

ETHNIC PROBLEMS AS THE SUBJECT AND OBJECT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

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Summary. The paper tries to present reflections on the identity, specificity and condition of present-day political science as a scholarly discipline. The starting point of the author's discussion are the challenges that political science faces, especially the processes of globalization, European integration, and the emergence and functioning of both global and European educational and research space. The author advances a thesis that ethnic research plays a significant and increasingly great role in contemporary political science. He discusses ethnicity in two basic aspects: as the subject and object of politics. He demonstrates that both are highly attractive cognitively and their importance is steadily growing. Ethnic studies, he believes, fall into all the basic divisions of political science, and excellently broaden its paradigms as well as research strategies and methods. This is exemplified by such categories in ethnic research as the problems of diasporas, national minorities, and Polish communities abroad (the Polonia).

Key words: ethnic research, ethnicity, diaspora, national minorities, the Polonia (Polish communities abroad)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Contemporary political science, facing new challenges, needs, as never before, a broader reflection and detailed discussion on its identity and specificity, its conditions and prospects for development. Such questions and proposed answers to them are discussed in the present volume by Jan Hudzik. His approach appears at the time which is highly favorable to 'our' discipline. There are probably very few others like this discipline that correspond to the needs of the 'new times' – the times of globalization. The explanatory and predicative function of political science is clearly growing in significance, its usefulness is evident in political practice, more and more complicated and covering new spheres of social reality. This reflection is also needed in Polish political science with its specific history and conditions, and complicated relationships with other related disciplines.

It should be stressed that political science, whose domain is to reflect on many levels on everything that is associated with politics and political activity, with winning and exercising power, is a comparatively new discipline with all the resultant advantages and disadvantages¹. Political science research consciously using this name started to be conducted in the nineteenth century in France, the United States, Germany, and Great Britain. In Poland, this discipline, called at different times political science, science or sciences of politics, and politology, can be traced back to the turn of nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Systematic studies in this field began in the interwar period, whereas it was introduced into academic teaching on a large scale as part of the so-called ideological disciplines, labeled as 'fundamentals of political science', in the latter half of the twentieth century².

In Poland the rapid development of this discipline and other social sciences manifested itself on the one hand in the expansion of the discipline itself and on the other in its institutional framework. In this first dimension, in accordance with UNESCO proposals³, the following branches emerged within it: 1) theory of state and politics, 2) the political system of society and the mechanisms of its functioning, 3) ideology, political thought and political doctrines, 4) international relations. One more branch developed somewhat later, i.e. social communication. In the process, in accordance with the world tendencies (in the socialist countries this took place only in Poland and Yugoslavia), the discipline so interpreted consisted of two complementary and fundamental levels: the theoretical part with the framework of concepts, categories and assumptions, and the empirical part containing the results of application of these categories to investigate reality.

This point of view on and perception of Polish political science also prevails today. Thus, it is assumed that the discipline is made up of the aforementioned main branches in two interpretations: theory of politics understood as the system of special propositions creating the image of political reality and empirical knowledge or concrete results of the study of social reality presented by means of these categories in the form of actual analyses, descriptions, explanations and forecasts⁴.

The development of political science also took place in the other, i.e. institutional dimension. Of great significance was inter alia the foundation of the Polish Political Science Society (1957), the establishment of the Polish Academy of

¹ For more: A. Chodubski, *Wstęp do badań politologicznych* (Introduction to political science research), Gdańsk 2005, p. 31 et sqq. See also the text by E. Olszewski in this issue.

² *Ibidem*, p. 41 et sqq. More: J. Puchalski, *Początek nauk politycznych w Polsce* (The beginnings of political sciences in Poland), „Nauka Polska” 1980, no. 6.

³ The UNESCO proposals of 1948 recommended the inclusion of the following problems in political science: political theories (together with history of doctrines), political institutions, parties, groups and public opinion, and international relations. See: *Nauka o polityce* (The science of politics), (ed.) A. Bodnar, Warsaw 1984, p. 40.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

Sciences Committee on Political Sciences (1972), and the setting up and development of political science centers not only at universities.

At present, political science is a discipline with an established position, developing methodology, and with its own heterogeneous research paradigm. Its problem and strength at the same time is its interdisciplinary character, utilization of the achievements of other sciences, especially social sciences, and expansiveness in this area. This specificity, resulting from a wide response to all manner of challenges, is conducive to controversies over what political science is and should be, what its field of research is like, what is or should be its object of research and domain at the same time. This is crucial to the extent that disputes in this area affect political science and also its relations with other disciplines, how it is perceived by related sciences, and finally, how it influences the frame of mind of those who pursue it. Great significance is also attached to the Polish system of professional career and academic promotion, and to vital discussions on the organization and functioning of science.

