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## THE IMAGE OF UPPER SILESIA IN GEOGRAPHY TEXTBOOKS 1921-1998

*Abstract:* The author discusses ways in which this region of traditional industry has been depicted in textbooks prepared for use in the education system and argues that while the image is generally homogenous and stereotypical, there are differences in particular historical periods. While textbooks of the inter-war period showed the 'difference' of Upper Silesia, the socialist ones stressed its 'importance', currently the deterioration of the area is the dominant theme. The main factors shaping the contents of the textbooks have been the political regime, contemporary educational theories and the phenomenon of stereotype inertia.

*Keywords:* Upper Silesia, image, stereotype, textbooks.

### 1. Introduction

School as the main source of knowledge, skills and behavioural patterns, apart from the family and the media, greatly contributes to the shaping of attitudes, images and stereotypes (Pocock, Hudson, 1978). Considering that one of the main goals of education is to develop people's personality and their value systems so that they form a socially acceptable view of the world (Piskorz, 1995), one may assume a relationship between a school curriculum and the extant political system. This is particularly true about those subjects that interpret contemporary social and political realities, and as such are especially vulnerable to manipulation and indoctrination. In Poland, along with history, geography has been such a subject, always being closely related to the political, social and economic situation, which has largely limited an objective presentation of events, phenomena and processes (Augustyniak, 1997). As problematic as it may be in itself, this fact has one interesting implication: the school curriculum of a given era is not just the reflection of knowledge, but also of the dominant value system.

## 2. Research objective and method

The objective of this paper, which is a part of a wider study into the Upper Silesian region, is to analyse its image as presented in geography textbooks<sup>1</sup>. In the context of the restructuring and the attempts by the local and regional authorities to change the negative and stereotypical image (Rykiel, 1991), the author is particularly interested in the image of Upper Silesia in the latest textbooks published in the 1990s. From this point of view the most exciting are the following questions:

- which aspects of reality does a textbook present?
- which categories are part of a school stereotype of the region?
- are the phenomena recently observed in the Upper Silesia reflected in school textbooks?

To answer these questions an analysis of geography textbooks published between the inter-war period and 1998 has been carried out.

There have been a number of reasons behind the selection of textbooks as the subject of research. Firstly, the textbook, along with the pupil's notebook and the blackboard is the most important didactic tool – all pupils should have one and this is usually the case. Secondly, it is the main and the fundamental source of geographical knowledge (Winklewski, 1967). And finally, it is not insignificant that the written is an accessible and synthetic material and lends itself well to the researcher's interpretation.

Methods of analysis turned out to be a problem, as the publications deal with presentation of a given group of topics in school textbooks. No universal method for studying this type of text had been developed. This is the reason why, in order to reduce subjective influences, the author has chosen a quantitative method of formalised text analysis, partly following the recommendations of Augustyniak (1997), in conjunction with a quantitative semantic interpretation. The texts were grouped, with the row addition method, into a number of thematic blocks, and in order to facilitate statistical processing texts of different lengths were brought to a common value by calculating percentages, which in turn were used to calculate the basic statistical parameters such as arithmetical average, the median, standard deviation and the maximum and minimum.

The analysis, covering elementary and higher school textbooks, included texts, graphics and the set exercises. Comparison of elementary school textbooks presented no problems. In the initial grades all the information on a given topic is provided in one place and in a concise way. Later on the bulk of information is still provided in the form of a regional review, but for the first time there are also topics devoted to specific topics (e.g. industry or agriculture). Secondary school textbooks are written in an entirely different manner. First of all there is a split between the natural environment and the human activity and economic activity has been further divided

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<sup>1</sup> Textbook is defined here as a book which followed the recommendations of the curriculum in the selection of the content and was approved educational authorities for educational purposes. For wider discussion about the definition of textbooks see Augustyniak (1997).

into 'industries'. This results in the break-down of the holistic approach to regions into their parts and significantly reduces the ease of comparison. A list of the textbooks considered has been appended.

### 3. 'A different land' – Upper Silesia in textbooks from the inter-war period

Among the many problems of the nascent Polish state, the development of a coherent education system was not the least. No less than three different models were to be merged and an attempt to connect the encyclopaedic Russian model with the drill of the Prussian '*schule*' and the tradition of Galicia seemed an almost impossible task. Yet it was achieved and the Polish school system was firmly established. One of the major, if not the primary, tasks of the educational system was to make familiar the three parts of Poland, previously separate, and to develop a common national identity and awareness. Children in Polish Lithuania had to be shown the life of the „Polish Belgium” and the pupils of Upper Silesia needed to find out about the distant and unfamiliar lands of Polesie or Wołyń in the east of the new state. Hence the numerous depictions of both the natural and the human landscape in the textbooks of the day (Table 1). Interestingly enough, depictions of Upper Silesia in the inter-war textbooks seem the most complete of all. They do not just discuss Black Silesia, but also Green and even White Silesia<sup>2</sup>. There were descriptions one does not encounter after the WW II: „*Silesia means [...] beautiful landscapes, dense forests, a wealth of hard coal and metallic ores, as well as modern industry*” (Pawłowski, 1933, p.102)

