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THE IMAGE OF GERMANS AND GERMANY IN *Przeegl d Zachodniö*  
IN 1945-1990

To write about the image of Germany in *Przeegl d Zachodniö*, one first must ask who were the authors of papers published and to whom the image presented is to be attributed. The reason is that that censorship in Poland was abolished only on April 11, 1990. Today it is difficult to learn what private views of the authors were, whether and on what occasions censors intervened and if soft censorship was often the case. Of course, I am not able to say whether the authors' private views were different and on which issues. To do so, one would have to compare original versions of papers with those published and ask their authors detailed questions. That I am unable to do.

Secondly, the image of Germany presented in *Przeegl d Zachodniö* kept changing. Thus the question is to what extent that evolution was spontaneous and to what extent it was an outcome of the changing conditionalities, both internal and external. That refers to the end of the Cold War, to the internal political system changes that accompanied replacing old first secretaries of the Polish United Workers' Party [PZPR] and events which caused that like Pozna revolt in 1956, the 1970 strikes, June 1976 protests, the emergence of the Solidarity movement, the martial law and the Round Table talks in Poland.

Thirdly, it is impossible to determine what the readership's reactions were 50 years ago as the readers surely perceived and responded to images of Germany differently from those who read *Przeegl d Zachodniö* today.

One more reservation is in place. It is impossible to offer a detailed analysis of everything written about Germany and Germans in *Przeegl d Zachodniö* in 1945-1990. Its first volume was published in 1945 when the issue of Poland's borders was not decided and post-war decisions on Germany were not yet taken. The year 1990 which marks the end of that period was the year of Germany's reunification and the end of censorship in Poland. Thus, with all above reservations in mind, a reconstructed image of Germany will be closer to an impressionist painting than a realist one.

*Przeegl d Zachodniö* devoted very much attention and space to Germans and that refers to both the German society and political organisations in the then two German states. A very interesting source of information is the Chronicle which was part of *Przeegl d Zachodniö* in from the late 1940s to 1990. Chronicles had a uniform format and included reports on politics, society and economy. In those years, the *Kronika Niemiec współczesnych* [Chronicle of modern Germany<sup>1</sup>] was part of *Przeegl d Zachodniö* since its first volume. Later, in the section titled *Reviews and commentaries*, analyses of various events were

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<sup>1</sup> Note: in Polish, the noun *Niemcy* is grammatically plural and refers to a German country and its citizens.

presented and that refers to political and economic developments in both German states. Many papers analysing legal solutions applied to Germany and in the two states were published too. Those were the texts which shaped the image of Germany, German states and Germans.

Before the Iron Curtain divided Germany and the world, Alfons Klafkowski wrote his paper titled 'A new German state in its early phase'. He pointed to some development trends and debated the future shape of Germany. In his analysis, he pointed out that some issues were not resolved at the Potsdam Conference and in its Agreements, and that the three powers did not fully agree on everything. He rightly concluded:

The more deeply one analyzes the German life, the more everyday troubles one recognises, those discrepancies grow. Of course, solutions will not focus on common German people and their wellbeing but will reflect the interests of the powers occupying Germany.<sup>2</sup>

Apparently, Klafkowski thought that all together the three powers had one vision of Germany and that Germany would be one state. About Germany's new borders and its eastern border he wrote:

The issue of Germany's eastern border seems to be most advanced. What remains to be decided is whether the left bank of the Oder will be Polish. The Lusatia issue is still open. The European opinion seems to be increasingly accepting the shape of Germany's eastern border which has actually been already practically demarcated.<sup>3</sup>

What Klafkowski wrote, seemed to reflect some hopes that a peace treaty could be signed shortly, that there would be one German state and denazification would be completed. About denazification, Klafkowski wrote that in the American and Soviet zones it progressed in a zealous way and that in the American zone, 1 250 thousand of German officials and civil servants were screened. He also noted that some people would avoid disclosing their activities and memberships during the Third Reich. Klafkowski's paper included the first and probably last joke about the denazification process:

The essence of denazification is best captured in a popular Berlin joke. 'Partei-genosse', 'P-g' for short, is now interpreted as 'Pech gehabt'. While 'Volksgenosse', 'V-g' is interpreted as 'Vorsichtig gewesen'.<sup>4</sup>

## I

The content of 'Przegl d Zachodni' kept changing in 1945-1990. In the presented images of German states and German people, several attitudes prevailed:

1. A German as an enemy; that was the prevailing post-war rhetoric;
2. An idealised image of the German Democratic Republic;
3. A negative, bleak image of the Federal Republic of Germany, revised with time;

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<sup>2</sup> A. Klafkowski, *Nowe pa stwo niemieckie w stadium organizacji*, 'Przegl d Zachodni' No. 1, 1946, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem, p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 47.

4. Two German states, both sovereign (1970-1989);
5. The 1980s evolution.

## 1.

Till around the late 1940s, the image of Germans as Nazi criminals prevailed in message conveyed in *Przeł d Zachodniö*. The regular message was that Germans had always been enemies of the Slavonic world and of Poles. The most characteristic demonstration of the above were numerous publications which underlined the 19<sup>th</sup> century belief and a Polish saying that *õ jak wiat wiatem nie b dzie Niemiec Polakowi bratemö* [since time immemorial, a German has never and will not be a brother to a Pole]. The tone of first volumes of *Przeł d Zachodniö* was set by historians affiliated to the Underground University of Western Lands, in particular by Zygmunt Wojciechowski. They underlined old ties between Silesia and Pomerania with Poland dating back to the Piast dynasty and, at the same time, they emphasised the everlasting hostility of Germans towards Poles and Slavs in general. That was also underlined in the early post-war years. The first volume strongly reflected the above. It was published in 1945 and contained three papers by Zygmunt Wojciechowski, i.e. *õGrunwaldö* [the First Battle of Tannenberg], *õPrzeszedł przez morzeö* [Crossed the sea<sup>5</sup>], *õHocł pruskiö* [The Prussian Homage], and Bogdan Suchodolski's paper titled *õDusza niemiecka w wietle filozofiiö* [The German spirit in the light of philosophy]. In his *õGrunwaldö* paper, Wojciechowski's thesis was that the event had a symbolic meaning and thus it was not only a battle with Teutonic Knights but a symbol of the struggle against Germans.