SPECIFICITY OF ETHNIC RESEARCH

In discussions on the identity of political science, especially on its field of research, a significant role is played by the issue of ethnic themes. These problems, because of their multi-level character and research attractiveness, are also inside the range of natural interests of other disciplines apart from political science – first of all sociology, history, psychology, and ethnology⁵.

We should, therefore, consider the problem to what extent ethnic research belongs to the territory of political science because we do not have to convince anyone that, like political science, it is of an interdisciplinary character. The starting point of the present discussion is the thesis that if we agree on that political science investigates inter alia the determinants and essence of political phenomena and processes taking place in different spheres of social life, and that the 'field of politics' comprises inter alia the political organization of society, social structures, ideological values, social consciousness and relations between these categories, then ethnic research is a significant part of 'our' discipline.

Ethnicity is interpreted by political science in various contexts, of which two are fundamental: as the entity (subject) and object of politics⁶. Both approaches are extremely attractive, with their growing importance in the area of research of this discipline. Thus, ethnicity is treated as the subject in the context of the eth-

⁵ For more, see: G. Babiński, *W poszukiwaniu modelu wyjaśniania przemian etnicznych w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej. O przydatności i nieprzydatności ogólnych teorii* (In search of the model of explaining ethnic transformations in Central-Eastern Europe. On the usefulness and uselessness of general theories) „Przegląd Polonijny” 1995, fasc. 4, p. 69 et sqq.

⁶ See: E. Gellner, *Narody i nacjonalizm* (transl. from *Nations and Nationalism*), Warsaw 1991.

nic group as such and in respect of formalized structures that represent it. Add also various contexts not only in the subjective, substantive treatment but also in the chronological and geographical presentation. All these references have their import in the context of the integration processes in Europe and the conception of creating the European Communities as subjects of international relations. It is often thought that because of Europe's multi-ethnicity, such concepts as 'national', 'national minority', or 'ethnic minority' will have to be thoroughly redefined. We cannot after all rule out that in an integrated Europe there will be no the so-called state or majority nation any longer: all nations will remain in minority. This may result in the development and subjectivization of ethnic groups that do not yet have the status of nation at present⁷.

In the approach, in which ethnic groups are treated as subjects of politics, the political scientists' field of research naturally has to comprise such problems as, for example, the organizational structures of ethnic groups, including institutions and associations covering particular spheres of their activity such as the educational system, culture, religion, or electoral committees set up by all ethnic minorities in a given country or electoral committees of individual groups. It is a norm that in order to attain their national objectives, ethnic groups have to formalize their activities, and should have nationwide, regional, and local representations. As shown by the example of Poland, where there are currently over a dozen national and ethnic minorities, each of them has its formalized structures and the minorities try to join forces during the election campaigns for the Parliament and local governments.

An important sphere of interest of political science are ethnic groups treated as the subjects of politics, especially in the context of function of the state. In this approach, it is particular policies that are of fundamental importance; first of all, ethnic/nationality/and state politics. This is an extremely vast territory, intriguing and arousing many controversies. Political scientists have already developed the functional canon of presenting it, which comprises the determinants, conceptions, subjects, forms and stages of realization, and consequences of this politics, both in the internal (domestic) and international contexts. The ethnic issues are also dealt with by other particular policies such as the state's educational, cultural, denominational or information policies. Their standing is directly proportional to the ethnic composition of the state and the scale of conflicts in this territory. Recently, there have been intensive studies concerning the state policy on national minorities and the legal status of national minorities as such and of individual ethnic groups.

⁷ See inter alia: M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*, Oxford 1999; Z. Bokszański, *Tożsamości zbiorowe* (Collective identities), Warsaw 2005; Z. Bauman, *Globalizacja* (Globalization), Warsaw 2000; *Dylematy tożsamości europejskiej pod koniec drugiego tysiąclecia* (The dilemmas of European identity at the end of the second millennium), (eds) J. Mucha, W. Olszewski, Toruń 1997.

There seems to be no doubt that broadly conceived ethnic research perfectly fits in all basic branches of political science. Thus, in the first one, political theory, the basic categories include nation, society, ethnic groups, national minorities, and ethnic minorities. In the second branch, as part of research into the functioning of society, considerable significance is attached to such problems as the functioning of the political organization of society, demographic processes, implementation of politics, forms of social activity, group bonds, the range and forms of national work of individual national and ethnic minorities. Ethnic issues are also included in the third branch of political science, i.e. in the sphere of political thought, and political ideologies and doctrines. The canon of research covers here e.g. the approach of individual trends in political life to the nationality/ethnic questions, the presence of these themes in political thought and policy programs. Especially advanced are the studies on the treatment of the foregoing questions by such trends as nationalist, socialist, Christian-Democratic, communist, and peasant ones and by individual political doctrines.

