialist movement had become established in Posen and West Prussia which involved the participation of workers of both nationalities. But at this time the movement was undoubtedly small. The strongest centres of Social Democracy in Posen were the towns of Posen, Rawitsch, and Bromberg and its environs.<sup>484</sup> According to inquiries made by some of the province's sub-prefects, in 1892 there were 2000 Social Democrats in Bromberg; 205 in its environs; 40 in Strenze; around 20 in Inowrazlaw; and in Gonsawa, 15 Polish socialists.<sup>485</sup> By the end of the 1880s, Social Democratic activity had been stimulated in the West Prussian towns of Danzig, Elbing, Marienburg, Thorn, Graudenz and Marienwerder.<sup>486</sup> Under the leadership of Otto Jochem, the Social Democrats in the constituency of Danzig Stadt won the following votes in the Reichstag elections: 557 votes in 1884; 2,279 in 1887; 3,525 in 1890; 4,265 in 1893; 3,822 in 1898; 6,070 in 1903.<sup>487</sup> In Elbing, 255 votes fell to the Social Democrats in 1887 and 595 in 1890.<sup>488</sup> In 1902, Arthur Crispian took over the Reichstag election candidature for the constituency of Elbing-Marienburg. Crispian, writing around 1912, estimated that there were 20,279 Social Democratic voters in

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dependant on the position of workers in other countries. The emancipation of the working class is consequently the work of workers of all cultures. In this conviction the Polish Socialist Party feels and asserts its solidarity with the working class of all districts.' *Gazeta Robotnicza*, No. 1, 1891 and No. 33, 1897, quoted in Jakóbczyk, *Wielkopolska*, pp. 103-107.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid.

<sup>483</sup> W. Schröder, *Handbuch der Sozialdemokratischen Parteitage von 1910 bis 1913* (München, 1972), p. 613.

<sup>484</sup> On 8 November 1896 a Social Democratic meeting took place in Posen at which a workers' association was founded in the city, the *Posener Arbeiter-Verein*. Its founding membership consisted of 27 comrades of both nationalities. The first meeting of the association took place on 11 November. *Gazeta Robotnicza*, No. 46, 1896, quoted in Jakóbczyk, *Wielkopolska*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>485</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, p. 28.

<sup>486</sup> Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, pp. 55-57.

<sup>487</sup> AFES. Nachlass Arthur Crispian. Undated manuscript: 'Bezirkssekretär für Westpreussen'.

<sup>488</sup> Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, p. 55.

West Prussia, and between 1910 and 1912, 916 active Social Democrats.<sup>489</sup> In the Reichstag election of 1912, the party won 28,215 votes in West Prussia, 8,038 of these being cast in the constituency of Danzig.<sup>490</sup> Membership of the PPS was always low in Posen and West Prussia. Its strongest centres were in Posen, Gnesen and Inowrazlaw. But even by 1910, the PPS still had only 151 members in the entire province of Posen and this had fallen to a mere 50 by 1912.<sup>491</sup>

As well as the SPD and PPS, the workers' political scene in Prussian Poland included organisations such as the *Towarzystwo Socjalistow Polskich* (Society of Polish Socialists) based in Berlin and the Trade Union Federation, directed through its General Commission in Hamburg. Trade union organisation during the 1890s, although involving modest numbers, was effectively stimulated through the efforts of the SPD and General Commission. The more sizable unions included the Carpenter's Union, which had 233 members in Posen and Bromberg in 1890 (this had diminished to 63 in 1895); 80 members in the Union of Tobacco Workers in Posen in 1893; and in Bromberg at the end of 1893, the Trade Union Federation had 200 members.<sup>492</sup>

The results of the Reichstag election in 1893 confirmed the weakness of the Social Democratic movement in the Eastern Marches. Here, SPD candidates, in collaboration with the Society of Polish Socialists (TSP), gained 2,475 votes in the constituency of Bromberg, 1,102 in Posen, and 501 in Rawitsch. The weakness of socialism at this election can be attributed, in part, to the failure of the socialist campaign to address adequately the concerns of the working population over the effects of the economic crisis, increasing militarism, and the reactionary politics of the Polish landowners.<sup>493</sup> In 1898, the Social Democrats won votes in only seven of Posen's fifteen constituencies, totalling 4,424 votes, but then more substantial gains for the province came at the Reichstag election in 1903 when the party won almost twice as many votes, reaching 8,407 (from all fifteen constituencies). At the 1903 election, the SPD had campaigned

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<sup>489</sup> AFES. Nachlass Arthur Crispian. Undated manuscript: 'Bezirkssekretär für Westpreussen', p. 14. Until 1899, the SPD sections of West Prussia and East Prussia were organisationally unified, with the provincial executive located in Königsberg. The decision to split the two provinces up was made at the provincial SPD meeting which took place for the first time in Danzig 3-4 September 1899.

<sup>490</sup> K. Rzepecki, *Naprzód czy wstecz?* (Poznań, 1912), pp. 54-56, 142.

<sup>491</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, p. 103; APP. Polizeipräsidium, No. 2681.

<sup>492</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, p. 30.

<sup>493</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

on a manifesto advocating universal suffrage, equal citizenship rights regardless of national status, abolition of high grain prices and indirect taxes, and the reduction to a minimum of expenditure on arms.<sup>494</sup>

In the first few years after 1900, Germany was drawn into an economic crisis which lasted until 1904. Then in the following year revolution broke out in Russia. These junctures helped to invigorate the workers' movement in Prussian Poland as workers' militancy crescendoed, reaching its peak in the years 1910-1912, both in the eastern provinces and in the Reich at large. In the years from 1901 to 1905 there were 178 strikes and lock-outs in Posen and West Prussia, involving the participation of 15,937 workers. The aim of these strikes was usually to win shorter working hours and pay increases. The revolution of 1905, particularly, stimulated a wave of strikes and campaigning against the three-class electoral system for the Landtag. In 1912, this had reached a total of 78 strikes and lock-outs, and the participation of 8819 workers for that year alone. Militancy was always stronger in Silesia with its more advanced industrialisation. In the same year, there were 118 incidents involving 19,895 workers in Silesia.<sup>495</sup>

The year 1905 was marked particularly by strikes in Germany's mining areas such as in the Ruhr and Upper Silesia. The strikes in the Ruhr were significant for the national question because they involved the participation of thousands of Polish migrant workers in unity with their fellow German workers. The response of the government in both regions was to deploy extra police and garrisons of soldiers, and to impose restrictions on socialist meetings. The industrial magnates of Silesia were particularly concerned about solidarity between workers in Russia and Prussia.<sup>496</sup>

Against this background of growing industrial unrest, the German and Polish socialist parties had managed to achieve a degree of organisational unity. With the existence of separate SPD and PPS associations at work in mixed-nationality areas, it was agreed at the PPS conference held in Berlin at Christmas 1902 to accept the terms of unity resolved by the SPD committee at the 'unity conference' which had been held on 19 October. According to this agreement, the legitimacy of the Polish organisation

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<sup>494</sup> Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, p. 34.

<sup>495</sup> *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, 280 (1916), pp. 22-27.