The First Battle of Tannenberg was not only a landmark in relations between Poles and the Teutonic Order. It was a clash of two worlds: the Slavonic and German ones, and it had a historic impact on the future of those two worlds.<sup>6</sup>

[í ] A feeling of great suffering inflicted by Germans has emotionally loaded Polish-German relations for centuries. It did not begin in the 10<sup>th</sup> century when Mieszko I and Boleslaus the Brave started to build the Polish state. Some profound crimes must have been committed in times from which there are no written records but which left an imprint in people's souls. For what other reason would Mieszko I so fiercely defend Poland's sovereignty against Germany? What we have recently experienced is a spotlight which helps lit prehistoric darkness and allows mute shadows to speak.<sup>7</sup>

[í ] The sense of Polish sovereignty stems from the struggle with Germans, from a conviction that no other forms of coexistence with Germans are impossible. That feeling has become such a powerful part of the Polish spirit that killing it would mean trying to kill Poland and Polish identity.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> A reference to the Anthem of Poland.

<sup>6</sup> Z. Wojciechowski, *Grunwald*, *Przeł d Zachodniö* No. 1, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 5.

For the generation of Poles who read Sienkiewicz's *Trilogy*, the above was clear. For them a Teutonic knight equalled a German. As it happened, the first Battle of Tannenberg, in which also Lithuanians and Czechs fought, served geopolitics well at the time:

Today is the time to settle Polish-Russian relations for ever, in close conjunction with the new Tannenberg victory of Slovenian people, in view of the need to permanently protect Slavonic states and nations against a new German attack.<sup>9</sup>

That motif was very long effectively used in the propaganda. In the 1960s, when a photo of Konrad Adenauer wearing a Teutonic cloak was taken, it was judged to be the proof of him being anti-Polish. Such simplifications stopped being repeated by historians and politicians only after censorship of academic papers lessened and the issue of Poland's borders was decided. As a comment, let me add that Marcei Kosman in his paper titled *My 1 zachodnia w polityce Jagiellonów* [Attitudes towards the West in foreign policy of the Jagiellonian dynasty] published some years later, viewed the Prussian homage quite differently:

It is a fact that the policy towards Prussia reflected Poland's national interest until the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. For later inconsistencies, Sigismund the Elder nor his successors cannot be blamed and that refers especially to departures from the 1525 Treaty of Cracow by subsequent rulers.<sup>10</sup>

Thus Kosman was far from accepting the traditional Polish-German hostility.

The premise of the already mentioned Bogdan Suchodolski's paper titled *The German spirit in the light of philosophy* is the existence of a homogeneous German spirit. A more thorough research convincingly proves that the German spirit is homogeneous, as actions taken by Frederick, Bismarck and Hitler demonstrated most straightforwardly and vividly.<sup>11</sup> Looking for characteristics common to philosophies of Kant, Hegel and German Nazi writers such as Ernst Kriek and Dietrich Klagges, served one purpose, i.e. to justify the thesis that German philosophy is anti-rational, mystifying, specious, *et cetera*. That philosophy led to War II, occupation and their consequences. In conclusion:

The tendency to mystify [concepts ó M.Z.] is very deeply enrooted primarily in the earlier described profound desire to create a new philosophical religion which would, in its particular way, protect traditionally valued concepts. Thanks to it, people still talk about God, the ideal, freedom, law and justice but the content of those concepts is totally different. Secondly, that tendency is enrooted in an idealistic reluctance to acknowledge the primacy of reality and in the imperialistic desire to transform the reality. Thus what is there, is not relevant. What is relevant is how we want to view the reality. In that respect German philosophy with its conceptual apparatus is distant from reality and it also mystifies the reality as propaganda does in other areas, and the administration too since its regulations and decisions are totally

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<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> M. Kosman, *My 1 zachodnia w polityce Jagiellonów*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 3, 1984, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> B. Suchodolski, *Dusza niemiecka w wietle filozofii*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 2/3, 1945, p. 88.

fictitious. For instance, there is a close spiritual relationship between Hegel's philosophising about nature and history and administratively imposed price lists which the market ignores, a phenomenon well known to us in Poland under occupation. That is but a manifestation of a characteristic of the German spirit.<sup>12</sup>

Stalinism was also reflected in the vocabulary used, especially in adjectives and other attributes. Thus Germany was *imperialistic* and Adenauer's government was referred to as Adenauer's *clique* or *gang*. That clearly and unambiguously pointed to the Soviet Union as the sole guardian of Poland's western lands. *Przegląd Zachodni* and its editors had no doubt that sticking to the Soviet Union was Poland's national interest. Stalin's obituary in *Przegląd Zachodni* made things clear. Communism was not the issue. New borders were. After quoting a relevant resolution of the then Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, the obituary read: "It is only natural that in *Przegląd Zachodni* due attention must be urgently paid to those Stalin's efforts thanks to which Poland has recovered its historic lands"<sup>13</sup>.