Authors pointedly depicted the nature of the central part of the plateau: „*in an area devoid of any charm, in an ugly and desolate landscape shrouded in a cloud of smoke and coal dust, scattered with thousands of belching smokestacks, where even the green vegetation has disappeared under layers of soot, pulsates the rhythm of work*” (Sobiński, 1934, p.130). Despite those sometimes – almost diabolical descriptions, one must notice an admiration for this land, which was so different to other Polish regions. Depictions of Upper Silesia are full of expressions showing an incredibly dynamic image in comparison with the static peace of the agricultural areas. Upper Silesian towns „*breathe tirelessly day and night with the pulsating life of human work*” (Radliński, 1927, p.96). Textbooks stressed that those towns and villages were the „*best constructed and most orderly*” (Karczewski, 1934, p.126).

Much attention was devoted to the people of the Upper Silesia – clearly in an effort to make them familiar to the inhabitants of the other parts of Poland. The picture was attractive „*This is a proud and hardworking people who love order and discipline*” (Pawłowski, 1933, p.98). „*Hard work develops in them alertness, cautiousness, endurance and perseverance. This abrasive exterior, however, hides a kind heart sensitive to*

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<sup>2</sup> Author uses here traditional division of Upper Silesia in: „Black” encompassing the area of coal basin (Central Part of the Plateau), „White” in the North and East, and „Green” which spreads in the area of Pszczyna Forests and Beskidyn Mts.

Tab 1. Distribution of main subjects in pre-war geographical textbooks. Numbers indicate the relative frequency of lines devoted to a subject.

Tab 1. Rozkład tematów w podręcznikach przedwojennych. Wartości oznaczają ilość (względna) wierszy poświęconych na dane zagadnienie.

Wielkość próby =7 Sample=7	Ogólna charakterystyka środowisko naturalne general characteristic, physical environment	Krajobraz przemysłowy industrial landccape	Węgiel i górnictwo coal mining	Hutnictwo steel industry	Miasta, ludność towns and population	Stosunki narodowościowe ethnics relations	Kultura regionu, Ślązacy culture of the region, Silesians	Inne other
Średnia / Mean	27.4	12.1	23.2	6.9	10.3	4.3	7.1	8.7
Mediana	25.5	11.6	24.6	5.1	8.8	2.9	3.6	11.4
Minimum	20.8	0.0	12.2	1.4	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maksimum	36.7	23.8	34.0	17.0	23.4	11.1	17.8	13.9
Odch.stand. / Stand. Dev	5.7	7.2	7.8	5.3	7.2	4.2	7.2	5.5

Source: author's calculations.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

*human suffering*” (Karczewski, 1934, p.127). An important part of the description also features extensively in the texts: one may regard it at least partly as national propaganda.

The image of Upper Silesia in the inter-war period textbooks constitutes a kind of counterpoint to that of the later depictions of the region. Many issues that involved the authors, typical for the young, multi-national state, are no longer relevant. Nevertheless, they possess a certain value particularly in comparison with the contemporary descriptions so lacking in content, the value of discovering something new, which is one of the fundamental ways of stimulating the pupils' curiosity.

#### 4. „The land of black gold” – Upper Silesia under communism

Restrictions of the autonomy of the school and to the free flow of knowledge during that era had a characteristic impact. Education became a sprocket in the machine of ideology. Regardless of its tidal changes, the ideological campaign continued to cast a shadow over education. The system was characterised by extreme centralisation of management and teaching, as well as making role-models of both the student and the teacher. The rule was: one textbook for a single level of education throughout the country. A monopoly of one author and one publishing house was typical. As a result, one image of a given topic was promulgated, and one textbook would be in use for a long time. Such books would have more than a dozen editions and in spite of the note „amended and altered edition” they would continue to be used without major changes for almost twenty years.

Starting with grade four, Upper Silesia was presented as an example of an industrial landscape. The structure of the contents became characteristic in all primary school textbooks: a few sentences devoted to the natural conditions of the Silesian Upland and a description of the anthropogenic landscape. A set of topics devoted to coal mining. The steel industry and other industries and finally, a description of the Silesian towns and cities. Praise for the new regime and the achievements in the new reality have been placed between the lines.