<sup>496</sup> *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, 280 (1916), pp. 22-27; Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, pp. 68-69.

was recognised by the SPD, including its programme, agitation and affiliation to the SPD. As part of the joint operational and organisational activity between the PPS and SPD, Reichstag, Landtag and local government candidates for mixed-nationality areas in the eastern provinces, would be nominated at constituency conferences at which both Germans and Poles would participate.<sup>497</sup> Participation at Social Democratic party conferences in Posen was open to all Polish and German comrades who held mandates.<sup>498</sup>

In majority Polish areas (according to the last population census), as a rule, only candidates who could speak German and Polish were to be nominated. Decisions over candidates were to be made at local level, though if a suitable candidate could not be agreed upon, then the decision would pass to the leaderships of the SPD and PPS. As part of the commitment to unity it was decided at the beginning of the 1902 to hold meetings of the Social Democratic electoral association in Posen alternately in German and Polish languages, although this practice was later changed to the one of conducting all meetings in both languages for the benefit of all. According to the same agreement, Polish-language newspapers were to be under the control of the committee of the PPS, with the *Gazeta Robotnicza* receiving recognition as the official PPS organ. A representative of the SPD committee would also sit in the Polish press commission.<sup>499</sup> Accordingly, at the 1903 Reichstag election, for Posen's fifteen constituencies, eight candidates were put forward by the SPD and five by the PPS.<sup>500</sup> At the party conference at Mannheim in 1906, the terms of the alliance between the German and Polish parties were formally promulgated by the party leadership.

A further important organisational feature of the relationship between the SPD and PPS was that until the end of 1913, PPS members automatically belonged to the provincial branches of the SPD. However, it is questionable as to how many Poles gave

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<sup>497</sup> 'Die Einigung der polnischen und deutschen Sozialdemokraten', *Posener Volkszeitung* (supplement), 30 Dec. 1902; Wehler, *Sozialdemokratie*, p. 122. Despite the features of unity evident, the PPS also enjoyed a significant degree of autonomy with much of the apparatus of an independent party. It possessed its own local cooperatives and had its own committee and party conferences. It was also significant that membership of the German party was not specified in its statutes.

<sup>498</sup> *Posener Volkszeitung*, 21 Feb. 1903.

<sup>499</sup> 'Die Einigung der polnischen und deutschen Sozialdemokraten', *Posener Volkszeitung* (supplement), 30 Dec. 1902; *Posener Volkszeitung*, 8 Jan. 1903. There were fifteen meetings of the Social Democratic electoral association in Posen held during 1902.

<sup>500</sup> Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, p. 28.

their support to the PPS. Its memberships were usually modest, except in Upper Silesia, where the party was strongest.<sup>501</sup> By 1910, the PPS memberships in Germany were still low: Upper Silesia 1578; Westphalia 201; Hamburg 145; Posen 151; Bremen 69; Berlin 51. In total: 2195 members. By 1912, the PPS membership totalled 2,060 and 2163 in 1913.<sup>502</sup>

Scepticism over the benefits and extent of grass-roots participation in the PPS was commonly expressed by members of the SPD. One delegate at the Jena congress in 1913, named Hörsing (from Breslau), claimed: 'The fact that more than 50 percent of the members in the so-called "German organisation", as the leaders of the PPS call it, are Poles, proves sufficiently that the Polish workers reject this special organisation'.<sup>503</sup> Similarly, the leading Poznanian Social Democrat Josef Gogowski had claimed at a meeting of the SPD electoral association that 'the greatest part by far of the Poznanian Polish comrades do not approve of the activity of the PPS, and has the greatest interest in it that unity is achieved.'<sup>504</sup> Rosa Luxemburg had also argued at the Munich conference in September 1902 that 'the overwhelming majority of Polish comrades work with the main party. This is evidenced also by the fact that the separatist group in Posen has almost no followers. It merely serves to maintain a split within Polish Social Democracy.'<sup>505</sup> This point was statistically underscored by evidence supplied by the editorship of the *Gazeta Ludowa* that the Social Democratic association in the city of Posen comprised 163 members of whom two-thirds were Polish in 1903. In

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<sup>501</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, p. 103. Approximately seventy percent of the PPS's membership was in Silesia; significant memberships were also located in the industrial regions of western Germany to where Poles had migrated.

<sup>502</sup> In comparison, the membership of the PPS in Russian Poland was considerable. At the turn of 1906/7, the total number of workers affiliated to socialist parties and trade unions stood at around 100,000 (approximately 15 percent of the labour force). Of these, 55,000 belonged to the PPS, 35,000 to the SDKPiL, and 6,500 to the Jewish Bund. These figures suggest that most workers gave their allegiance to the 'social patriotism' of the PPS. Lim, 'Labour', pp. 121-144 (p. 130); W. Schröder, *Handbuch der Sozialdemokratischen Parteitage von 1910 bis 1913* (München, 1972), p. 612.

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 615.

<sup>504</sup> *Posener Volkszeitung*, 14 Oct. 1902.

<sup>505</sup> *Posener Volkszeitung*, 23 Sept. 1902. Frictions between the SPD and PPS came to a head at the Munich party congress (16 September 1902). Among the criticisms directed at the PPS at the congress was a speech made by August Bebel. Bebel, who had been sympathetic towards the Polish cause, expressed exasperation that 'we have safeguarded for them a special organisation, have not been stingy with financial support, have granted each of their financial requests readily. But we believed that as in Austria the Poles would add themselves to the main German party. That has unfortunately not happened. The national Polish question has been pushed always more to the fore, also in the *Gazeta Robotnicza*.'



comparison, the PPS had only thirty members in Posen after twelve years of existence.<sup>506</sup> Moreover, it had been reported in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (3 April 1900) that at the time of writing there were at least one thousand workers organised in the German trade union movement in Posen, of which at least four-fifths were Polish.<sup>507</sup>

Given this testimony and the low memberships of the PPS, it appears to have been the case that the majority of Polish socialists spurned this separate organization and joined the SPD instead. The reasons for this highly significant feature cannot be conclusively established. But what it clearly suggests is that most Polish workers subscribed to 'internationalism' over and above 'nationalism', leading them to embrace transnational organizational structures and forms of behaviour; nationalism, and its categories of thought and behaviour were transgressed. The motives for this transgression appear to have been, from the evidence available, either 'ideological' or 'practical'. The existence of the first factor, of internationalist ideology, has already been demonstrated. Alternatively, practicality on the part of Polish workers might be cited as an explanation for the membership of Polish workers of German unions and associations. Kazimierz Wajda, whilst acknowledging the difficulty in quantifying the national composition of the trade union movement, has argued that 'economic conditions motivated the workers to join German unions because they were economically stronger and more effective.'<sup>508</sup>

The features of grass-roots transnationalism in Posen and West Prussia were, however, constantly overshadowed, and ultimately eroded, by the long-standing and

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<sup>506</sup> The paper also told of how the representatives of the German party were labelled pejoratively as 'social Hakatists' by the PPS in Posen and Upper Silesia, and had their integrity was frequently called into the PPS paper *Gazeta Robotnicza. Gazeta Ludowa*, No. 52, 1904, quoted in Jakóbczyk, *Wielkopolska*, pp. 113-116.

<sup>507</sup> A branch of the General Commission of Germans Trade Unions was first established in Posen in 1898. The trade union movement included, according to this report, tailors, shoemakers, and metal-workers. There were 'public meetings almost every week and the unions were joined by Poles and Germans, men and women, en masse.' It was suggested by the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* that the incorporation of Polish workers within the German trade union movement in the region was a sign of 'ripening class-consciousness'. GStA PK, 1, HA. Rep. 77, CB, S, No. 698, p. 3.