On the other hand, authors and editors very frequently drew attention to the presence in Germany's politics of persons who had played important roles in Hitler's Germany. It was underlined that they acted as spokesmen of Europe. In particular, West Germany formally joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was criticised. That criticism grew especially strong when the General Treaty, that is the Convention on Relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany, was negotiated. Arguments were typical: "The third reading and resolution taken in Bonn on the European army and the General Treaty are the next step of Adenauer's clique to rearm West Germany and revive its imperialism."<sup>14</sup> Pronouncements questioning the western border of Poland were carefully monitored. Zygmunt Wojciechowski raised an alarm:

About the *Heimat im Herzen* series and its volumes like e.g. *Wir von der Weichsel und Warta*, we already wrote at the beginning of 1951 in *Przegląd Zachodni* (No. 3 and 4). However, at present, this [German] propaganda literature has been hugely expanded. All dams have been removed and the revisionist madness is at large. There are academic associations concerned with eastern issues only, like the Herder-Institut in Marburg, Osteuropa-Institut in Berlin and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Osteuropa-Kunde in Stuttgart. It is not that there are no "conciliatory" pronouncements. But the condition is that Western Lands are returned to Germany and then the rest of Poland would join "Europe". One who opposes that idea is, of course, a radical chauvinistic nationalist.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, p. 120.

<sup>13</sup> *Józef Stalin*, *Przegląd Zachodni* No. 1/3, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Z.W. [Zygmunt Wojciechowski], *Po sukcesie ogólnym*, *Przegląd Zachodni* No. 1/3, 1953, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, p. 8.

That simple message split somewhat after the creation of two German states in 1949.<sup>16</sup> Zygmunt Wojciechowski's paper *„Distinguendum est“* can be considered to be the programming one. It ended as follows: *„That is why while looking at Germany<sup>17</sup>, one should carefully watch their attitude to the Polish-German border. A German who recognises that border and a German revisionist are two opposite poles today<sup>18</sup>. At that time a pattern emerged. There were „good“ East Germany, i.e. the German Democratic Republic, and „bad“ West Germany. The latter was frequently referred to as the „west-German union republic“ and the „Bonn republic“. In the case of the FRG, small letters tended to be used. All that had its propaganda objective, namely to imprint that West Germany was less important than the GDR. The creation of two German states was recorded in the Modern Germany Chronicle, however, much more space was devoted to the German Democratic Republic. Wilhelm Pieck's speech was quoted almost in full and the following part was emphasised:*

We will never allow the Oder-Neisse border to be exploited by agents of imperialism to pit the German nation against our Polish neighbour and instigate a new war. The Oder-Neisse border is to be one of peace and never disturb our friendly relationship with the Polish nation. We wish and desire to tighten our economic relations to the benefit of both nations.<sup>19</sup>

In the 1950s, in the Modern Germany Chronicle section of *„Przegląd Zachodni“*, 37 papers in German were published. Their collection was titled *„The emergence of the German Democratic Republic“*.<sup>20</sup> Later, in the Chronicle, achievements of the GDR were usually contrasted with *„appalling“* developments in the FRG. Titles spoke for themselves. For example, in 1949, the Chronicle in its *„Economic life“* section, included entries titled *„Economic difficulties of the government of the newly created separatist West German state“*, *„Problems of the Saargebiet industries“*, *„The shrinking of the watch-making industry in the western part of Germany“*, *„Worries of West German vegetable and fruit producers“*, *„The catastrophic economic situation in the western part of Berlin“*, *„Prices go up in west Berlin“*, *„Financial policy of the German Democratic Republic“*, *„Prices cut in the German Democratic Republic“*, and so on.<sup>21</sup> In the section on economic life, the Leipzig Fair was commented as follows: *„The panorama of most important industries of today speaks for taking care of people's wellbeing. The man was the focus of undertakings. The entire interest of an inventor and a developer has been concentrated on the man.“* Along the same lines, the

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<sup>16</sup> That *„split“* was visible in all research areas. Cf. H. Olszewski, *Problemy niemcoznawcze w naukach prawnych w Polsce*, *„Przegląd Zachodni“* No. 1-2, 1981, p. 75: *„After 1949, studying German affairs followed two tracks. One covered the GDR and the other the FRG.“*

<sup>17</sup> Cf. note 1, above.

<sup>18</sup> Z. Wojciechowski, *Distinguendum est*, *„Przegląd Zachodni“* No. 9/10, 1949, p. 188.

<sup>19</sup> *Kronika Niemiec współczesnych*, A. J. Kamiński, *ycie polityczne*, two entries: *Utworzenieš Republiki Zwiłzkowej Niemiec (zachodnich) ó Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (pp. 681-685), *Powstanie Demokratycznej Republiki Niemieckiej* (pp. 685-694), quotation p. 690, *„Przegląd Zachodni“* No. 12, 1949.

<sup>20</sup> *„Przegląd Zachodni“* January-June 1950, p. 150ff. The entries included the Constitution of the GDR and its anthem.

<sup>21</sup> M. Zakrzewski, *ycie gospodarcze*, *„Przegląd Zachodni“* 1949, pp. 695-792.

entry titled 'Craftsmanship in the east and west of Germany' is about the collapsing craftsmanship in the west in contrast to the GDR where:

There the state is interested in a further development of craftsmanship and the 5-year plan foresees its growth by nearly 70% (in 1950-1955). The legislation assists craftsmen by easing tax procedures and a number of various advantages have been introduced. While in the GDR and the eastern part of Berlin crafts have been revived, in western Germany its bankruptcy keeps spreading.<sup>22</sup>

A clear example of idealising the image of the GDR is the information about the 1953 strike in Berlin. To start with, in the *Modern Germany Chronicle* there is a short but meaningful entry titled 'A new course' in the internal policy in the German Democratic Republic in which decisions taken by the SED Politburo are reviewed. The interpretation is that regulations issued by the government of the GDR were criticised by the Politburo and that applied to compulsory levy of overdue taxes and takeovers of neglected farms. The entry implied that in the light of new regulations, the old ones were repressive. And probably all that was due to the fact that:

From the summer of 1952, the objective was to speed up the building of socialism [ ] Distorting the party and government objectives, small and medium-size farms were appallingly neglected as attention was focused on the emerging agricultural cooperatives which now farm 15% of the arable land in the GDR.