Most of the texts begin with a characteristic introduction to the new region: „As far as the eye can see, smokestacks, smokestacks everywhere, one sees some strange factory structures, some high towers built of steel scaffolding” (Wuttke, 1957, p.145). Compared with the pre-war images, the majority of the descriptions are typified by a set structure and a poverty of language with always the same few keywords: a smokestack, colliery, steel mill, heap, towns that grow into other towns, smoke. More ambitious images that attempt to break the unchanging list of features are few and far between. There is no place for Silesia other than the Black one; only some of the texts mention that the industrial region does not cover the entire Silesian Upland, but only its central part, that not all Silesia is one huge coal mine. Only Czekańska (1960) mentioned Green Silesia. There is even a pattern: the later the date of publication the less rich and more simplistic the text. Unfortunately, this pattern still pertains today. During 1940s and 50s, authors still mentioned that „alongside simple fields, woods and meadows

*we see industrial towns*” (Wuttke, 1957, p.143). Later on, fields and meadows are never mentioned and forests are spoken about only in the context of their non-existence.

The textbook editors make efforts to differentiate the panorama of Upper Silesia from other regions of Poland. This is reflected in the ubiquitous exercises along the lines of ‘think and point out the differences between the Upper Silesian landscape and your home region’.

Coal, and everything related to it, was the ‘flagship’ topic that by far dominated in terms of textual quantity (Table 2). Authors stressed the huge significance of the ‘black gold’ for the national economy by naming it as the driving force of Polish development and the main natural resource. Textbooks abounded in figures showing the multitude of coal uses, there were also maps with colliery locations. We clearly witness the turning of the coal miner’s work into a myth. Grade four textbooks acquainted the pupils with the appearance of a colliery, the work and the character of the miner „[...] miners work with self-sacrifice and efficiency, they know how badly Poland needs coal. They display comradeship and solidarity” (Kądziołka, 1981, p.67). The work in coal mines is categorised as being dangerous and hard but also attractive and honourable: „It is a great honour to be a miner – many a boy dreams about becoming one” (Brzozowska and Kanikowska, 1974, p. 108)

The steel industry is depicted in a similar way, although it remains secondary to coal mining. Nevertheless, a visit to a steel mill is a set piece of the elementary school textbook.

The myths of industrialisation and the socialist reality may have been reinforced by consolidating exercises. The essential methodology manual by Winklewski (1967) recommends sentences such as „how many buildings were constructed in town after 1945, what was the growth in population, what new industrial plants were erected in the powiat or voivodship?” In the textbooks studied, the most frequently encountered set tasks ask for an assessment of the economic significance of Upper Silesia in general and that of coal in particular. Another typical exercise calls for the listing of industrial centres and making associations with town/industry or a town-specific plant.

Upper Silesian towns and cities are the basis of introducing the term ‘conurbation’ to the pupils’ vocabulary. The negative features of these towns, i.e. congestion, noise and the chaotic housing have been mentioned: however, they are suggested as remnants from pre-war times. The downside of the Silesian towns is the result of „the capitalist economy focusing on profit alone which has left behind a chaotic and excessive concentration of factories, collieries, steel mills and waste heaps and a chaotic transport network” (Barbag, Berezowski, 1953, p.283). It was suggested that only after the WW II, thanks to the intensive efforts of the state and on the part of the citizens an improvement of the difficult living conditions was achieved. A typical measure was to present the world along such a dichotomy: everything before 1945 was bad and everything after that date – good; the narrow lanes with houses close to each other dating from before the war were contrasted with the post-war housing estates „comprising sports fields, playgrounds, parks and squares, among the blocks of flats”. Such description of Upper Silesian towns stands clearly at odds with the image of the pre-war towns of the region, for example in the work by Radliński (1927), who mentioned

Tab 2. Distribution of main subjects in socialist geographical textbooks. Numbers indicate the relative frequency of lines devoted to a subject.

Tab 2. Rozkład tematów w podręcznikach socjalistycznych. Wartości oznaczają ilość wersów (względna) poświęconych na dane zagadnienie w analizowanych publikacjach.

Wielkość próby n=10 Sample=1	Ogólna charakterystyka, warunki środowiska General characteristic, physical environment	Krajobraz przemysłowy Industrial landscape	Węgiel, górnictwo Coal mining	Hutnictwo Steel industry	Przemysł Ogólnie* Industry in general	Degradacja i Ochrona środowiska Degradation and nature protection	Ludność, miasta Population, towns	Inne Other
Średnia / mean	9.3	5.2	41.0	14.2	11.0	4.4	10.0	4.9
Mediana	8.0	1.2	38.4	11.9	9.8	0.0	10.2	0.0
Minimum	0.0	0.0	18.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maksimum	28.6	15.9	65.9	31.1	31.4	12.9	17.8	30.4
Odch. Stand. / stand. Dev.	9.4	6.5	16.8	10.6	9.5	4.0	6.1	10.2

\* including other industries than coal mining and steel.