<sup>508</sup> Wajda, 'The Poles and the Germans', p. 16; K. Wajda, 'Ruch robotniczy w Bydgoskiem w latach 1890-1903', *Studia i materiały do dziejów Wielkopolski i Pomorza*, 1 (1955), p. 127. Wajda has shown how in the town of Wongrowitz in Bromberg, every member of the bricklayers' union was Polish with the exception of one. In Kolmar, the secretary of the bricklayers' union had a Polish name and committee members of the bricklayers' union in Filehne also appear (by name) to have been Polish. In the town of Kulmsee, a town where construction workers were predominantly Polish, Polish workers had joined the socialist bricklayers' trade union and had also been members of the board.

unresolved disjuncture between the PPS and SPD, and this would, on the eve of war, rupture the settlement reached between the SPD and PPS at Mannheim in 1906. Following a resolution passed at the SPD congress at Jena in 1913, it was expected that, contrary to the wishes of the various factions of the PPS, Polish associations would merge into the body of the German SPD. The ultimate consequence of this was that the organizational and financial ties between the SPD and PPS were severed.<sup>509</sup> As a result of the Jena resolution, it was determined at a PPS conference at Oświęcim during the same year that membership of the SPD by Poles was to be regarded as treason and that PPS candidates should stand in all majority-Polish areas. The PPS increasingly concentrated its efforts in Galicia and Congress Poland. The PPS programme became, at its core, one of national liberation from the oppression of imperial powers. This programmatic tendency had been in formulation since 1909 within the PPS. In this vein, the autumn of 1912 witnessed the creation of the 'Temporary Commission of Confederated Independence Parties' by Józef Piłsudski and Witold Jodko-Narkiewicz; a union of nationalist Polish parties from all three partition territories. At this point the long threatened schism within the German-Polish socialist movement finally came to fruition.<sup>510</sup>

Despite these looming tensions, between 1908 and 1914, the workers' movement experienced its most rapid development in Posen and West Prussia. As well as the SPD, this was also true of the trade unions. The Trade Union Federation increased its membership in Germany from 1.9 million members in 1907 to almost 2.5 million in 1914. Among the strongest unions were included those of metal-workers, builders, transport and factory workers, woodcutters, textile workers and miners. In the province of Posen, the various Social Democratic associations formed the 'District Union of Social Democratic Societies in Posen' which was based in Bromberg. At this time the numerically strongest of the 15 constituencies in Posen for Social Democracy were Posen, Bromberg, Czarnikau, Rawitsch, Fraustadt, Wirsitz, and Samter; in West Prussia, by 1910, the most important centres were reported to have been Thorn,

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<sup>509</sup> The PPS (of the Prussian partition), the PPS revolutionary faction and the PPSD asserted that this resolution contravened the terms of the Second International's previous resolutions concerning nationality.

<sup>510</sup> Danilczuk, *Działalność*, pp. 133-136.

Graudenz, Dirschau and Danzig. But memberships tended to be fluid, being affected by seasonal work and changing economic conditions.<sup>511</sup>

It is difficult, owing to the fragmentary nature of the evidence available, to summarise conclusively the levels of workers' participation in Social Democrat associations and trade unions. However, it has been calculated that there were approximately between 8,000 and 10,000 workers organised in the years before the war in Posen in the SPD, PPS, and the Trade Union Federation. But their number never constituted more than 20-25 percent of all organised workers.<sup>512</sup> Dieter Fricke, in his study of the organisation of the German workers' movement, has calculated the following provincial Social Democrat memberships:

*Table XXIII: Social Democrat Membership in the Provinces of Central and Eastern Prussia, 1906-1914*

	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
East Prussia:	3575	3951	3573	4590	5663	7312	8909	8191	10488
West Prussia:	706	916	1185	2047	2582	3583	3768	3472	4407
Greater Berlin:	41700	78364	86429	87614	101191	111021	119769	118828	121689
Brandenburg:	16188	17312	18754	18660	22894	25540	29086	28842	34783
Pomerania:	5051	5997	6723	8136	9626	10406	11804	12429	12319
Posen:	225	251	463	871	1073	1302	1235	1069	1030
Breslau:	{	10013	10334	10568	14136	17270	19610	19191	20072
Görlitz:	{ 17203 }	4005	4738	4936	6368	8204	7325	8283	8986
Oberlangenbielau:		5434	6117	7873	9398	11517	12625	11918	13222
Kattowitz:		598	601	932	1397	1840	2064	2327	2724

*Source:* D. Fricke, *Zur Organisation und Tätigkeit der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung (1890-1914)* (Leipzig, 1962), p. 68.

Despite the increasing strength of the Free Trade Unions and SPD associations after 1908, most workers belonged to clerical or trade organisations led by the Catholic and Protestant clergy and the bourgeoisie. The most important of these were the 'Polish Trade Union' (ZZP) which was established in the years after 1901 by National Democratic activists, the 'Catholic Association of Polish Workers' (TKRP) and the

<sup>511</sup> Ibid., pp. 101-104.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

‘Union of Working Women’. The founding of Catholic unions was inspired by the new social politics of Pope Leo XIII, pronounced in his encyclical *Rerum novarum* of 1891, following which the first Catholic workers’ associations in Posen and West Prussia were formed during the years 1892-1900 by the archbishop of Posen-Gnesen, Florian von Stablewski. Other notable associations included the *Evangelische Arbeitervereine*, the *Christlich-Soziale Gewerkschaften*, and the *Hirsch-Dunckersche Gewerkvereine*, but in Posen, with its predominantly Catholic populace, the memberships of the TKRP and ZZP were far greater than these.<sup>513</sup>

These organisations were also active in West Prussia. Amidst the radicalisation of workers’ politics which occurred from 1903 onwards, the TKRP, ZZP, and German-led Christian trade unions stepped up their activities in West Prussia. The ZZP particularly strove to hinder the spread of the Social Democratic trade unions, and as part of this strategy, had founded by 1906 new branches in Thorn, Kulmsee, Kulm, Graudenz, Schwetz, Kowalewie, Briesen, Lidzbarku, Löbau, Gollub, Czersku, Pr. Stargard, Danzig, and Allenstein. In the battle against secular unionism, the memberships of the TKRP and ZZP expanded rapidly; the membership of the TKRP increased from 12,000 in 1903 to 29,000 in 1908 and that of the ZZP rose from 500 to 5000 during the same period. The Polish working class’s natural disposition towards organisation under ‘national-Catholic’ banners was self-evident, although even after the founding of the ZZP, it remained common for Polish workers to belong to both this organisation and the Free Trade Unions, particularly in towns and cities where the majority of workers were German.<sup>514</sup>

Social Democracy had to compete in Posen and West Prussia against these confession-based movements, particularly the Catholic workers’ movement led by the clergy. Catholicism was one of the most important single factors for the belated development of socialism in Posen and West Prussia, especially on the land where (secular) socialism was resisted by the clergy. Other factors included the relatively low levels of industrialisation and urbanisation in Posen and West Prussia, varying levels of

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<sup>513</sup> W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews: the Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772-1914* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 242-43; Danilczuk, *Działalność*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>514</sup> Wajda, ‘Ruch robotniczy’, p. 127; Wajda, ‘The Poles and the Germans’, p. 16; Danilczuk, *Działalność*, p. 104; Łukaszewicz, *Ruch Robotniczy*, pp. 22-23, 48.

party organisation between different localities, and the doubtful appeal of Social Democratic economic policies among the peasantry and rural workers.<sup>515</sup> As one Prussian ministry report put it in 1897: ‘the strivings up till now to win the rural population over to the doctrines of Social Democracy have failed almost entirely with the “anti-collectivist mindset of the farmer”’.<sup>516</sup> The SPD party secretary for West Prussia, Arthur Crispian, had also suggested the national and religious ‘structure’ of the population in West Prussia as being a hindrance to political progress.<sup>517</sup>