Actually, that quotation is from a speech given by the then Vice-Prime Minister Walter Ulbricht. Why did the SED adopt a 'new course'? We learn that it was 'obviously' due to shortages and, in general, the policy of fast industrialisation at the expense of halting production which the home market needed.<sup>23</sup> In this context the title on the next entry is no surprise: 'Provocations of foreign agents in the territory of the GDR'. That was the title of the entry devoted to the strike of construction workers in Berlin. The text is based on quotations from *Neues Deutschland*. Smuggled in foreign agents and saboteurs, equipped with combustible preparations, were disguised as physical workers and provoked strikes and riots.

Democratic press underlines also that in mid-June industrial clothing for bricklayers and carpenters was sold out in east Berlin. Because it was needed for western agents who were to pretend they were construction workers and provoke others to riot against the government.

The provocateurs were fascists and the working class succumbed to them because 'as *Neues Deutschland* wrote 'much of the working class was strongly poisoned with Hitler's ideology after the 12 years of fascist dictatorship'. Riots took place in other towns too, in Magdeburg, Halle, and Görlitz. Their anti-Polish character was also mentioned. The entry simply reproduced the image painted by East German propaganda. The 'intervention' of

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. M. Zakrzewski, *ycie gospodarcze, Kronika Niemiec współczesnych*, 'Przegl d Zachodniö, 1951, pp. 617-622 (Chronicle covering 1 September to 31 October 1951).

<sup>23</sup> *Kronika Niemiec współczesnych* (16 February to 10 September 1953 ), 'Przegl d Zachodniö No. 9/12, 1953, p. 411 and 413.

Soviet military units was judged to have prevented bloodshed. The number of fatal casualties was given after the East German press: four policemen [militia members] and, in addition, two civilians and 19 demonstrators. Among the injured were 191 policemen, 61 civilians, 126 demonstrators.<sup>24</sup>

At this point, let us quote President Joachim Gauck's words:

The death of 55 persons has been documented. The exact number of fatal casualties remains unknown. Probably 15 thousand people were arrested and then 1.8 thousand of them were convicted by GDR courts in politically motivated cases. Hundreds of the uprising participants were sent to forced labour camps in Siberia.<sup>25</sup>

In 2013, Gauck reminded that already in August 1953, the 17<sup>th</sup> of June was instituted as the National Day of Remembrance for the German People in the FRG.

Until 1970 everything what happened in the GDR was reported, mainly by quoting East German press. After 1970, that interest in the GDR decreased as the GDR could hardly be an object of in-depth research. In 1970, the Treaty of Warsaw was signed. Earlier publications on the FRG were few. In 1980, a review of a book on Marxism titled *Faschismusforschung* was published. The book was published in East Germany. Its reviewer focused on the persistence of a Marxist approach to German historiography and criticized it as schematic.<sup>26</sup> In 1984, another book published in the GDR was reviewed. It was on the history of political-legal doctrines in the GDR. The actual impetus was the publication of the first textbook on political doctrines in the GDR. The review reads that the textbook was intended to be an introduction to Marxism and that in 1963-1974, history of political doctrines was not taught. The contents of the textbook was striking. The whole history of political thought was (sub)titled 'Pre-Marxist Period'. That gives much food for thought as at that time academics in Poland enjoyed more freedom. In Poland, in 1980, no one produced textbooks like that and probably nobody thought about writing a textbook like that.<sup>27</sup>

In 1980, Antoni Władysław Walczak, a member of the 'Instytut Zachodni', in his paper on policies of the FRG titled 'Trzecia dekada polityki (ogólno-) niemieckiej RFN w wietle raportów kanclerskich o sytuacji narodu (1970-1980)'<sup>28</sup> wrote that increasingly while saying 'Germany', Poles meant the FRG. In that important paper, he argued that West Germany's government strived to carry pan-German politics. Walczak noted that the GDR was never referred to as 'Germany'. He negated and criticised West Germany's doctrine of one nation and rightly underlined that international commitments of the FRG did not apply to citizens of the GDR. Walczak's content with détente in relations between the German states was obvious.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, pp. 413-417, quotations from p. 415 and 414.

<sup>25</sup> J. Gauck, *Chlubna karta w historii walk o wolno*, 'Gazeta Wyborcza' 17.06.2013, p. 2. See also B. T. Wieli ski, *Powstanie w Berlinie*, 'alehistoria. Tygodnik Historyczny' 17.06.2013.

<sup>26</sup> M. Zmierczak, *O stanie i kierunkach rozwoju marksistowskich bada nad faszyzmem*, 'Przeł d Zachodni' No. 5/6, 1980, pp. 262-274.

<sup>27</sup> H. Olszewski, *Historia doktryn polityczno-prawnych w Niemieckiej Republice Demokratycznej*, 'Przeł d Zachodni' No. 3, 1984, pp. 139-146.

<sup>28</sup> A. W. Walczak, *Trzecia dekada polityki (ogólno-) niemieckiej RFN w wietle raportów kanclerskich o sytuacji narodu (1970-1980)*, 'Przeł d Zachodni' No. 5/6, 1980, pp. 186-206.

From the 1970s, *Przeegl d Zachodniö* did not devote much space and thought to the GDR. An exception was Janusz Rachocki's paper on *Miejsce polityki spoŁecznej w systemie ustrojowym Niemieckiej Republiki Demokratycznejö* [Social policy in the GDR: its place within a system]. Rachocki largely based his paper on Helga Ulbricht's deliberations and argued that in the GDR, social policy - as a separate area of research, was not developed in contrast to Poland where it was researched and lectured on at universities. He also underlined that according to East German authors social policy was the domain of the state and not of other subjects, for instance the state owned firms. To the end of his paper, he wrote that in the GDR *some bias against the very concept of "social policy" and aversion to theoretical discussions on social policyö* vanished. Thus one can conclude that the very concept of social policy in the Soviet block became closer to that in the West. Important was also an earlier paper by Wojciechowska who analysed the criminal law passed in the GDR in 1968. The then Criminal Code, Article 105, penalised activities encouraging citizens of the GDR to emigrate from the GDR as well as kidnapping and impeding them from returning to their country.<sup>29</sup>