In the two remaining branches of political science the ethnic issues are likewise significantly present. In the sphere of international relations ethnicity has always played a vital role, with great emphasis being placed on problems related to emigration, ethnic conflicts, systems of human rights, including the rights of national and ethnic minorities, and relations between the country of descent and the country of settlement, where emigrants from the former have settled. The sphere of dynamically developing social communication comprises inter alia the issues of the media of national and ethnic minorities, their status and availability, the forms of supporting separate national identities by these, and the problem of funding them.

Based on the achievements and methodology of many disciplines, including political science, ethnic research has developed characteristic paradigms of scholarly inquiry, conceived of as multidimensional systems of theoretical assumptions, of resulting methodological implications and research procedures, or, in short, as specific research strategies⁸.

The first is the evolutionist paradigm based on the assumption that nations and ethnic communities are a product of the natural history of societies, which, while developing and changing, evolved from family-tribal communities into mature nations. In the next, cultural-anthropological paradigm, the assumption prevails that ethnic communities are natural, distinct cultural communities undergoing transformations that can be investigated and explained. In comparison with the previous one, this interpretation abandons the belief in the fundamental resemblance of transformations of all communities in favor of emphasizing the specific character and historical determinants of such transformations.

⁸ For more, see: G. Babiński, *Metodologia a rzeczywistość społeczna. Dylematy badań etnicznych* (Methodology and social reality. Dilemmas of ethnic research), Kraków 2004, p. 11 et sqq.

To the political scientist, one more paradigm above all is of crucial importance: the ethnic-political one, which bases on the assumption that a nation is not only a cultural but also political community, i.e. one striving to have its own political subjectivity. This research approach places emphasis not so much on cultural factors as on the analysis of consciousness, ideologies, institutions, leadership, and goals. There is a clear distinction here between a nation as a political community, culturally diversified inside, and the essentially culturally homogeneous ethnic groups devoid of political traits. Within this paradigm a distinction is made between the approach assuming the primacy of the state and its institutions in the rise and transformations of ethnicity (prevailing in German science), and the approach (dominant in the Central-Eastern European tradition), which recognizes the secondary role of the state in favor of predomination of ethos and laws of its development.

The fourth – socio-ecological – paradigm, stemming from the research postulates of the so-called ecological school or Chicago school, is based on the assumption that a nation and other ethnic communities are above all specific types of social communities. In this interpretation, the character, shape, contents, sense of separate identity, and the ideology of ethnic community are determined by such social factors as possession of one's own territory and the degree of its ethnic exclusiveness as well as economic differences, group interests and their implementation, threats, attitudes and the character of contacts with other social groups. In this paradigm emphasis is laid on the group character of ethnicity and the importance of, for example, ecological features is accentuated.

Another paradigm, psychological-behavioral, with diversified assumptions, is reducible to the conviction that ethnic communities are collections of people with definite attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Emphasis is put here on getting to know these attitudes and behaviors, less importance being attached to studying their social determinants. This approach is used to study attitudes, ethnic stereotypes, xenophobia and hostility in ethnic relations.

In the fifth paradigm, an identity-related one, the conviction prevails that ethnicity can be reduced to consciousness and identity. This is a strategy accepting the lack of more distinct social and structural determinants of ethnic identities⁹.

The research strategies distinguished in the foregoing paragraphs form a certain chronological sequence and are correlated with the prevailing research paradigms in social sciences. The contemporary approaches to ethnic research are most often of an eclectic character, complementary to one another. According to G. Babiński, the methodology of contemporary ethnic research is merely a certain hologram shade (i.e. seen from a certain angle) of the methodology of social research¹⁰. In his view, they are most often based on the so-called paradigm of

⁹ *Ibidem*. See also: E. Babbie, *Badania społeczne w praktyce* (transl. from *Research Methods for Social Work*), Warsaw 2003.

¹⁰ G. Babiński, *op. cit.*, p. 13. See also *idem*: *Metodologiczne problemy badań odrębności kulturowych zbiorowisk etnicznych w społeczeństwach pluralistycznych* (Methodological problems of research into cultural identities of ethnic communities in pluralist societies) [in:] *Kultura skupisk*

postmodernity, whose characteristic trait is the recognition that to apply different points of view and theoretical orientations is equivalent and admissible. He contends, like many others, that ethnic studies as a collection of diversified and heterogeneous socio-political facts, phenomena and processes, do not usually allow us to build and use a separate, stable and at the same time uniform research paradigm.