Source: author's calculations.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

Katowice as a „*beautiful town with a European structure*”. A positive example was given as Tychy – „*a town built from scratch in Socialist Poland for miners and their families*”. Post-war achievements in construction were also stressed. „*There are no monuments in Katowice, but there are a number of impressive edifices, institutes, theatres, schools [...] the magnificent Palace of Youth*” (Brzozowska, Kanikowska, 1974, p.171). Since 1970s the centre of Katowice, modern and functional, in the view of the authors, with the futuristic ‘flying saucer-dome’, became a symbol.

Until the 1980s the side effects of industrial activity and the degradation of the natural environment were omitted. Although expressions indicating a negative impact of industry appeared here and there, the term „pollution” was never used. Authors were slowly arriving at the conclusion that when overly congested, large-scale industry, whilst still bringing enormous benefits, may lead to irrevocable changes to the environment. When they finally mentioned pollution the actual causes were never stated. After all, one could not write that the deterioration of the region was to a large extent a consequence of the ‘rational and planned’ socialist economy, and so authors sought the causes of the adverse impact of the industry among the results of the German and pre-war economy and suggested that the conditions of the environment were being systematically improved in the new reality.

## 5. „Degraded land” – Upper Silesia in contemporary textbooks

The easing of the centralist tendencies, minimum curricula with an option for the teacher’s own contribution and the introduction of independent schooling are among the most important changes in the education system after 1989. The monopoly of one author was broken in 1980s and that of one publisher fell in 1990s. Textbooks have turned into goods ruled by the principle of supply and demand, resulting in many different volumes of varied content, methodology and publishing level being offered on the market. The most striking change has been the graphics and design; photographs and graphs are increasingly replacing the written word. Something that once seemed impossible has been achieved – textbooks are made attractive to the pupils.

The new reality seems to be placing editors of new geography manuals, particularly relating to social and economic matters, in a difficult position indeed. In the rapidly changing environment, much information is already out of date at the time of publication. This significantly reduces the life of a book and forces the author to make constant corrections. It is particularly significant in the face of the fact that school geography is still upholding the approach adopted by encyclopaedias and the often-encountered tendency to prefer facts to phenomena and processes. Thus, there still is a demand for dynamic textbooks, which could provide a broader interpretation of the contemporary changes in Poland at national, regional and local levels. Only a few titles of this kind have appeared so far.

As far as the approach to the presentation of Upper Silesia is concerned, not much has changed, and the observed tendency undermines the region’s already bad image. Upper Silesia continues to be depicted as a classic example of an industrial



region, but now it has been deprived its myth as the chief contributor of the national product and as being Poland's benefactor.

The contemporary textbooks concentrate on showing how industry adversely affects the environment. This is not just reflected in the increased volume of the material devoted to environmental deterioration but also the proposed consolidating exercises. The 1990s' pupil does not answer the question „*What does Upper Silesia give our country?*” but the relationship between the development of industry and towns on the one hand and the deterioration of the environment and living conditions on the other. Pupils may also be asked to provide examples of „*In what way does the industrial region adversely affect the environment*”. Often they are required to explain why the forests covering the Silesian Upland have disappeared.

The region's landscape has become a synonym for extreme deterioration: “To the west of the charming upland Krakowsko-Częstochowska [...] there is the Silesian upland buzzing with operating machinery” (Sokołowska, Wilczyńska-Wołoszyn, 1997, p.97). „*Wherever you look — there are factories, coal mines, houses, heaps and quarries everywhere. Smoke is coming out of the many smokestacks and the air is so heavily polluted that sometimes it is hard to breath. Water in the rivers is dirty*”. (Mordawski, Wójtowicz, 1996, p.123)

Customarily, much attention is paid to coal mining, metallurgy and other manufacturing industries (Table 3). No major changes have been noticed in this area. Next, young students acquaint themselves with the work of a miner and a steelworker, which occupations have somewhat lost their appeal without the propaganda hype. However tough and dangerous the work of a miner remains, it is far less valuable for the country than in the past. Those virtues of the mining fraternity, so loudly praised under the *ancien regime* have vanished somewhere.

Some texts feature a historical development of industry in Upper Silesia. Generally speaking, authors have managed to describe the idiosyncrasies of the region's development, although even here a number of myths and clichés from the previous period still remain. Silesian political history is depicted in a particularly biased and one-sided way. This is especially evident in the discussions of the pre-war period; narrow streets and cramped town centres still scare the readers of such texts.

As far as the majority of such textbooks is concerned, environmental deterioration and protection have become the chief topic (Table 3). It is very unfortunate that even this topic is often approached in a simplistic manner. Some volumes include incomplete and outdated statistics. I do get an impression that the authors have felt the urge to make up for the mistreatment of the topic during the former period when the negative effects of industry were a taboo. It is to be regretted that the fact that a large number of the smokestacks are a thing of the past had been overlooked and that even in the 'black triangle' the air is breathable. There is a paradox worth noting: now, when the region's environmental condition has improved dramatically (during 1989-1996 dust and gas emission fell by a factor of three, the quality of water improved and the risk of soil contamination diminished) the authors present the picture of a „region of death” without supporting it with any up to date

Tab 3. Distribution of main subjects in postsocialist geographical textbooks. Numbers indicate the relative frequency of lines devoted to a subject.