This salience of Catholicism as a hindrance to the development of Social Democracy is supported by statistical analysis of Alois Klöcker, who analysed the relationship between confessional affiliation and the numbers of votes and mandates won by the Social Democrats in all constituencies of the German Empire at the 1907 Reichstag election. Klöcker’s study established a correlation between the denominational profile of constituencies and the number of Social Democratic votes and mandates gained. It showed that (with some exceptions) the greater the proportion of Protestants in individual constituencies, the greater the number of Social Democratic votes. Of all votes won by the Social Democrats in the 1907 election, the 146 constituencies with majority-Catholic populations provided 15.17 percent of all votes to the Social Democrats; the 251 constituencies with majority-Protestant populations provided 84.83 percent of all votes to the Social Democrats. Of the 43 Social Democratic mandates gained, only 6 were from majority-Catholic constituencies. It is calculated that overall, 11.14 percent of Social Democratic votes came from Catholics, whereas 88.86 percent came from Protestant voters.<sup>518</sup>

This pattern is corroborated by an analysis of electoral results in Posen, West Prussia and Silesia. Twenty of the 23 constituencies where Social Democracy won

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<sup>515</sup> The Social Democratic *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (3 April 1900) had listed the lack of heavy-industry as a factor for the slow development of Social Democracy in Posen and also the ‘powerful influence of the Catholic clergy. The Polish nationality and Catholicism are almost identical here and the priests appear as the appointed leaders of political life’. GStA PK, 1, HA. Rep. 77, CB, S, No. 698, p. 3.

<sup>516</sup> APP. Polizeipräsidium Posen, No. 2666, p. 622.

<sup>517</sup> AFES. Nachlass Arthur Crispian. Undated manuscript: ‘Bezirkssekretär für Westpreussen’, pp. 1-3. Similarly, a report in *Vorwärts* (18 July 1913) had cited the low level of industrialization in West Prussia as the reason for the ‘cultural backwardness’ of the population ‘which comes to expression not least in the struggle between Poles and Germans’. GStA PK, 1, HA. Rep. 77, CB, S, No. 736, p. 13.

<sup>518</sup> A. Klöcker, *Die Konfession der sozialdemokratischen Wählerschaft 1907* (M. Gladbach, 1913), pp. 22-29, 122-123.

more than 10 percent of the vote in these provinces in 1907 had majority-Protestant populations. In 40 of the 63 constituencies within these three provinces, Social Democracy won less than 10 percent of the vote, and in 31 constituencies, less than 5 percent.<sup>519</sup>

*Table XXIV: Denomination and the Social Democrat Vote for the Reichstag in 1907*

	Soc-Dem Votes (%)	Protestant (%)	Catholic (%)
<i>Danzig Regierungsbezirk:</i>			
Marienburg-Elbing	25.7	68.2	26.3
Landkreis Danzig	17.0	60.3	38.7
Stadtkreis Danzig	26.0	65.7	31.5
Neustadt-Karthaus	0.5	24.4	74.9
Berent-Pr. Stargard	0.6	29.1	69.9
<i>Marienwerder Regierungsbezirk:</i>			
Stuhm-Marienwerder	3.5	45.3	53.1
Rosenberg-Löbau	0.7	49.7	49.4
Graudenz-Strasburg	5.1	45.7	52.0
Thorn-Kulm	1.7	43.1	54.4
Schwetz	0.4	39.7	58.4
Konitz-Tuchel	1.7	18.5	80.5
Schlochau-Flatow	0.7	54.1	44.1
Deutsch-Krone	3.2	57.8	41.3
<i>Posen Regierungsbezirk:</i>			
Posen	4.0	23.3	70.6
Samter-Birnbaum-Obornik	1.9	31.0	67.2
Meseritz-Bomst	0.5	42.8	56.3
Buk-Kosten	0.0	18.6	80.6
Kroeben	2.1	24.4	74.6
Fraustadt	4.6	37.4	60.8
Schrimm-Schroda	0.0	15.2	83.8
Wreschen-Pleschen	0.0	13.3	85.5
Krotoschin	0.0	26.6	75.9
Adelnau-Schildberg	0.5	18.7	79.5
<i>Bromberg Regierungsbezirk:</i>			
Czarnikau-Kolmar	5.0	56.7	41.0
Wirsitz-Schubin	0.7	39.3	58.8
Bromberg	6.3	58.7	39.2
Hohensalza-Mogilno-Strelno	1.2	26.2	72.2
Gnesen-Wongrowitz	0.3	24.8	73.6

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<sup>519</sup> Ibid.

*Breslau Regierungsbezirk:*

Guhrau-Steinau-Wohlau	4.4	73.2	26.4
Militsch-Trebnitz	7.1	77.2	22.5
Wartenburg-Oels	3.2	72.1	27.4
Namslau-Brieg	16.7	69.4	29.8
Ohlau-Nimptsch-Strehlen	15.9	70.1	29.7
Breslau (Ost)	42.6	58.3	38.4
Breslau (West)	48.0	58.5	34.7
Landkreis Breslau-Neumarkt	27.7	60.4	39.0
Striegau-Schweidnitz	32.6	62.1	37.3
Waldenburg	50.7	66.1	33.0
Reichenbach-Neurode	43.2	41.9	57.2
Glatz-Habelschwerdt	6.3	6.1	93.6
Frankenstein-Münsterberg	3.3	21.1	78.7

*Oppeln Regierungsbezirk:*

Kreuzburg-Rosenberg	0.6	39.3	59.9
Oppeln	5.2	12.5	86.9
Gr. Strehlitz-Kosel	2.1	4.3	95.1
Lublinitz-Tost-Gleiwitz	5.2	7.0	91.4
Beuthen-Tarnowitz	12	6.7	91.8
Kattowitz-Zabrze	11	6.2	91.0
Pletzt-Rybnit	1.1	6.3	92.8
Ratibor	5.8	3.5	95.8
Leobschütz	3.4	8.7	90.8
Neustadt	8.1	7.6	92.0
Falkenberg-Grottkau	1.6	16.8	83.0
Neisse	4.8	7.4	92.2

*Liegnitz Regierungsbezirk:*

Grünberg-Freistadt	26.0	82.5	16.7
Sagen-Sprottau	22.6	83.2	16.3
Glogau	16.4	69.0	29.7
Lüben-Bunzlau	27.4	85.0	14.5
Löwenberg	16.1	73.4	26.4
Liegnitz-Goldberg-Hainau	31.0	85.6	13.2
Landeshut-Jauer-Volkenhain	25.0	64.0	35.6
Schönau-Hirschberg	30.0	81.2	18.1
Görlitz-Laubau	40.1	88.0	11.1
Rothenburg-Hoyerswerda	24.7	90.6	8.5

Source: A. Klöcker, *Die Konfession der sozialdemokratischen Wählerschaft 1907* (M. Gladbach, 1913), pp. 22-24.

The salience of denominational status as a factor in the growth of Social Democracy is driven home by a comparison of the three Silesian regencies: Breslau, Liegnitz, and Oppeln. As table XXIV shows, Oppeln had a predominantly Catholic population, whereas the populations of Breslau and Liegnitz were predominantly Protestant.

Accordingly, Social Democracy won significantly fewer votes in the constituencies of Oppeln. The significance of this comparison lies in the fact that not only was the proportion of the population of Oppeln employed in industry (17 percent in 1907) comparable with that of Breslau and Liegnitz (both 18 percent), but Oppeln also possessed the greatest urban population of the three regencies. Fifty-five percent of the inhabitants of Oppeln lived in towns and cities in 1907 (settlements with 2000 or more inhabitants), whilst in Breslau and Liegnitz the proportion was 53 and 42 percent respectively.<sup>520</sup> This comparison suggests strongly that in Silesia denomination was the predominant factor in the development of Social Democracy, not industrialisation.