Such an approach is appropriate for political science, which uses several specific research methods of its own in the reflection on ethnic problems. Two of them are of fundamental significance here: the decision method and the systemic method regarded as those that most fully characterize the specificity and separate character of the discipline. The first of the two is made up of the following elements: a decision-making center treated as the subject of political action; a decision-making process, political decision and political implementation. This approach allows us to comprehensively present social and political phenomena, to treat political reality as dynamic, and to flexibly locate the decision-making center. Also the systemic method is treated as especially cognitively valuable: it is characterized by the overall presentation of the object of scholarly investigation and an in-depth analysis of relations between individual elements as part of a larger whole. This whole is the political system (with its parts represented e.g. by ethnic groups) and the essence of the method is to present political phenomena as the arrangement, internally structured into a whole, of elements with a definite structure. In this approach, reality is not interpreted as loose sets of isolated elements but as an internally integrated whole governed by regularities. It is important here to distinguish the set of elements of political systems, in the institutional interpretation this being states, political parties, social organizations, including minority ones, while in the sociological interpretation – social groups, also formalized ones.

It follows from the foregoing remarks that ethnic research cannot therefore be treated as the domain of one discipline, even so broadly defined as political science. This type of research is not only multidisciplinary but above all also interdisciplinary in the broadest sense of the word. When investigating the ethnic questions in the context of broadly conceived political phenomena and processes taking place in different spheres of social life, political science widely uses the achievements of many other scholarly disciplines. This applies above all to history and sociology, the most 'political' of related disciplines and also methodologi-

polonijnych (The Culture of Polish communities abroad), (eds.) O. Czarnik, K. Gronowski, Warsaw 1981; *idem: Problemy metodologiczne badań interdyscyplinarnych nad ruchami migracyjnymi i zbiorowościami wytworzonymi przez te ruchy* (Methodological problems of interdisciplinary research on migration movements and communities produced by these movements) [in:] *Stan i potrzeby badań nad zbiorowościami polonijnymi* (The state and needs of research on Polish communities abroad), (eds.) H. Kubiak, A. Pilch, Wrocław – Warsaw – Kraków 1976.

cally most 'advanced'¹¹. It is no accident that within political science there are such sub disciplines as political history, political sociology, sociology of political relations, sociology of international relations, and sociology of ethnic research. The political scientist who studies ethnic questions is assisted by the two disciplines in his research into the history of the investigated processes, evolution and functioning of the society as a whole, all kinds of groups that make it up, and social and political relations that regulate the relationships between them. What he finds useful are the modern, also empirical, research methods and techniques employed by these disciplines. It is now difficult to imagine the political scientist using research procedures without reference to e.g. historical or behavioral methods, to surveys or interviews. By means of them he can study the behaviors of particular individuals and groups, learn the essence of their activity in the context of the political role performed, analyze the development of political institutions, including those representing ethnic groups.

THE ISSUES OF MIGRATION AND POLISH COMMUNITIES ABROAD

What the political scientist finds especially interesting in ethnic research are two more specific problems, which inspire a special kind of methodology. One of them is the issues concerning migration and diasporas, including the Polish one, also referred to as Polonia, and the other are the questions of national and ethnic minorities.

The import of these issues is determined not only by their political character but also by the scale alone of the problem. Namely, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, migrations covered, on a global scale, 150 million people, i.e. those who lived and worked outside their country of descent. They constituted ca. 3% of the world population, their number today being twice as high as it was in the mid-nineteen-sixties. Moreover, the increase rate of the number of migrants is higher than the birth rate. For example, at the end of the twentieth century the former was 2.6% and the latter 1.7%¹². At the same time it is estimated over 100 million people belong to almost 300 ethnic groups¹³. In the case of nine nations, more than 20% of their members live outside their country of descent, i.e. in diaspora. For example, 80% of the Irish, 75% of Jews, 66% of Armenians, 50% of Albanians, 35% of the Portuguese, 33% of Poles, 30% each

¹¹ See for example: A. Comte, *Metoda pozytywna w szesnastu wykładach (Cours de la methode positive)*, Warsaw 1961; S. Nowak, *Metodologia badań społecznych (New methodology of social research)*, Warsaw 1985.

¹² *World Migration Report 2000*, Geneva 2000, p. 5. For more, see: D. Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact. World Migrations in the Second Millennium*, Durham 2002; K. Bade, *Europa in Bewegung. Migration vom spaeten 18. Jahrhundert bis zum Gegenwart*, Muenchen 2000.

¹³ *Die Volksgruppen in Europa. Ein Handbuch*, hrsg. Ch. Pan, B.S. Pfeil, Wien – Braumueller 2000, p. 10.

of Greeks, Hungarians, and Italians, as well as 20% each of Russians and Ukrainians live outside their country of descent¹⁴. The estimates also show that in terms of numbers the Polish diaspora is the fourth largest, following the Chinese, Russian, and Italian emigration.