Tab 3. Rozkład tematów w podręcznikach postsocjalistycznych. Wartości oznaczają ilość wersów (względna) poświęconych na dane zagadnienie w analizowanych publikacjach.

Wielkość próby =15 Sample=15	Ogólna charakterystyka warunki środowiska General characteristic, physical environment	Krajobraz przemysłowy Industrial landscape	Węgiel , górnictwo Coal mining	Hutnictwo i inny przemysł Steel and other industry	Degradacja i ochrona środowiska Degradation and Nature protection	Ludność, miasta Population, towns	Restrukturyzacja regionu Economy Restructuring	Inne Other
Średnia / mean	7.6	6.2	17.6	14,5	35,3	11.7	1.2	6.0
Mediana	2.6	4.1	13.5	13,5	25,1	12.4	0.0	3.3
Minimum	0.0	0.0	1.3	0,0	11,8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maksimum	31.5	19.3	40.5	27,0	72,0	21.5	8.0	33.0
Odch. Stand. / stand.dev	10.0	6.7	14.5	7,4	21,2	5.9	2.6	9.0

Source: author's calculations.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

statistics and just feed pupils with euphemistic sentences such as „*smoking chimneys and air that cannot be inhaled*”. One positive tendency is the growing proportion of the content devoted to environmental protection.

The set of Upper Silesian features has not changed. Therefore most of the current textbooks devote much attention to the region's towns, chiefly as examples of difficult living conditions in a derelict area. One of the authors concludes the „*Katowice is a typical mining town*” (*sic!*). To follow such a train of thought, one could point to classic cities of metallurgy such as Cracow and Warsaw. One should perhaps be glad that the modern office buildings of the Stalexport company have replaced the socialist Palace of Youth as the symbol of Katowice architecture. It is satisfying to see that at least some authors have noticed something more than collieries, coking plants and power stations in the local towns and cities; they mention the Silesian Library, the Philharmonic Hall and the Symphony Orchestra.

Contemporary problems and transformations within the Katowickie voivodship either go unnoticed or are presented only superficially (Table 3). This should not be surprising, as the latest economic and social transformations do not occupy more than a few pages in the thick volumes. One of the books lists the principal investors, alas, without their geographical locations. Only one of the textbooks analysed (Plit, 1997) devotes any more space to discussing the transformations of the Polish reality. However, it shows the changes throughout the whole country, it devotes a relatively large space to the regions. It contains a sentence the type of which one would like to see more of „*Chorzów – the town of the now non-existent death triangle*”. Another rare exception among primary school textbooks is the work by Licińska (1993) where one finds not just a description of activities other than industrial in Upper Silesia but also a few sentences on the need for profound changes in the region. It is regrettable that these sentences have been omitted from later editions. If the issue of restructuring can be found, as in the book by Dudek and Wójcik (1997), it is understood in the context of environmental protection rather than economic restructuring.

To explain the authors' approach, they are required to follow the recommendations of the curriculum in the selection of the content. And what is a primary school pupil to learn about Upper Silesia? Now, according to the latest curriculum (MEN, 1998) the pupil „*knows that the Silesian Upland is one of the most polluted and destroyed areas in Poland and Europe. He knows the causes of the destruction of the natural beauty of the region. [...] The pupil can present the ways to restore a nice appearance to the destroyed areas*”. Authors do implement these assumptions. It is a pity though, that they devote far less attention to other recommendations of the curriculum such as the issue of regional restructuring.

## 6. Conclusions

In school textbooks, Upper Silesia is continuously put forward as an example of an industrial landscape presented with just a few features which, in the authors' view, are dominant. The list of these features has not changed since 1945; only some internal shifts have occurred within each category (Fig. 1). A tendency visible during

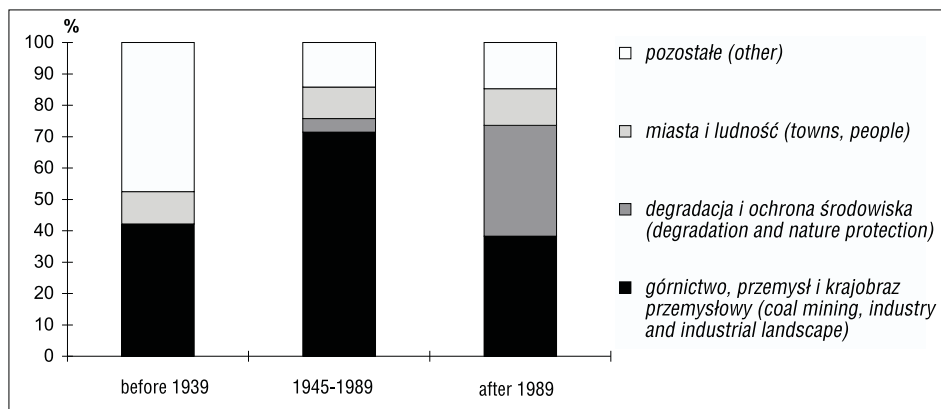


Fig. 1. Comparison of chosen subject in handbooks of different historical period.