### (iii) Conclusion

The Social Democratic movement in Posen and West Prussia achieved critical mass after 1890, following the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Laws. German Social Democracy was, however, but one option open to the region's workers. Polish and German workers in these predominantly rural and relatively unindustrialised provinces were presented with a choice between membership of the German Social Democratic movement, including the Free Trade Unions, the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), or clerical and trade organisations led by the Catholic and Protestant clergy and the bourgeoisie. Most joined the last of these, of which the 'Polish Trade Union' (ZZP) and the 'Catholic Association of Polish Workers' (TKRP) were the most important. Nevertheless, despite the low level of heavy industry in the region, the strong social influence of Catholicism, and the political distortions caused by the national conflict, German Social Democracy gradually increased its following after 1900, attaining a total membership of 5437 in Posen and West Prussia by 1914. At the Reichstag election of 1912, the Social Democrats won 12,968 votes in Posen and 28,215 votes in West Prussia.<sup>521</sup> In comparison, the membership of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) remained very low, not

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<sup>520</sup> *Statistisches Jahrbuch für den Freistaat Preussen*, 10 (1912), p. 73; *Statistisches Jahrbuch für den preussischen Staat*, 5 (1907), p. 33.

<sup>521</sup> Rzepecki, *Naprzód*, pp. 54-56.



only in the East but in Germany as a whole. Its membership stood at 151 in Posen in 1910 and totalled a mere 2195 in the whole of Germany.

Although consistent and reliable statistical data does exist to be able ascertain the national composition of the membership of the Social Democratic movement, nor the national identities of those who voted for the SPD at election time, the testimony and statistical data available suggests strongly that Polish workers mostly rejected the PPS and its nationalistic platform in favour of the German party. For instance, it has previously been noted that two-thirds of the membership of the Social Democratic association in the city of Posen were Polish in 1903. There are also credible indications that Poles joined the Free Trade Unions in substantial numbers, for instance, the aforementioned statistic that four-fifths of workers organised in the German trade union movement in Posen were Polish.

In conclusion, Polish supporters of Social Democracy appear to have shunned the national paradigm in favour of a transnational one. This could follow from the convenience and advantages of belonging to the German party, and secondly, from some degree of commitment to the doctrine of internationalism. Evidence for the second possibility is strongest. Evidence of this is found in press reports of public and members meetings held by local socialist associations, where 'transnational solidarity' was, following the example of Rosa Luxemburg, usually held to be the best means to the ending of social exploitation and national oppression. The internationalist doctrine was supported practically through the organisation of local Social Democratic associations which united German and Polish workers on a basis of equality, and in which efforts were made to overcome the linguistic divide. This was achieved through the publication of bilingual propaganda and the use of translation in meetings. These were examples of manifestly transnational categories of thought and behaviour.

Although Polish workers appear to have been predominantly and cordially integrated into the SPD, the history of the PPS leading up to its secession in 1913 shows irrefutably that ultimately nationalism was not renounced by the party's ideological leaders. This situation was met by the German party leadership invariably with ideological ambivalence towards the Polish question which was never completely

resolved. The regional experience of Posen and West Prussia ultimately became subsumed within the turmoil of the macro-historical rise of Polish nationalism.

## Conclusion

Nationalism was the most pervasive doctrine in the society and politics of Imperial Germany. The national idea coloured every major facet of social experience, not least in the empire's ideological powerhouse, the Prussian state. The extent of its suffusion by the turn of the century was exemplified by Georg Schiele, writing in the *Preussische Jahrbücher*:

The word national is today on all people's lips. One speaks of national duties and rights, national education and fulfilment. The word unifies and divides political parties. It has become an article of faith, a dogma, as in the past century were the words freedom and equality. This word represents the measure of good and evil; the justification of war and revolution. It is as if it were one of the Ten Commandments.<sup>522</sup>

The proliferation of national categories of thought and behaviour in imperial society was not unique to Germany. Nationalism, in its manifold forms, advanced rapidly in the states of Europe from the 1870s.<sup>523</sup> Factors, including the economy, the democratisation of politics, international rivalry (exacerbated by the Long Depression), urbanisation and industrialization, were important influences upon the development of nationalism. In all European countries, this development was closely related to changes in the relationship between the citizen and the state, and more broadly, between the state and the 'nation'. Profound social change influenced the creation of the modern administrative state, as governments sought to achieve closer relationships with their citizens. In Imperial Germany, the role of the bureaucracy expanded particularly during the Wilhelmine period, when, according to Hans-Ulrich Wehler, 'with the increasing differentiation of state functions, the significance of the bureaucracy grew in everyday politics as well as in society.'<sup>524</sup> Nation-building in new nation states such as Germany was pursued through the construction of roads, railways, political institutions, public education, and conscription. Moreover, efforts were made by political and cultural elites to promote

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<sup>522</sup> G. Schiele, 'Staat, Volk und Nation', *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 110 (1902), 189-206 (p. 189).

<sup>523</sup> Eric Hobsbawm identifies three particular social factors which gave impetus to this development: 'the resistance of traditional groups threatened by the onrush of modernity, the novel and quite non-traditional classes and strata now rapidly growing in the urbanizing societies of developed countries, and the unprecedented migrations which distributed a multiple diaspora of peoples across the globe, each strangers to both natives and other migrant groups, none, as yet, with the habits and conventions of coexistence.' E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 109.

<sup>524</sup> H-U. Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, 4 vols (München, 1987-), III (1995), 1021.

the national consciousness of their populations; schooling, conscription, anthems, monuments, historiography, *inter alia*, could each be used as means to this end.<sup>525</sup> It was a fundamental feature of identity construction that national identities were inextricably dependent upon constructions of the national 'other'.<sup>526</sup>

Processes of nationalization affected life in Prussia's eastern borderlands profoundly after 1871. Within this context one concern was pre-eminent: the attainment and maintenance of German national predominance. This imperative was central for successive German governments and nationalists because of the critical geopolitical importance of the region. The unequivocal words of Dietrich Schäfer were typical in this respect: 'The existing state and imperial border is for us unalterable. The existence of Prussia and Germany depends upon it.'<sup>527</sup> Accordingly, the integrity of the Eastern Marches was of significance to Prussia's international security, its economic interests, and the private interests of a large section of its ruling class. The Polish question was an enduring and unavoidable factor in any strategic calculation. The question of Polish irredentism presented itself ever more perilously at those moments when the spectre of war loomed larger, such as at the time of Caprivi's chancellorship and the *Neuer Kurs*.<sup>528</sup> The threat of attack or subordination to a foreign power appeared to necessitate the state's drive to bolster the presence of the German nation in East, for as Otto Bauer had argued 'Only a strong polity uniting the whole nation seemed able to prevent the continuance or reestablishment of foreign rule.'<sup>529</sup> Bauer's analysis was apposite in

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<sup>525</sup> S. Woolf (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the present: a reader* (London, 1996), pp. 19-20, 26-28; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 109-10. On the cultural aspects of nation-building in Imperial Germany, see, for instance, M. Jefferies, *Imperial Culture in Germany, 1871-1918* (Basingstoke, 2003); R. Alings, *Monument and Nation: Das Bild vom Nationalstaat im Medium Denkmal-Zum Verhältnis von Nation und Staat im Deutschen Kaiserreich, 1871-1918* (Berlin, 1996); M. Hughes, *Nationalism and Society: Germany 1800-1945* (London, 1988), pp. 149-153.

<sup>526</sup> In Imperial Germany, the self/other construct was particularly evident in the phenomena of anti-Semitism (especially from the 1880s), and in respect of Bismarck's 'enemies of the Reich' and the *Kulturkampf*. There were also the depictions of 'external' enemies such as France and Russia. S. Berger, *Germany* (London, 2004), pp. 92-96; K. v. See, *Freiheit und Gemeinschaft: völkisch-nationales Denken in Deutschland zwischen Französischer Revolution und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Heidelberg, 2001); M. Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1792-1918* (Stuttgart, 1992); M. Keller (ed.), *Russen und Russland aus deutscher Sicht: 19./20. Jahrhundert: von der Bismarckzeit bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (München, 2000).