In the literature on the subject the diaspora is defined as the spreading of members of some group, most often ethnic or religious, among other dominant groups. According to R. Cohen its distinctive features are the following: 1) forced spreading with the accompanying tragedy of a nation or ethnic group; 2) spreading as a result of the expansion of a state or group; 3) shared memory of the abandoned territory (the myth of fatherland); 4) idealization of one's family home and collective involvement in activities supporting the existence of the fatherland; 5) occurrence of return migration acceptable to the diaspora members; 6) awareness of one's separate identity, history, or shared fate; 7) problems in the relations between a group and the society in the country of settlement; 8) significant contribution to the life of the country of settlement¹⁵.

The investigation of these problems can be carried out using numerous migration theories¹⁶. Those that focus on economic migrations utilize neoclassic conceptions, the theory of split market, new economics of migration, the conception of the global system. The processes of migration can also be studied by means of conceptions of chain migrations, migration networks or the theory of social capital¹⁷. Many research opportunities, also in political science, are provided by the phenomenon defined by Raymond Breton as institutional completeness¹⁸. It applies to the manner of organizing their ethnic life by immigrants, which consists in creating 'their own world' in the alien environment¹⁹. In practice this means that within an ethnic community immigrants can satisfy almost all their needs. This is how practically all the emerging roads of diaspora immigration worked. They generated their own institutional completeness, which, however, functioned in different ways. For example, in the Polish communities, strongly Catholic, organizations and societies associated with the parish played a special role. In the German, Irish or even Jewish communities, however, it was the secular structures that were the strongest and most active.

¹⁴ *Największe diaspory na świecie* (World's largest diasporas), compiled by M. Pieslak, <http://www.wspolnota-polska.org.pl>

¹⁵ R. Cohen, *Global diasporas*, Seattle 1997, p. 2.

¹⁶ See: A. Górny, *Wybrane zagadnienia podejścia jakościowego w badaniach nad migracjami* (Selected problems of qualitative approach in research into migrations), Warsaw 1998.

¹⁷ For more, see: D. Prasałowicz, K.A. Makowski, A.A. Zięba, *Mechanizmy zamorskich migracji łańcuchowych w XIX wieku: Polacy, Niemcy, Żydzi, Rusini. Zarys problemu* (Mechanisms of overseas chain migrations in the 19th century: Poles, Germans, Jews, Russians. Outline of the problem), Kraków 2004, p. 23 et sqq.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, s. 39.

¹⁹ A. Walaszek, *Światy imigrantów. Tworzenie polonijnego Cleveland 1880–1930* (The worlds of immigrants. The making of Polish Cleveland ...), Kraków 1994.

In the research into migrations, special significance is attached to motivations by which those who decide to leave their own country are guided. Scholars divide decisions of this type into the so-called push factors and pull factors. The former are associated with the country of origin while the latter with the country of destination²⁰. This treatment of the problem, also from the political-science standpoint, allows us to organize the research and its treatments in an orderly fashion, especially in the context of reflections on the causes of migrations, and to broaden interpretations of the processes analyzed. Among diverse motivations for leaving one's own country, political, religious, and economic motives are traditionally distinguished. For example, the mass migrations at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were typical economic migrations. During and after the world wars migrations were most often motivated by political factors. In the aftermath of religious conflicts, often stimulated by national/ethnic factors, there were and there are instances of exodus of millions of people in all parts of the world.

The Polish scholars are especially interested in the Polonia problems, i.e. covering the Polish communities abroad, living outside Poland. According to H. Kubiak, 'Polonia' is the whole set of first- or next-generation individuals, genetically associated with the Polish national community, who emigrated from the Polish ethnic territory in Europe for different reasons and at different times, and then permanently settled in the territories of other nations or states²¹. The category of 'Polonia' thus covers all those who, regardless of the country of residence and knowledge of the (Polish) language, retain the consciousness of their Polish descent, manifest interest in Polish culture and show the understanding of Polish national interest²².

The numerical strength of the Polish communities abroad is difficult to estimate exactly. The prevailing view in the estimate surveys is that the number of Poles living outside Poland may oscillate even around 20 million people, although the official statistics in the countries of settlement record this number as approximately twelve million. The largest Polish communities abroad are found in the United States, where more than half of the Polish diaspora live, and in Germany, Brazil, Ukraine, France, and in Belarus. It is estimated approximately that the following number of Poles live in these countries: in the USA – 10.6 mil-

²⁰ *Emigracja z ziem polskich w czasach nowożytnych i najnowszych, XVIII – XX w.* (Emigration from Polish territory in modern and contemporary times...), (ed.) A. Pilch, Warsaw 1984, p. 14 et sqq.

²¹ H. Kubiak, *O koncepcję badań polonijnych w kraju* (For the conception of research into Polish communities abroad), „Przegląd Polonijny”, 1975, fasc. 1, p. 17.