The image of the GDR which surfaced then was one of a repressive and totalitarian state. Probably no research was carried on national identity of the inhabitants of East Germany. In *Przeegl d Zachodniö* one cannot find a single contribution which would confirm the thesis about a separate national identity of East Germans. However, it did happen that as late as in 1990, Gra yna Sas's book on East Germans' identity was advertised as follows:

In the book, the process of shaping the national and state identity of the GDR is presented, especially against the situation in and of the FRG. [í ] The complicated and hard conditions in which the separate position and self-identification of the GDR were born against the FRG are recognised as the GDR faced a radically different West German doctrine of the existence of *an open German issueö*.<sup>30</sup>

It was only in 1986 that Mieczysław Stolarczyk's paper *Stanowisko Polski Ludowej wobec zagadnienia jedno ci i podziaŁ Niemiec w latach 1944-1949ö* [The stance of the Polish People's Republic on the issues of Germany's unity and division in 1944-1949] was published in *Przeegl d Zachodniö*. Stolarczyk put it relatively straight:

The positive attitude of the Polish government towards the Democratic Republic of Germany followed from the following premises. Firstly, the GDR was perceived as the first German state which rejected the *Drang nach Ostenö* tradition and recognised the Oder-Neisse Polish-German border. Secondly, the creation of the GDR reinforced the image of *the peace campö* competing then with *the war campö*. Thirdly, the GDR was seen as a useful starting point to introduce radical changes in all of Germany facilitating possible unification. After the FRG and the GDR were created, this third premise alleviated the contradiction in pronouncements of the Polish government which, on the one hand, was for the unity of Germany as a state and, on the other hand, it positively evaluated the creation of the GDR. On 11 November 1949, at the 3rd Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party,

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<sup>29</sup> J. Wojciechowska, *Nowy kodeks karny Niemieckiej Republiki Demokratycznej*, *Przeegl d Zachodniö* No. 3/4, 1970, pp. 94-95.

<sup>30</sup> G. Sas, *Droga do to samo ci. Geneza, zaŁcenia i realizacja polityki odgraniczania NRD od RFN 1970-1980*, *Przeegl d Zachodniö* No. 3, 1990, p. 68 (advertisement).

Bolesław Bierut said that in a uniform Germany, the roots of expansion to the East, which was long the objective of German owners of means of production, would be eliminated like in the Soviet occupation zone.

[í ] thus Poland is so substantially interested in the unification of Germany within the framework of the German Democratic Republic. That would put an end to retaliatory, aggressive and revisionist trends cultivated under the Anglo-Saxon patronage in West Germany. Thus the creation of the German Democratic Republic was treated as a stage on the path to the emergence of a uniform democratic Germany. The possibility that the division of Germany might persist for some longer time was recognized. However, most arguments used supported the vision that the division would not last long. The same position was declared by the Soviet Union.<sup>31</sup>

### 3.

A review of the negative image of the FRG and its gradual improvement can well begin with the naming and attributes in particular. After *The Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany* was passed in 1949, the new state was called *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* and its translation is *Federal Republic of Germany* [Polish: *Republika Federalna Niemiec*]. In Poland, it was not referred to as *Republika Federalna Niemiec* until the Treaty of Warsaw was signed in 1970. Before 1970, the FRG was referred to as *republika zwi zkowa* [union republic], *republika bo ska* [Bonn republic], *Niemcy zachodnie* [western Germany] and after the two German states were recognised, it was referred to as *Niemiecka Republika Federalna* [Federal German Republic]. Only in 1974, in the title of one paper published in *öPrzeł d Zachodniö*, the proper name *Republika Federalna Niemiec* was used.<sup>32</sup> At the same time it needs to be noticed that despite the fact that while commenting upon the background and careers of some West German politicians, references to East German press were commonplace, hardly any author whose contributions were published in *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* ever used the adjective *fascist* in the FRG context. This is not to say that some adjectives were not quoted after the GDR press. For example, the entry on the new election law (20 January 1953) ends as follows: *öThe East German press simply calls the law fascistö*<sup>33</sup>. References in a similar tone include: *öThe GDR press writes that in West Germany there are crowds of very distinguished Nazis appointed to highest posts, and ó in addition ó there are various organisations which are more or less Naziö*<sup>34</sup>.

In general, the image was that of an imperialistic state, disregarding borders, revisionist and the like. All pronouncements of German revisionists who had mentioned Silesia, were strongly underlined. Nevertheless, on the whole, direct attacks were avoided while quotations from the GDR press were plenty. For example, the *öWhite Paperö* of the Democratic Germany National Council dated 11 August 1951 was reviewed twice. Firstly, in

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<sup>31</sup> M. Stolarczyk, *Stanowisko Polski Ludowej wobec zagadnienia jedno ci i podzia u Niemiec w latach 1944-1949*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* No. 3/4, 1986, pp. 108-109.

<sup>32</sup> M. Cyga ski, *SPD w Republice Federalnej Niemiec 1949-1974*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* No. 3, 1975, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Kronika Niemiec współczesnych*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* 1953, p. 688.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 689.

the Political Life section of the Modern Germany Chronicle of 1 July to 31 August 1951, it was recognised as the most important event in those 2 months. Walter Ulbricht's words were quoted: "I think that there is no disagreement that no negotiations of a peace treaty are possible with Nazi military and Adenauer's clique as Adenauer openly admitted to be a representative of German imperialism"<sup>35</sup>. The next review, signed by K.ö., of the book titled *Weissbuch über die amerikanisch-englische Interventionspolitik in Westdeutschland und das Wiedererstehen des deutschen Imperialismus* published in 1951 in Berlin by the Nationale Front des Demokratischen Deutschland, is more detailed. The reviewer judged the book to be a valuable source and thoroughly reported on theses presented. They were: "Germany was split to prepare a war" and "German imperialism is the most important ally of American imperialism". Chapter 4 of the book was devoted to documenting the emergence of the separatist West German state "made in the USA". Chapter 5 was titled "West Germany as the territory of recruitment, military training and a base for American war". Direct quotations in the review illustrate the then common image well:

American imperialism frantically prepares an offensive war against the USSR, the German Democratic Republic and other people's democracies.