Ryc. 1. Porównanie wybranych bloków tematycznych w podręcznikach poszczególnych okresów.

the recent years is for the paragraphs concerning industry to shrink and those on the environmental deterioration and protection to swell. The latest changes are reflected in the textbooks only marginally.

After 1989, the image of the region has become highly negative, as Upper Silesia is characterised as a typical example of an area destroyed by human activity. With the fall of Polish socialism and the myth of industrialisation a number of positive features associated with the region have been eliminated. The issue could be approached in a more general manner, i.e. as a contemporary revelation and a hierarchical depreciation of the traditional industrial area. Whilst the pre-war textbooks pointed to the 'otherness' of Silesia and the books of the socialist period indicated its 'importance', contemporary textbooks seem to mainly present 'the degeneration of the area.'

The stereotypical image of the region is particularly visible in its geography. It is still dominated by the 19<sup>th</sup>-century symbols: the colliery winding tower, a smokestack or a waste heap reflected in a clearly bigger number of illustrations devoted to industry and mining (Table 4), as well as the established ways to show the view of Upper Silesia. This selection of illustrations has an impact on the creation of an image of the region that cannot be overestimated: children absorb graphic images far quicker than the read and learned text. (Walmsley, Lewis, 1997)

What is the reason for the simplistic and simplified image of the reality in primary school textbooks? Apart from ideological factors and value systems characteristic of all periods, one must look at educational theories. A generally recognised theory says that „*Teaching geography ought to employ appropriately selected models [...] the selected landscapes are to be discussed by considering factors that dominate in a given area*”. (Wocke, 1979, p.30). To apply this rule empirically, Upper Silesia is a typical example of an industrial landscape. Industrial landscapes are dominated by

Tab 4. Distribution of figures in geographical handbooks under analysis (in percents).

Tab. 4. Rozkład ilustracji (w procentach) w analizowanych podręcznikach geografii.

	Środowisko naturalne Physical environment	Węgiel i górnictwo Coal mining	Przemysł i krajobraz przemysłowy Industry, and industrial lanscape	Miasta Towns	Degradacja i ochrona środ. Degradation and nature protection	Inne Other
Socjalizm	8.5	42.6	34.1	2.1	12.8	0.0
Postsocjalizm	4.1	36.5	21.0	17.6	13.5	5.4

mines, steel mills, coking plants and power stations. Teaching about anything else would be redundant ballast for the pupil's memory, already burdened with an overloaded curriculum. I do not question the rule itself – it is right to simplify the complexities of the world in line with the cognitive capabilities of the student, as required by school philosophy. But as usual, the devil is in details. Today, to present industrial landscapes with examples of mining and metallurgy is anachronistic. The contemporary industrial landscapes, both in Poland and abroad, look essentially different. Moreover, a question arises as to whether the face of Upper Silesia can be described in terms of the industrial landscape alone. Perhaps it would be worthwhile mentioning other features such as the cultural idiosyncrasies of this 'border' region

It may be that the way regions are presented results from the mode in which new textbooks are written, where authors base their work on existing books. This might bring a temptation to use the existing model and the related topics. Evidence to that effect might be found not just in the similar structure of most textbooks, but also in the same phrases and figures in many books. This may be compounded by the fact that most of the authors do not come from the region and, having little contact with it, may themselves be influenced by its stereotype. The latter would only confirm the old truth about the inertia of images which have remained unchanged, despite fact that the reality they pretend to depict has altered greatly (Goodey, 1973).

And finally a fundamental question. If textbooks are to show typical elements of a given landscape, perhaps the changes that have taken place in Upper Silesia after 1989 are not meaningful enough to merit mention. Mining is still strongly reflected in the employment structure. While the environment has clearly improved, still some areas within the region are being destroyed. Nevertheless, the problem seems not to be in the selection of the content, but in the form of presentation and the vocabulary used. Indeed, one may still write about 'the air that one cannot breathe', children perennially ill, and concentrate solely on the traditional industries. But, maybe, one could also write this way: „*The Silesian Upland was for a long time a land of coalmines, steel mills and heavy industry. They were very successful but polluted the*

*environment. While mining remains the main industry of the Silesian people, the authorities and the local community want to change the region's structure. Foreign investors have built modern plants, mainly in car industry (eg. in Gliwice and Tychy). Much has been done to improve the environment – waste heaps and smokestacks may still dominate the skyline, but it must be said that the air in the majority of the region is already clean”.*

The content is the same, but the message is fundamentally different.