²² W. Kucharski, Z. Tomkowski, *Wokół podstawowych pojęć i definicji* (Around the fundamental concepts and definitions) [in:] *Polacy w świecie. Polonia jako zjawisko społeczno-polityczne* (Poles in the world. The Poles living abroad as a socio-political phenomenon), vol. 1, Lublin 1986, p. 19 et sqq.

lion, Germany – 2.0 m., Brazil – 1.5 m., Ukraine – 1.1 m., France – 1.0 m., and in Belarus – 1.0 m.²³

The Polish diaspora is an extremely important element of Poland's politics both in bilateral and multilateral relations. The force of this argument is perfectly reinforced by all kinds of structures that integrate and represent the Polish communities abroad. They are headed by the World Polonia Council, whose members are the central organizations from almost all countries where the Poles came to settle, and worldwide Polonia associations. Its aim is to promote the Polish and Polonia interests, establish good reputation of Poland, the Poles, and the Polish communities abroad, and to preserve the national cultural and historical heritage. Another very important body is also the Union (formerly Council) of Polish Communities in Europe, which embraces several dozen central and nationwide Polish and Polonia organizations in almost all European countries. Its goal is to integrate and strengthen the position of the European Polonia movement, and establish Poland's rightful place in a United Europe. With regard to Latin America, similar objectives are realized by the Union of Polonia Associations and Organizations in Latin America and several hundred of Polonia organizations and institutions operating in individual countries.

Studies on the Polish diaspora have a long and rich history. They were begun already before World War I²⁴, and then developed in the interwar years by numerous Polish scholars, inter alia Józef Chałasiński²⁵, Mieczysław Szawleski²⁶, and Apoloniusz Zarychta²⁷. During that period many institutions were set up in Poland, whose purpose was to conduct scholarly investigations of native emigration, emigrants, and national minorities. This goal was served inter alia by the Institute for Research into Ethnic Affairs (established in 1921), A. Mickiewicz Society for Cultural Care over Poles Abroad (established in 1922), or the Scientific Institute for Research on Emigration and Colonization (established in 1926).

After the World War II Poland's policy in this area was intensified in the mid-nineteen-fifties. Some responsibilities were then taken over by the 'Polonia' Association for Contacts with Polish Communities Abroad, established in 1950.

²³ *Polonia w liczbach. Szacunek na rok 2003* (Polish communities in figures. Estimates for 2003) Compiled by M. Pieslak., http://www.nasza-gazetka.com/Menu_Polonia/DIASPORA/DIASPORA. For more, see: *Polska diaspora* (Polish diaspora), (ed.) A. Walaszek, Krakow 2001.

²⁴ See for example: L. Caro, K. Englisch, *Emigracja i polityka emigracyjna* (Emigration and emigration policy), Poznań 1914.

²⁵ Inter alia: J. Chałasiński, *Wśród robotników polskich w Ameryce* (Among Polish workers in America), „Wiedza i Życie” 1934, fasc. 8/9; idem: *Parafia i szkoła parafialna wśród emigracji polskiej w Ameryce. Studium dzielnicy polskiej w południowym Chicago* (The parish and parish school among the Polish immigration communities in America. A study of the Polish district in Chicago), „Przegląd Socjologiczny” 1935 os. 3–4.

²⁶ M. Szawleski, *Wychodźstwo polskie w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki* (Polish immigration in the United States), Lvov – Warsaw – Kraków 1924.

²⁷ A. Zarychta, *Emigracja polska 1918–1931 i jej znaczenie dla państwa* (Polish emigration 1918–1931 and its significance for the state), Warsaw 1933.

For the purpose of intensification and integration of studies the Commission on Polish Communities Abroad was set up in 1959 with the Polish Academy of Sciences [PAN] Committee on Research on Contemporary Culture, which was subsequently transformed in 1970 into the separate PAN Committee on Research into Problems of Polish Communities Abroad (now the PAN Committee on Research into Polish Communities Abroad)²⁸.

A breakthrough in the research into the problems related to Polish communities abroad took place in the nineteen-sixties and seventies. It was then that original and comprehensive conceptions of research and organization were developed, inter alia by Remigiusz Bierzanek and Hieronim Kubiak. The former emphasized the interdisciplinary and multi-faceted character of these studies²⁹, while H. Kubiak defined the main areas of research on the Polonia. His 'Uniform program of research tasks concerning research into Polish communities abroad' comprises such problems as: determinants of emigration from the Polish territory, history of individual Polish communities abroad, associations and institutions set up by Polish communities abroad and transformations of their functions, participation in the socio-political life of the country of settlement, the educational and school systems of Polish communities abroad, forms of ties of Poles living abroad with their country of descent, preservation of documents and materials concerning Poland all over the world, and the policy of the countries of settlement towards immigrants³⁰. In his sui generis 'manifesto' of 1975, H. Kubiak stressed that „the program of research tasks in the studies on Polish communities abroad has and needs to have an interdisciplinary character. This is determined by the character of the object of cognition, multi-faceted by nature and going beyond the scope of any of the existent social and political sciences.” According to Kubiak, the interdisciplinary character

does not consist in the simple procedure of adding up the results of studies conducted independently of one another, as part of diverse research trends, different cognitive horizons, etc. It manifests itself, however, in jointly defined strategic and intermediate goals, in the agreement on theoretical and methodological foundations as well as the conceptual network of categories of description and explanation, and the synchronization of the time and object of research³¹.