[í ] In this climate, in western Germany, the German imperialism is reborn. Its main pioneers are most dangerous war criminals who, humanity demands, were appropriately punished.

[í ] The restoration of the general staff as the nucleus of the neo-Nazi west German army has been in progress since 1945.<sup>36</sup>

In the light of Alfons Klafkowski's and Krzysztof Skubiszewski's papers on international law mentioned earlier, it seems that the review was published on purpose. Its aim was to exemplify the "appropriate" and "right" Stalin's politics with others' words.

A characteristic feature was the rhetoric followed. The western part of Germany was simply a continuation of the 3rd Reich inhabited by a multitude of Hitler's followers if not fascists. However, "Przeegl d Zachodni" fulfilled its task pointing to little effectiveness of denazification. That was confirmed in 1968 by German students who attempted to reconstruct histories of their grandfathers and fathers. Creating a list of names and careful monitoring of the career of lesser and bigger Nazis was of interest to "Przeegl d Zachodni". Only in the 1970s, in the journal of the Instytut Zachodni a paper questioning the thesis about "the German spirit" was published. The paper was on Karl Jaspers who, as it is well known, dealt with the issue of German guilt right after WW2 and whose arguments were ignored until then.<sup>37</sup>

Prior to the 1980s one could hardly learn about the participation of Germans in Olympic Games. In 1956-1964, there were two National Olympic Committees but one joint German national representation. In the 1952 Olympic Games, only West German sportspeople took part. From 1968, the GDR had its own representation. It took many years for the readers

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<sup>35</sup> *Kronika Niemiec współczesnych. ycie polityczne* (1 July - 31 August 1951), "Przeegl d Zachodni" No. 9/12, 1952, pp. 297-298.

<sup>36</sup> K., *Weissbuch über die amerikanisch-englische Interventionspolitik in Westdeutschland und das Wiedererstehen des deutschen Imperialismus*, "Przeegl d Zachodni" 1953, pp. 637-652.

<sup>37</sup> M. Suchocki, *Karola Jaspersa koncepcja przebudowy niemieckiej wiadomo ci polityczno-kulturalnej*, "Przeegl d Zachodni" No. 3, 1970, p. 1ff.

of *Przeł d Zachodniö* to learn about the Lausanne declaration of August 1950 which read: *German sporting youth thoroughly condemns cruel war criminals all over the world. Hereby, it expresses its deep regret and hopes that soon it will be able to join the sporting youth of the world to prove that it desires to contribute to peace ó the main aim of efforts of Pierre Baron de Coubertin, the benefactor of humanity.*<sup>38</sup>

It was obvious to Poles that the Oder-Neisse border could not be temporary thus many analyses in *Przeł d Zachodniö* were devoted to the status of the western border of Poland. Since the border was recognized by the GDR before 1970, it was natural that its stability was underlined. However, it was emphasized that the Treaty of Zgorzelec (1950) and border agreements between Poland and the GDR *öwere implementations of the Potsdam Agreements and were of declarative nature. That is they took for granted the agreed and implemented legal status [of the border]ö and that they were a legal tool for the needed stabilization of the Polish-German border. Eventually, they öeffectively contributed to the delimitation and demarcation of the border based on the Potsdam agreementö*<sup>39</sup>. It needs to be added that the texts referred to above were limited to legal argumentation and no epithets like *Adenauer's clique* or *German imperialists* were used.

#### 4.

In the next issues of *Przeł d Zachodniö*, the attitude towards Germans changed. The most important changes included underlining the sovereignty of both German states, their equivalence, and a tentative mentioning of two German nations. Instead of tales about eternal Pan-Germanism, a matter-of-fact attitude prevailed. There were more texts focusing on actual difficulties faced by Germans after WW2. A most interesting debate was on the participation of Germans in Olympic Games. It was strongly underlined that separate representations of the GDR and the FRG spoke for the normalization of the situation. One does have a feeling that the 1969 change on the FRG political arena contributed to the way events in West Germany were reported. *Miedzi ski's* paper titled *Wybory do VI Bundestagu. Powstanie rz du koalicji SPD ó FDP w NRFö* [Elections to the sixth German Bundestag. The formation of an SPD-FDP coalition government of the FRG]<sup>40</sup> which was published in the Reviews and Commentaries section is a good example. The presented analysis of political parties' programmes and relations, election results and coalitions formed prove that the knowledge of the situation was deep. References demonstrated that the author and the author of the next paper<sup>41</sup> had access to western publications and did not hide it. References included those to *Der Spiegel*, *Das Parlament* and *Die Zeit*. *Miedzi ski* included highly relevant (though historical) information like the distribution of votes in the first and second rounds and

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<sup>38</sup> Z. Melosik, *Problem niemiecki w ruchu olimpijskim*, *Przeł d Zachodniö* No. 2, 1986, pp. 36-55, quotation from p. 38.

<sup>39</sup> B. Wiewióra, *Umowy graniczne mi dzy Polsk a Niemieck Republik Demokratyczn*, *Przeł d Zachodniö* No. 4/5, 1953, p. 472.

<sup>40</sup> F. *Miedzi ski*, *Wybory do VI Bundestagu. Powstanie rz du koalicji SPD ó FDP w NRF*, *Przeł d Zachodniö* No. 1, 1970, pp. 108-136

<sup>41</sup> R. Drecki, *Blok chadecki w RFN po przej ciu do opozycji*, *Przeł d Zachodniö* No. 1, 1970, pp. 137-143.

political programmes presented during the 1969 campaign. The paper was based on German sources and was not flowery. Nevertheless it reflected Polish hopes that the issue of borders would be finally settled for good.