<sup>527</sup> Deutscher Ostmarkenverein, *Die deutsche Ostmark* (Lissa, 1913), p. 62.

<sup>528</sup> V. Berghahn, *Imperial Germany, 1871-1914: economy, society, culture and politics* (New York, 2005), pp. 254-263.

<sup>529</sup> Indeed for Bauer 'the desire to repulse foreign rule was the motivating force behind all the nineteenth-century movements for a nation-state'. Quoted in Woolf, *Nationalism in Europe*, pp. 82-83.

regard to a territory where demographic dominance and strong state control were seen as vital to maintaining national, and ultimately, state integrity.

The Eastern Marches was one instance of a more general problem that afflicted the German Empire: the Empire was an 'unfinished' nation-state. Not only did the state not include all Germans (especially Cisleithanian Germans), but it suffered the seemingly insoluble problem of minority nationalisms within its borders. These included the Poles, Danes, Walloons (around Eupen and Malmédy), Alsatians and Lorrainers.<sup>530</sup> The greatest of these numerically was the Polish national minority in the eastern provinces of Prussia, numbering 2.87 million in Prussia in 1890; approximately 10 and 5.8 percent of the Prussian and imperial populations respectively.<sup>531</sup> The history of this region after 1871 is marked most strongly by the seemingly insuperable contradiction between German and Polish national interests. The 'nationality conflict' which ensued was concentrated in the provinces of Posen and West Prussia. Conflict was the dominant paradigm after 1871, and the predominant influence upon the social and political contexts of the region, its institutions and ideologies; after 1871 these became increasingly suffused with the spirit of national destiny.

The national conflict occurred in a territory with a predominantly agrarian economy, dominated by estate agriculture and its associated industries. Industrialisation accelerated after 1871, supported both by the agricultural sector's requirements, and the goods it supplied. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of industrial enterprises in the province of Posen employing fifty or more workers increased rapidly between 1875 and 1907 from 72 to 352, those with eleven to fifty workers rose from 395 to 1,373, and those with six to ten employees increased from 511 to 1,810.<sup>532</sup> The Wilhelmine era saw the growth of the industrial working class and the populations of the towns. The economic development of the region affected the two nationalities differently, however. It was a salient feature of the regional economy that a distinct economic gradient existed between the nationalities: approximately three-quarters of the agrarian working class in Posen, and almost two-thirds in West Prussia, were

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<sup>530</sup> H-U. Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, 4 vols (München, 1987-), III (1995), 961-65, 355-361; P. Alter, *Nationalism* (London, 1994), p. 78.

<sup>531</sup> O. Zimmer, *Nationalism in Europe, 1890-1940* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 53.

<sup>532</sup> W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772-1914* (Chicago and London, 1980), pp. 211-12.

Polish. It was therefore a border territory in which the national divide was, to a great extent, delineated economically.

The region's socio-economic stratification was reflected in its various political constellations. In the decades after 1848, politics in Posen and West Prussia had been coloured most strongly by the representatives of conservatism, liberalism, and Polish nationalism. Conservatism's main constituencies had been the Junkers, the state bureaucracy, and the Protestant clergy, as well as by large swathes of the peasantry. In comparison, German liberalism's main constituencies consisted of the German and Jewish bourgeoisie and members of the professional occupations concentrated on the towns and cities. The traditional leaders of Polish nationalism were the gentry and Catholic clergy, and it was not until the 1870s that the relatively progressive forces of populism began to gain ground, followed by National Democracy in the 1890s. In the Wilhelmine period, the Catholic clergy continued to hold sway ideologically and organisationally over the Polish masses with its brand of 'clerical populism' centred on the Union of Polish Catholic Workers' Societies (ZKTRP). This movement, together with other Catholic and Protestant trade organisations, always attracted the lion's share of the region's working class, monopolising over the Social Democrats and the free trade unions. The Social Democratic movement did not gain momentum until after 1890, and even then only modestly relative to other parts of Germany.

The national conflict was the most extreme manifestation of the national divide existing in the Prussian East. The divide was predicated fundamentally upon linguistic difference, and it was its changing contours, to the detriment of the German side, which were the primary cause of civil conflict after 1871. Linguistic identity was foundational for both national communities and their respective political superstructures. Territorial demarcations were excluded for the reason that the reality of mixed and irregular settlement continually rendered them untenable. Instead, there could only be an ideologically grounded 'interface'. The ethno-linguistic emphases of this locally-based model of nationalism concur with many of the more general studies of nationalism in the German Empire. It was with the advent of *völkisch* nationalism

that the conception of nationality as based upon 'culture, language and blood' reached its apotheosis.<sup>533</sup>

Linguistic analysis had been decisive in determining the numerical and spatial limits of each national community. It was the realisation, statistically determined, that the demographic presence of Germans in the East was diminishing in relation to the Poles, which led the state to instigate its policies of assimilation ('Germanization') and Colonization. Both strategies, which aimed at increasing the numerical presence of the German-speaking population, ultimately failed. The political struggle of the Polish nationality was aided by the fact of a higher Polish birth-rate and increasing economic prosperity, transforming the German assault into a dynamic conflict.

The national divide had important cultural features. In particular, cultural institutions were among the most stable reference points of national life for both peoples. This role became heightened by the progressive nationalization of culture during the imperial period, as the reverberations of the national conflict came to permeate the cultural practices of the region. In particular, the Prussian state, in its struggle against Polish nationalism, initiated a programme of *Hebungspolitik*, begun in the late 1890s. The drive to nationalise culture was concentrated on cultural institutions such as the theatres, libraries, and educational institutions, as well as the bureaucracy and geographical infrastructure such as the railways and waterways. Cultural institutions performed a leading role in sustaining 'national culture' in the mixed-nationality provinces. German and Polish library networks and theatres effectively extended the linguistic binary which underpinned the interface. The Posen Academy and Danzig polytechnic were closely controlled outposts of German academia in the

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<sup>533</sup> M. Hughes, *Nationalism and Society*, pp. 132-33; S. Berger, *The Search for Normality: national identity and historical consciousness in Germany since 1800* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 21-35; O. Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland, 1770-1990* (München, 1996), pp. 30-35; R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992); P. Alter, *Nationalism* (London, 1994), pp. 8-15; F. Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: a Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley, 1974); H. James, *A German Identity: 1770-1990* (London, 1990). On Polish nationalism, see P. Brock, 'Polish Nationalism', in Sugar and Lederer (eds.), *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (London, 1969), pp. 310-372; W. Molik, 'Entwicklungsbedingungen und -mechanismen der polnischen Nationalbewegung im Grossherzogtum Posen', *Berliner Jahrbuch für Osteuropäische Geschichte*, 2 (1995), 17-34; W. Molik, 'The Poles in the Grand Duchy of Poznan 1850-1914', in Kappeler (ed.), *The Formation of National Elites* (Dartmouth, 1992), pp. 13-39 (p. 13); M. Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge, 1985); A. Walicki, *Poland between East and West: the controversies over self-definition and modernization in partitioned Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), pp. 35-42; N. Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1981), II, 18.

eastern borderlands. Neither Polish nor German institutions were entirely exclusionary on the basis of nationality (Polish students were admitted to the Danzig polytechnic and Posen Academy on restrictive terms), although the national paradigm pervaded their existences.