It was during that decade that universities in Cracow, Poznań and in Lublin established research and teaching departments, which specialized in the prob-

²⁸ H. Kubiak, *O koncepcję badań polonijnych w kraju* (For the conception of domestic research into Polish communities abroad) „Przegląd Polonijny”, 1975, fasc. 1, p. 17.

²⁹ R. Bierzanek, *Stan i potrzeby badań naukowych nad problematyką polonijną* (The state and needs of scholarly research into the problems of Polish communities abroad), „Problemy Polonii Zagranicznej” 1968, vol. V, pp. 7–28.

³⁰ H. Kubiak, *op. cit.*, p. 23 et sqq.

³¹ *Ibidem* p. 15.

lems of the Polish communities abroad³². The research that they started was included in the then launched, centrally controlled programs, first of all as part of the Central Program of Basic Research. Political scientists took active part in it, focusing their attention on several fundamental issues: emigration waves and their causes, the status of Polish communities abroad, national activities of individual communities with special emphasis on political activities, on participation of these Poles in the social life of the country of settlement, and policies towards the Polonia pursued by both the Polish government and the countries of settlement. The domain of political scientists embraced the studies on the national-political activity and status of particular Polish population centers abroad, waves of Polish emigration, including political emigration resulting from the consequences of World War II, political crises in post-war Poland, and caused by martial law. The analyses of organizational structures, processes of creation of Polonia elites and forms of integration of Poles abroad were also of considerable importance.

The problems pertaining to Polish communities abroad are still an attractive 'field of research'. The majority of issues contained in the canon of research into Polish communities abroad, formulated as early as in the nineteen-seventies, are still not fully explored, waiting for the interested political scientist. The most interesting of those are concentrated in such areas as the Polish diaspora in globalization processes and in the politics of the Polish government, multicultural policy, subjects of ethnic politics, the Polonia elites and lobbies, organizational integration of Polish communities abroad, and problems of the Poles living in the East.

THE ISSUES OF NATIONAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

The character of the problems concerning national minorities makes them particularly closely related to political science – for a long time these issues have also been an important part of investigations conducted as part of this discipline. Already in the discussions and controversies around the basic categories and concepts in this field, the prevailing approach is a political science interpretation. Such is the character of the definition of national minority, according to which it

³² In Cracow the Polonia Teaching and Research Center was set up at Jagiellonian University (now operating as Institute for Studies on Polish Communities Abroad and Ethnic Studies). The Catholic University of Lublin established the Institute of Polish Migration (now Institute for Research into Polish Communities Abroad and Ministry for Polish People from Abroad), while Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin set up the Cultural and Educational Center for Polish People from Abroad and the separate Section for Research into Polish Communities Abroad at the Intercollegiate Institute of Political Science (they now operate separately as the UMCS Polish Language and Culture Center for Polish People from Abroad and Foreigners and the UMCS Faculty of Political Science's Department of Ethnic Research). In Poznań the PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences) Department of Research into Polish Communities Abroad was established (the PAN Department of Ethnic Research).

is a group of citizens of a state, which is in minority in relation to the remaining part of its population and does not occupy a dominant position; it is characterized by ethnic, linguistic or religious traits, it jointly strives to preserve their separate cultural identity and has aspirations interpreted in terms of the state³³. A similar interpretation applies to the difference between national and ethnic minority, which relates to the character of their political aspirations, sometimes to the demographic and organizational strength, and to the historical status of minority population centers. In political science the established assumption is that national minorities are groups that have their own mother country or only a developed program of struggle for it, whereas ethnic minorities do not voice such postulates³⁴.

Historical, sociological, and political science approaches also compete in the research into the minority problems. The prevalence of the political science approach is determined at present first of all by the political character of this area of research. For it embraces, at the same time, as a characteristic paradigm of studies on minorities, such problems as: the origin of minority communities, their numerical strength and location, the state of national consciousness, their social structure, legal status, the structure of organizational life, trends in political life, economic activities, educational and school systems, the press and publishers, religious life, attitude towards the country of settlement, and their position in the politics of the country of settlement and of descent³⁵. This characteristic canon of investigating individual minorities, developed in political science, has been widely realized in scientific research for many years³⁶.