On 21 December 1972, the Basic Treaty, i.e. the *Treaty concerning the basis of relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic*, was signed. Once that happened, the issue of defining a nation emerged. There were two German states and their relations were special, nevertheless the thesis that there were two German nations ó propagated by politicians from the socialist camp and activists from the GDR ó was not strongly articulated. Interestingly, no paper or analysis of the Basic Treaty was published in *öPrzeł d Zachodniö*. The normalization process was, however, very carefully reported in the Chronicle section (relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany in the first half of 1971<sup>42</sup> and in the second half of 1971<sup>43</sup>). Entries covered all events and steps taken referring to many sources. At the time, there was much interest in political partiesø conventions in the FRG and in the stance of the Federation of Expellees [Bund der Vertriebenen]<sup>44</sup>. The most important issue to the editors was the recognition of the Oder-Neisse border. At the same time it was underlined that new relations were bound to normalize the FRGø relations with the entire öcamp of socialist statesö.

The two German countries were treated as sovereign entities. Unquestionably, there was much more information about the FRG. The öbefriendedö GDR could not be well researched. That is a conclusion indirectly drawn from later internal debates at the Instytut Zachodni. At the Instituteø General Assembly on 28 March 1990, its then Director Antoni Czubi ski admitted that:

Our employees in most of their works covered the FRG. That was due to access to original materials. The GDR issue was recognised. A research team was formed to cover developments in the GDR. However, it encountered formal obstacles and was unable to gain access to archives of the GDR.<sup>45</sup>

## 5.

In the 1980s, the image of Germany was far from simple. The historic context is relevant. In Poland, it was the time when the Solidarity movement emerged and then martial law was introduced. The then leader of the GDR Erich Honecker insisted that a socialist order was restored in Poland and local border traffic was suspended. The FRG was far from condemning Polish people. On the other hand, in the FRG in 1982, a constructive vote of no

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<sup>42</sup> J. R. i K. S., *Kronika procesu normalizacji*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* No. 3/4, 1971, pp. 436-479.

<sup>43</sup> J. R. i K. S., *Kronika procesu normalizacji (Stosunki mi dzy Polsk i Niemieck Republik Federaln w drugim półroczu 1971 r.)*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* No. 1/2, 1972, pp. 129-150.

<sup>44</sup> M. Cyga ski, *Kampania šZwi zku Wyp dzonychö przeciw rz dowi Brandta-Scheela i próbom normalizacji stosunków NRF z Polsk , NRD i ZSRR*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* No.3/4, 1971, pp. 454-479.

<sup>45</sup> A. Soba ska, M. Ramza-St pniak, *Walne Zebranie Człnków Instytutu Zachodniego im. Zygmunta Wojciechowskiego*, *öPrzeł d Zachodniö* No. 3, 1990, p. 124.

confidence was taken and a new coalition of the CDU/CSU and liberals headed by Helmut Kohl took over. The result of the then early general elections proved German support for the coalition. German Christian Democrats were always associated with not recognising the Oder-Neisse border and thus their victory caused some concerns but *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* did not propagate an image of hostile West Germans. This is not to say that German imperialism was not recalled but, at the same time, Christian roots of the CDU-CSU were explicated e.g. by Anna Wolff-Pow ska<sup>46</sup>. It was also reminded that not all citizens of the FRG were revisionists. The tone and approach changed markedly which can be exemplified by Wolff-Pow ska's paper titled *öZwrotö czy škontynuacjaö w polityce wschodniej RFNö* [*A turnö or ðcontinuationø the FRG policy towards the East*]<sup>47</sup> in which she discussed Kohl's zigzagging on a revision of the borders (demanded by territorial associations) and the dream to unite Germany. Neither promising facts nor those which called for criticism were dismissed.

In 1984, Bohdan Demby wrote about the changing approach of the FDP to Poland's western border noticing that the process was slow but progressing.<sup>48</sup> Polish-German associations in the FRG were warmly commented upon by Tomasz Budnikowski and Bernard Perlak.<sup>49</sup>

In the 1980s, readers of *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* could learn much about the FRG, its system, elections and legislation. There was very detailed information about the political system of the FRG, political parties, the essence of federalism, and also about the automobile market<sup>50</sup> in that country. Most importantly, loaded epithets stopped to be used and emphasis was put on thorough analyses. In 1989, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* published the German law on political parties which was the first of its kind in Europe.

In the context of enlargements of European Communities and the Union idea, German schools of political thought were discussed and that refers to ideas other than Bismarck's or Hitler's. For example, Gustav Radbruch's legal philosophy was presented including the well-known Radbruch Formula *lex iniusta non est lex* meaning that statutory law must be disregarded by a judge in favour of the justice principle.<sup>51</sup> Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas were also described.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. A. Wolff-Pow ska, *Ideologia chrze cija ska w programie i dzia łalno ci CDU/CSU*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 5/6, 1980, pp. 121-140.

<sup>47</sup> A. Wolff-Pow ska, *öZwrotö czy škontynuacjaö w polityce wschodniej RFN?*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 5/6, 1985.

<sup>48</sup> B. Demby, *Stosunek FDP do zachodniej granicy Polski u progu utworzenia rz du z SPD*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 2, 1984, pp. 139-145.

<sup>49</sup> T. Budnikowski, B. Perlak, *Towarzystwa niemiecko-polskie w RFN*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 2, 1984, pp. 146-154.

<sup>50</sup> J. Dubisz, *Niektóre aspekty waha koniunkturalnych na rynku samochodów osobowych w RFN*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 5/6, 1985, pp. 131-145.