By 1871, German and Polish nationalism were well established in the frontier provinces of Posen and West Prussia, and, in the words of Richard Blanke, 'by 1900 presented similar, "modern" typologies: morally ethnocentric, relying on organization, indoctrination, and stereotypes of the opposition, complaining of economic discrimination'.<sup>534</sup> The matrix to which both national movements aspired was the nation-state. But, despite their similarities, the political relationship between the two nationalities was profoundly asymmetrical, the German nationality being supported by the government and agencies of the state.

The German-Polish relationship has been interpreted according to a number of paradigms, each of which is empirically valid. In its introductory section this study has charted a number of the most important cases. In each instance, the interpretative paradigm structures the narrative framework or 'emplotment'. The paradigm of conflict has been predominant in the scholarship of the German-Polish relationship in the Prussian borderland. In comparison, this study has shown how the (conflictual) social and political interaction between the two nationalities produced oblique, yet substantive, forms of *transnational* culture and identity. The processes of interaction by which this occurred are interpreted as constituting a paradigm of *synthesis*. This term signifies explicitly the transition from national to transnational categories of thought and behaviour. The term transnationalism in this study therefore specifically signifies *deviation* from nationalism; in other words, its referents are *post-national*.

This definition of the transnational as *deviation* from national categories is a narrower one than that which is implied by the body of literature in the field. The application of the term transnationalism in historical research is exceptionally wide-ranging and disparate, typically being applied to historical contexts with little in

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<sup>534</sup> Despite their 'modern' characteristics, Blanke makes the important point that neither national movement can be analysed according to modernist theories which link the advent and development of nationalism to processes of 'modernisation', given the low level of industrialisation in the region and the political dominance of feudal elites. R. Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire (1871-1900)* (New York, 1981), p. X.



common. As the following definition offered by Sebastian Conrad suggests, the term applies most generally to processes occurring across national borders:

The concept denotes features and constellations which transcend national borders. These include also the history of foreign policy and international relations, above all in their recent form. The concept 'transnational' should be applied to far and away the greatest part of trans-border relations and assumes that the demarcation between domestic and foreign politics, which structured earlier controversies, is now obsolete. Such relations can be considered bilaterally or multilaterally, with balance or asymmetrically.<sup>535</sup>

As this definition suggests, the meaning of transnationalism does not necessarily presuppose the deviation from, or liquidation of, national categories; only the fact of acting across a national divide is elemental.<sup>536</sup>

Transnational phenomena were a significant feature of both the *social* and *political* contexts of the frontier provinces, and could be 'objective' or 'subjective' in form. Most fundamental were aspects of language and semantics in the region. Given that 'national culture' was based upon linguistic criteria, the foundation for a 'transnational culture' was first and foremost linguistic. Language not only structured the interface between German and Polish nationalisms; it also subverted it. It has been shown how a semantic conflation of religion and nationality grounded a transgressive axis for individual and collective identity. In particular, the conflation semantically denationalised German Catholics. These Germans not only existed 'objectively' in a transnational milieu strongly coloured by Polish culture and nationalism; their transnationalism also existed 'subjectively', as the perception of a Catholic identity which transcended the national divide. It has been shown how German Catholic communities such as the 'Bamberger' and 'Koschnewier' lived within milieus strongly coloured by Polish culture. In particular, German Catholics were frequently bilingual and were integrated with their Polish neighbours through the school system and religious practices. Their ethnic characteristics such as costume and customs were commonly hybridic as the cases of the 'Bamberger' and 'Koschnewier' demonstrate. In

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<sup>535</sup> S. Conrad and J. Osterhammel (eds.), *Das Kaiserreich transnational: Deutschland in der Welt, 1871-1914* (Göttingen, 2004), p. 14. See also W. Robinson, 'Beyond Nation-State Paradigms: Globalisation, Sociology, and the Challenge of Transnational Studies', *Sociological Forum*, 13 (1998), 561-595 (p. 561).

<sup>536</sup> The problem of defining the field of 'transnational history' has been the subject of a recent dialogue between some of its leading exponents published in *The American Historical Review*. See 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', *The American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), 1440-1464.

conclusion, it can be demonstrated that some German Catholic communities possessed substantive 'transnational cultures'.

Bilingualism, in school or among the population at large, represented a clear transgression of the national divide. The social contact between the nationalities continually produced degrees of bilingualism. Bilingualism was a phenomenon with 'subjective' and 'objective' aspects. In both cases bilingualism confounded the principle widely held that 'nationality followed language'. It signified the possibility of subjective ambivalence or transgression in respect of an individual's identity. However, the question of how most bilinguals really identified themselves remains beyond certain determination. In the 'objective' sense, bilingualism defied the binary construct held to be the essence of national difference. The phenomenon of bilingualism, which introduced ambiguity into the statistical classification, frustrated the rationalisation of nationality in the borderlands, consequently diminishing the state's ability to order and control the national relationship in the East. As a national conflict developed within the provinces of Posen and West Prussia, nationalists on both sides sought to homogenise their respective communities so as to gain political advantage. Nevertheless, bilingualism remained a distinct feature of the region. This is particularly shown by the frequencies of bilingualism among elementary school children up to 1911 (as high as ten percent in Bromberg regency in 1911). Indeed, the elementary schools were central in the promotion of bilingualism, the principle of bilingual education having been employed regularly, albeit sporadically, in the Prussian school system after 1871. It was an important irony of the attempts made to Germanize through the elementary school system that these in fact enhanced the socio-economic competitiveness of Poles who became bilingual.

Besides linguistic categories, the institution of mixed marriage was one of the most profound mediators of transnational identity in the border region, and at the same time, one of the most symbolic. It also represented a causal influence upon the linguistic categories of the region in increasing the prevalence of bilingualism. In the eyes of commentators, the phenomenon of marriage between Germans and Poles represented the most 'extreme' form of social interaction between the nationalities in the Prussian East, as it brought not only changes of consciousness and behaviour, but also of 'racial'

identity. Mixed marriage was in fact a normal and consistent feature of life in Posen and West Prussia, and was particularly notable in the Catholic milieus noted above, where German Catholics and Poles lived within close proximity to one another. The rates of mixed-nationality and mixed-confession marriage changed little between 1871 and 1914. Neither the fallout from the national conflict, nor the influence of the churches effected any significant changes in the rates of mixed marriage during this period.

Before the 1890s, mixed marriage was most contentious in its religious implications, particularly during the *Kulturkampf*. Indeed, the German concept of *Mischehe* equally denoted intermarriage between religions. In Prussia, this type of marriage occurred most commonly between Catholics and Protestants. At stake in this case was a struggle of material and spiritual dimensions for the sustenance of each church. It was in the Wilhemian period that *Mischehe* increasingly took on connotations of national and racial mixing. The heightened construal of mixed marriage in national terms during this period was largely an effect of the national conflict in the East, while its 'racialization' was a consequence of the widening influence of Social Darwinism and theories of racial hygiene. Accordingly, mixed marriage and sex between the nationalities was interpreted and depicted by the use of 'racial' and 'cultural' typologies. These became manifest principally in the Eastern Marches novels and in the German national press. Accordingly, sex and marriage between Germans and Poles were depicted as transgressions of distinct, yet unstable, racial and cultural divides.

Transnational phenomena existed in the political contexts of the region. The aforementioned semantic conflation underpinned the formation of a transgressive political axis, which has been characterized in this study as the 'Catholic-Polish axis'. The axis' main points of reference had been established during the *Kulturkampf* in the 1870s. The main feature of integration between Germans and Poles along the axis was the political incorporation of German Catholics into Polish politics. The principal phenomenon of this was the choice made by some German Catholics to prioritize their religion by voting for a Polish candidate. This confounded the assumption that a German 'national' would naturally support a German party candidate or be guided by

national categories of thought. In fact, the national conflict in Prussia's eastern provinces co-existed and intersected with a potent 'religious conflict' whose rationale contravened the former. Faced with this choice between conflicting loyalties, a significant proportion of German Catholics chose to prioritise their religion over a national allegiance. In doing so they subverted the integrity of the German nationality in the East and hampered the efforts of the state and its agencies such as the Union of Associations of German Catholics to promote German national interests. German Catholicism had mediated the formation of intrinsically transnational categories of political thought and behaviour.