The political character of minority issues is first of all determined by the fact that they are a crucial element of internal and international politics, the subject and object of political activity, often assisted by legal solutions that specify the rights and duties of ethnic group members. Of fundamental importance here are the strivings of countries of descent and countries of settlement, of which the former strive to strengthen the communities of their fellow countrymen in another state in order to enhance its bargaining position in relations with it, while the latter strive to neutralize this factor. This type of attitude and characteristic competition occurs primarily in the countries neighboring one another, which have the other's population inside their borders³⁷. Hence, there have always been and are widespread attempts to externally influence the state of national con-

³³ H. Chałupczak, T. Browarek, *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce 1918–1995* (National minorities in Poland ...), Lublin 2000, p. 14.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 15

³⁵ See: A. Kłoskowska, *Kultury narodowe u korzeni* (National cultures at their roots), Warsaw 1996.

³⁶ See: A. Smith, *National Identity*, London 1991; *Konflikty etniczne. Źródła – typy, sposoby rozstrzygnięcia* (Ethnic conflicts. Sources – types, ways of settlement), (eds) I. Kabzińska-Stawarz, S. Synkiewicz, Warsaw 1996.

³⁷ For more, see: Z. Kurcz, *Mniejszość polska na Wileńszczyźnie. Studium socjologiczne* (The Polish minority in the Vilna region. A sociological study), Wrocław 2005, p. 23 et sqq.

sciousness of individual minorities, the conditions of their organization, and national and political activities. It sometimes happens that as a result of such actions by the country of descent some minority groups are assigned the instrumental role of a factor detrimental to the country of settlement. Most often, however, which must be emphasized, ethnic groups are a special bridge between neighboring countries, thereby facilitating their rapprochement and cooperation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The ethnic subject matter, which is without doubt of an interdisciplinary character, perfectly fits in the cognitive sphere of political science. There is also no doubt that research into this field is in the range of interests of other disciplines such as sociology, history, ethnology, psychology, to name but those that naturally, as it were, 'border' this set of issues. As yet, because of the interdisciplinary character of this subject matter, there is not, and probably cannot be, one common and coherent theory of ethnic relations, and research into this field is conducted most often within individual disciplines, basing on paradigms and methods characteristic of each one. On account of its interdisciplinary character, political science seems to cope best with this subject matter.

Despite methodological and problem-related divergences, it seems advisable or even necessary to look for common or similar paradigms and levels of research within the scopes of different disciplines³⁸. At the same time, the point of reference of the theory and methodology of research in the scholarly territory in question must be the theory and methodology of global ethnic research. Especially the research into Polish communities abroad, focused on the Polish ethnic group outside Poland, must be 'open' to studies on other ethnic groups in the countries where the Polish communities settled. Without comparative studies, without searching for features and phenomena shared with other ethnic groups, such studies will not be reliable and complete. Research undertakings of this kind, with the necessary participation of political scientists, can provide additional knowledge on the regularities governing the field of ethnic issues, and on the problems awaiting investigation or less thoroughly explored. This also the path to combining the results of research on different stages and phases of the processes under investigation, to attaining the comparability of results of research with a similar theoretical and methodological background, to subject systematization, and to the methodological ordering of ethnic research.

³⁸ For more, see: G. Babiński, *op. cit.*, p. 19 et sqq.

PROBLEMATYKA ETNICZNA JAKO PODMIOT I PRZEDMIOT
BADAŃ POLITOLOGICZNYCH

Streszczenie. Artykuł jest refleksją na temat tożsamości, specyfiki i kondycji współczesnej politologii jako dyscypliny naukowej. Autor za punkt wyjścia swoich rozważań przyjmuje wyzwania, przed jakimi ona stoi, mając na uwadze przede wszystkim procesy globalizacji, integracji europejskiej oraz powstanie i funkcjonowanie tak światowej, jak i europejskiej przestrzeni badawczej oraz edukacyjnej. Stawia tezę, że we współczesnej politologii istotną i coraz większą rolę odgrywają badania etniczne. Rozważa on etniczność w dwu podstawowych aspektach: jako podmiot oraz przedmiot polityki. Udowadnia, że oba są niezwykle atrakcyjne poznawczo, a ich ranga stale wzrasta. Jego zdaniem badania etniczne mieszczą się we wszystkich podstawowych działach politologii, znakomicie rozszerzają jej paradygmaty, strategie i metody badawcze. Za egzemplifikację posłużyły mu takie kategorie z zakresu badań etnicznych, jak problematyka diaspory, mniejszości narodowych oraz Polonii.

Słowa kluczowe: badania etniczne, etniczność, diaspora, mniejszości narodowe, Polonia