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## **Wizerunek Górnego Śląska w podręcznikach geografii (1921-1998) Streszczenie**

Autor, uważając szkołę za jedno z głównych źródeł kształtujących wyobrażenia przestrzenne, analizuje wizerunek (*image*) Górnego Śląska w podręcznikach geografii w okresie ostatnich osiemdziesięciu lat. W aspekcie restrukturyzacji obszaru

i czynionych przez władze lokalne i regionalne prób zmiany niekorzystnego i niewątpliwie stereotypowego postrzegania obszaru, interesuje autora zwłaszcza wizerunek Górnego Śląska w podręcznikach najnowszych, wydanych po 1989 roku. Szczególnie podejmowane są następujące zagadnienia:

- 1) składniki krajobrazu i społeczno-ekonomicznej rzeczywistości regionu prezentowane przez podręczniki;
- 2) kategorie składające się na szkolny stereotyp regionu;
- 3) związek pomiędzy współczesnymi przemianami na Górnym Śląsku a treścią podręczników.

Podstawową metodą badawczą, stosowaną w pracy, jest jakościowa (semantyczna) i ilościowa (statystyczna) analiza treści, przy czym wzięto pod uwagę warstwę tekstową, graficzną oraz ćwiczeniowo-zadaniową podręczników przeznaczonych dla szkół podstawowych oraz ponadpodstawowych.

Mimo generalnej homogeniczności przedstawiania kategorii tematycznych, uważanych przez autorów podręczników za typowe cechy Górnego Śląska, przeprowadzone badania pozwalają wyróżnić w każdym z okresów analizy (międzywojenny, socjalizmu, współczesny) elementy dominujące.

Przewodnią cechą podręczników międzywojennych wydawało się być ukazywanie odmienności krajobrazu i gospodarki Górnego Śląska od innych krain Polski. Wiązało się to z zadaniami ówczesnego systemu szkolnictwa, szczególnie zaś w konieczności wzajemnego zapoznania, stworzenia poczucia wspólnoty losów i świadomości narodowej rozbitych dotąd terenów Polski. Należało pokazać dzieciom na Litwie specyfikę życia „Polskiej Belgii”, a uczniów na Górnym Śląsku zaznajomić z abstrakcyjną dla nich krainą Polesia czy Wołynia. Dlatego wiele w podręcznikach opisów krajobrazu, tak naturalnego, jak i antropogenicznego, a w porównaniu z późniejszymi okresami, opisy Górnego Śląska są najpełniejsze, prezentują obszernie zarówno treści fizyczno-geograficzne, jak i zagadnienia społeczno-gospodarcze.

W okresie socjalizmu, kiedy to industrializację uważano za jeden z podstawowych celów państwa, Górny Śląsk w podręcznikach stał się sztandarowym przykładem obszaru przemysłowego, zaś szczególnie uwypuklano rolę surowcowych gałęzi przemysłu – hutnictwa, a zwłaszcza górnictwa. Sztandarowy, zdecydowanie dominujący ilościowo temat stanowił węgiel i wszystko, co z nim związane. Podkreślano ogromne znaczenie „czarnego złota” dla gospodarki kraju, określając go motorem rozwoju Polski i mianem głównego bogactwa naturalnego. Zamieszczano liczne ryciny przedstawiające wielorakość zastosowań węgla, pojawiały się mapy rozmieszczenia kopalń. Można zaobserwować wyraźną mitologizację zawodu górnika. Warto nadmienić, że Mit uprzemysłowienia objawiał się nie tylko w pokazywaniu korzyści uzyskiwanych dzięki działalności górnictwa-hutniczej, ale i w całkowitej niemal bagatelizacji niekorzystnego oddziaływania branży na środowisko.

Współczesne podręczniki, w których Górny Śląsk stanowi przykład krajobrazu skrajnie zdegradowanego, skupiają się głównie na wykazaniu, jak działalność przemysłowa negatywnie oddziałuje na otoczenie. Obrazuje to nie tylko wzrost treści poświęconej degradacji środowiska (ryc. 1), lecz i proponowane ćwiczenia utrwalające. Uczeń lat dziewięćdziesiątych, w przeciwieństwie do ucznia z czasów PRL-u, nie



odpowiada już na pytanie: „*co Górny Śląsk daje naszemu krajowi?*” lecz wykazuje związek pomiędzy rozwojem przemysłu i miast a zniszczeniem środowiska i pogarszaniem się warunków życiowych albo daje przykłady „*jak GOP niekorzystnie wpływa na środowisko naturalne*”.