The politics of Catholicism was one of two cases where political doctrines and movements mediated the formation of specifically transnational political ideology and behaviour. The second mediator was Social Democracy, which, like Catholicism, held universalistic aspirations and ideals. The Social Democratic movement in Posen and West Prussia achieved critical mass after 1890, following the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Laws. Despite the low level of heavy industry in the region, the strong social influence of Catholicism, and the political distortions caused by the national conflict, German Social Democracy gradually increased its following after 1900, attaining a total membership of 5437 in Posen and West Prussia by 1914. Electoral support for Social Democracy reached an all-time high in all four regencies at the Reichstag election of 1912, when the party won 17.7 percent of the vote in Danzig; 3.7 percent in Marienwerder; 4.9 percent in Bromberg; 3.1 percent in Posen.<sup>537</sup> In comparison, the membership of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), however, remained strikingly low, not only in the East, but in Germany as a whole. Its membership stood at 151 in Posen in 1910 and totalled a mere 2195 in the whole of Germany.

Although consistent and reliable statistical data does not exist to be able ascertain the national composition of the membership of the Social Democratic movement, nor the national identities of those who voted for the SPD at election time, the testimony and statistical data available suggests strongly that the majority of Polish workers mostly rejected the PPS and its nationalistic platform in favour of the German party. In

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<sup>537</sup> G. Ritter, *Wahlgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1871-1918* (München, 1980), pp. 68, 72.

conclusion, Polish supporters of Social Democracy appear to have shunned the national paradigm in favour of a transnational one. This occurrence followed either from the convenience and advantages of belonging to the German party, or from some degree of commitment to the doctrine of internationalism. Evidence for the second possibility is strongest. The internationalist doctrine was supported practically through the organisation of local Social Democratic associations which united German and Polish workers on a basis of equality, and in which efforts were made to overcome the linguistic divide. This was achieved through the publication of bilingual propaganda and the use of translation in meetings. These were examples of manifestly transnational categories of thought and behaviour.

Transnational phenomena were significant in both the social and political contexts of Posen and West Prussia. In politics they were, on the whole, ideological in origin, such as in the choice of German Catholics to prioritise their religion over their nationality, or the adherence of Polish (and German) workers to internationalist ideals; in areas of social life such as in mixed marriage, church and school, and the social function of bilingualism, transnationalism was generally a matter of social pragmatism. Within a historical context in which nationalism was pervasive, these cases demonstrate *how* and *why* people lived outside of it. In this sense, they demonstrate the *limits of nationalism*, as an ideology and as a principle of community, and the potential for alternative social units to the nation.

In each of the areas identified, transnational forms of consciousness and behaviour were attributable to a significant minority of the population at any one time. As has been previously remarked, in this period transnational processes and discourses were 'abnormal' and 'anomalous'; national categories were 'normal' and predominant. Nevertheless, the minority was sufficient to subvert the integrity of both the German and Polish national communities. Transnationalism in the eastern borderlands was therefore of considerable political consequence within this historical context. In transgressing national categories, transnational phenomena were opposed by nationalists on both sides of the national divide in particular instances; they constantly threatened to destabilise the respective nations. It was, however, for the German side that the threat was most serious.

The perniciousness of transnationalism for the German nationality was largely due to the force of Catholicism in the region. The incorporation of the German Catholics within Polish social milieus, materially or ideologically across Posen and West Prussia, subverted the integrity of the German nationality in this strategically critical region, bringing the Catholic Church, represented in local communities by the clergy, into conflict with the interests of the state. The conflation of Catholic-Polish identity was indicative not only of the social denationalization of the German Catholics, but also of their political denationalization, manifest in the political structures of the Catholic-Polish axis.

Similarly, the institution of mixed marriage was perceived as a threat by both German and Polish nationalists and propagandists, who invariably claimed that it resulted disproportionately in the assimilation of their nationals to the other side. In fact, statistical evidence does not support either claim. Again, German propagandists charged Catholicism, and particularly the Catholic clergy, with encouraging the Polonization of Germans (especially German men) by their fervent Polish wives. One of the special characteristics of this form of social mixing was that, occurring within the private sphere of the family, it was relatively unreachable by the government's *Polenpolitik*, and hence could not be prevented or easily controlled. The institution of mixed marriage was critically important owing to the foundational social role of the family unit in imperial society, as well as the actual frequency of mixed marriages between the nationalities. The net result of this, as well as the other features of transnationalism in the region, was that it was made more difficult for the Prussian state to win in the struggle against Polish nationalism; a struggle which was ultimately to end in catastrophe and the inauguration of a new epoch in German-Polish history.

## Appendix

Table A1: Reichstag Mandates-Posen and West Prussia, 1871-1912

Key: P=Polish; K=Conservative; NL=National Liberal; Z=Centre; RP=Reichspartei (Free Conservatives); I=Independent; RefP=Reformpartei; Fr=Freisinn.

Seats held by Centre and Polish deputies (the 'Catholic-Polish axis') are indicated in blue.

	1871	1874	1877	1878	1881	1884	1887	1890	1893	1898	1903	1907	1912
<i>Danzig Regierungsbezirk:</i>													
Elbing-Marienburg	K	K	I	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	RP
Danzig Land	K	NL	NL	Z	Z	K	K	Z	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP
Danzig Stadt	NL	NL	NL	NL	NL	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr
Neustadt-Carthaus	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Berent-Pr.Stargardt	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<i>Marienwerder Regierungsbezirk:</i>													
Stuhm-Marienwerder	NL	NL	NL	RP	NL	RP	RP	RP	K	RP	RP	RP	RP
Rosenberg-Löbau	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	P	P	RP	RP	K	RP
Graudenz-Strassburg	NL	NL	NL	NL	P	P	NL	P	P	NL	NL	NL	NL
Thorn-Kulm	NL	NL	I	P	P	P	NL	P	P	NL	P	NL	NL
Schwetz	NL	P	K	K	P	K	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	P	RP
Konitz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Schlochau-Flatow	K	K	K	K	RP	K	K	K	K	K	Ref P	K	K
Deutsch Krone	RP	NL	NL	K	K	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP
<i>Posen Regierungsbezirk:</i>													
Posen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Samter-Birnbaum-Obornik	NL	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Meseritz-Bomst	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	RP	K	K	K
Buk-Kosten	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kröben	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Fraustadt	NL	NL	NL	NL	P	RP	RP	RP	P	Z	RP	RP	Z
Schrimm-Schroda	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Wreschen-Pleschen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Krotoschin	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Adelnau-Schildberg	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<i>Bromberg Regierungsbezirk:</i>													
Czarnikau-Kolmar	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	Fr	K	K	K
Wirsitz-Schübin	P	I	P	RP	P	P	NL	RP	RP	P	P	P	P
Bromberg	N L	NL	NL	K	Fr	K	K	K	P	RP	RP	RP	RP
Inowraclaw-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Mogilno													
Gnesen- Wongrowitz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Sources: P. Schwabe and F. Specht, *Die Reichstag-Wahlen von 1867 bis 1907* (Berlin, 1908);  
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Map A2: German and Polish Settlement in Posen and West Prussia, circa 1913

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*Source:* Deutscher Ostmarkenverein. *Die deutsche Ostmark* (Lissa, 1913).

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