Wizerunek regionu po 1989 roku stał się wybitnie negatywny, co wiąże się, z faktem, iż Górny Śląsk jest charakteryzowany jako typowy przykład zniszczonego przez działalność człowieka obszaru. Wraz z upadkiem socjalizmu i mitu industrializacji szereg pozytywnych cech przypisywanych regionowi i jego mieszkańcom zostało wymazanych. Można problem ten ujmować szerzej: jako współczesne przewartościowanie i deprecjację hierarchiczną tradycyjnych obszarów przemysłu. Jeśli bowiem podręczniki przedwojenne pokazywały „inność” Górnego Śląska, socjalistyczne „ważność”, to współczesne wydają się prezentować przede wszystkim „zdegradowanie”.

Omawiając wizerunek współczesny, zwrócono uwagę, iż aktualne przemiany ekonomiczno-społeczne w znikomym stopniu odzwierciedlają się w książkach szkolnych.

Wyróżniając dominanty treści w poszczególnych okresach, autor podkreśla jednak wyraźną stereotypowość przedstawienia regionu, szczególnie widoczną w podręcznikach wydanych po 1945 roku (w tym także najnowszych). Elementy stereotypowe można wyróżnić poprzez przypisywanie całej Wyżynie Śląskiej charakteru wielkoprzemysłowej, zanieczyszczonej aglomeracji oraz niedostrzeganiu innych cech Górnego Śląska. Zjawisko to szczególnie odzwierciedla się w szacie graficznej. Dominował (i dominuje w niej nadal) model przestrzeni dziewiętnastowiecznej industrializacji z typową jej symboliką: wieżą wyciągową kopalni, dymiącymi kominami na tle hałd itd. Taki dobór rycin ma trudny do przecenienia wpływ na kreowanie wizerunku i zarazem stereotypu regionu: obraz zostaje bowiem przez dziecko dużo szybciej niż tekst przyswojony i zapamiętany.

Przyczyn schematycznego i uproszczonego wizerunku Górnego Śląska autor upatruje w kilku źródłach.

Pomijając czynniki ideologiczne i charakterystyczny dla każdej epoki system wartości, należy wskazać na teorie dydaktyczne. Powszechnie akceptowana zasada nauczania brzmi: „*Nauczanie geografii powinno odbywać się poprzez odpowiednio dobrane przykłady [...] wybrane krajobrazy omawiamy poprzez rozpatrywanie czynników dominujących w danym obszarze*” (Wocke, 1979, s.30). Stosując zasadę empirycznie: Górny Śląsk jest typowym wzorcem krajobrazu przemysłowego. W krajobrazie przemysłowym dominują kopalnie, huty, koksownie i elektrownie. Nauczanie o czymś innym byłoby zatem zbędnym balastem dla pamięci ucznia i tak już wystarczająco obciążonej przeładowanymi programami. Nie negując samej zasady, autor wskazuje na częściową nieadekwatność stosowanego w niej wzorca. Przedstawianie krajobrazów przemysłowych w oparciu o górnictwo i hutnictwo to obecnie anachronizm. Współczesne krajobrazy przemysłowe, tak na świecie, jak i w Polsce, wyglądają zasadniczo inaczej. Po drugie, nasuwa się pytanie, czy tylko krajobraz przemysłowy oddaje oblicze Górnego Śląska? Czy nie należałoby wspomnieć także więcej o innych cechach, jak chociażby specyfice kulturowej tego regionu „stykowego”?

Kolejną przyczyną wskazywaną przez autora jest sposób pisania nowych podręczników, szczególnie pokusa w korzystaniu z istniejących wzorców, prowadząca się niejednokrotnie do mechanicznego powielania starszych wydań podręcznika.

Fundamentalne znaczenie zdaje się mieć również zjawisko inercji stereotypu (wizerunek pozostaje stały przez dłuższy czas, chociaż rzeczywistość, do której się odnosi, znacznie się zmieniła). Być może autorzy, zakładając, iż podręczniki mają przedstawiać typowe składniki danego obszaru, nie uważają zmian, jakie zaszły na obszarze Górnego Śląska po 1989 roku za tyle istotne, by szerzej się nad nimi rozwodzić. Wydaje się jednak, że problem nie tyle tkwi w doborze treści, ile w sposobie jej prezentacji, w tym także w używanym słownictwie.

Biorąc pod uwagę istotny wpływ, jaki wywierają obecnie wyobrażenia społeczne i wizerunek regionu na decyzje lokalizacyjne firm (sprawa niebagatelna, zważywszy sytuację restrukturyzowanego i zagrożonego strukturalnym bezrobociem regionu), autor postuluje podjęcie przez autorów podręczników w szerszym zakresie tematu aktualnych przemian środowiskowych, społecznych i ekonomicznych, w tym zwłaszcza odejście od mitu zdegradowanego „trójkąta śmierci”.

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