<sup>51</sup> B. Wrzochalski, *Filozofia warto ci a prawo mi dzynarodowe i wojna w pogl dach filozoficzno-prawnych Gustawa Radbrucha*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No.1, 1984, pp. 45-61.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. J. Chodorowski, *Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi i jego doktryna zjednoczenia Europy*, *öPrzeegl d Zachodniö* No. 1, 1984, pp. 1-25. In this context it is worth pointing out that the attitude to Adenauer changed as well: *öNew people entered the scene (R. Schuman, A. de Gasperi, K. Adenauer) who took the appropriate implementation of a united Europe in their hands. [í ] The European Communities, which they created in the 1950s, did not closely mirror von Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas*

To the end of the 1980s, largely associated with the Gorbachev era, many drastic political changes took place. What was happening in both German states was well reflected in the Chronicle part of *Przeegl d Zachodniö*. It suffices to recall some of its entries. Firstly there was the *Chronicle of the FRG relations with European socialist states* (1987 onwards). From January 1990, there was the *Chronicle of the FRG's eastern policy*. The author was Stanisław Werko who used many different sources.

Sometimes, the GDR was criticised in both the Chronicles and diverse papers. For example, a reviewer of a book on the economy in the GDR mentioned *passim* that *öfavourable conditions of inter-Germany trade complement and contribute to good results of the entire GDR's economyö*<sup>53</sup>. Another reviewer was critical about the GDR's law on citizenship.<sup>54</sup> In 1989, a paper by Berthold Löffler was published in *Przeegl d Zachodniö*. He stated that: *ö[í ] in between us, that is Germans from the FRG and Poland, the GDR has sneaked in and it disturbs the neighbourhood with Polesö*.

Having read different papers published in *Przeegl d Zachodniö* in the 1980s, one might learn that some earlier information needed to be corrected. To exemplify, Lech Janicki while writing about the 17th of June being celebrated in the FRG pointed to its origin:

It was made believed that the unrest and riots in the GDR and especially in its capital, Berlin, directly contributed to it. The riots had hardly anything to do with the FRG. Their reason was not the re-unification of Germany. They were manifestations of the protest against ignorant socio-economic decision made by the GDR authorities which were painful for labourers (physical workers in particular).<sup>55</sup>

## II.

Unquestionably, for *Przeegl d Zachodniö*, its contributors and editors, and for Zymunt Wojciechowski ó the founder of the Instytut Zachodni and the journal, the Oder-Neisse border was final. For political reasons, many contributors did think that Poland of the Piast dynasty should be reborn. Many were simply pragmatic and some shared, like the people of Wiekopolska [Greater Poland province], Roman Dmowski's view that any relation between Poles and Germans entailed hostilities while relations with Russians would always be easier because of the shared Slavonic background. They all believed that it was Poland's *raison d'ötat* that Polish western lands should be invested in and developed and that Poles should learn that those lands were theirs. Frequently, they viewed social processes realistically. Regrettably, Poland's authorities did not follow, for ideological reasons, or did not wish to follow the wise advice to privatise the land and introduce a land registry. That advice

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in terms of their characteristics, outreach and function. However, their roots were in von Coudenhove-Kalergi's vision of Pan-Europe and in part the Communities were its implementation.ö

<sup>53</sup> J. Fiszer's review of T. W. Kaczmarek's book titled *Gospodarka NRD* (PWE, Warszawa 1982), *Przeegl d Zachodniö* No. 1, 1984, p. 181.

<sup>54</sup> W. Czapli ski's review of G. Riege's *Die Staatsbürgerschaft der DDR* (Berlin 1982), *Przeegl d Zachodniö* No. 1, 1984, pp. 173-177.

<sup>55</sup> L. Janicki, *Symbole pa stwowe RFN i ich historyczno-polityczne podö e*, *Przeegl d Zachodniö* No. 3, 1988, p. 56.

followed observations that "One needs to take into account that for a peasant a registered ownership is a basic formal proof of ownership rights" and that "a national-political interest comes first, before the Treasury interest"<sup>56</sup>. The advice was ignored and led to negligence in result of which agricultural advancements were troublesome. Modern bankrupt collective farms and settlements prove the point.

I think that authors published in "Przeł d Zachodni" always wanted to encourage investments in western lands because they knew well that there would not be other new lands. That observation follows from what Zygmunt Wojciechowski wrote in 1945 about the essence of politics:

The highest priority of policy makers is to be skilful enough to underpin the strength of society, to employ that strength when the future of society is being decided. [ ] To unveil that hidden strength, one must move people's emotions. It is necessary to balance rational and emotional arguments well. Policy makers must employ reason to see the objectives but to make society reach those objectives, it must experience emotions. It is the only way for society reach its full potential.<sup>57</sup>

The above is worth remembering while browsing old issues of "Przeł d Zachodni" today and not to miss its basic characteristic, i.e. having been involved in current affairs, and see contributors as people deeply convinced that Poland's borders were final and favourable and would not be changed again. They did all they could to persuade Polish society to feel "at home" in the western lands. Most contributions to "Przeł d Zachodni" served that purpose. Another main purpose was to consolidate histories of Silesia, Pomerania and the western lands.

Thus it not surprising that Germans and two German states were viewed in the context of Poland's western border, that some information about social or economic life was untrue and often purposefully absent. If we ignore propaganda about the "good" GDR, we can learn much about legislative restrictions and strictness of national law there, and about general elections in the FRG for example. Another interesting thing is the insight to propaganda in the GDR, mainly through materials quoted. A valuable contribution of "Przeł d Zachodni" was its careful monitoring of German literature on fascism and Nazism. Reviews published were a good source of information which, after 1989, has been a resource facilitating various research. Much can be learned from reading publications on Germans and two German states. Even tracing changes in the vocabulary and epithets can teach one a lot. Especially in cases of an event or development described or interpreted differently today.

The cover of "Przeł d Zachodni" was changed after the re-unification of Germany and the change was symbolic. It reads: *Poland, Germany, Europe*. Today, more space is devoted to Europe. It is a Europe of reunited Germany, of Poland and many other countries. At the same time in our Europe of today, borders are not questioned. The time has come for distanced analyses of history and various modern relations among interest groups.

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<sup>56</sup> M. Kiećewska, L. Gluck, *Zagadnienie akcji migracyjnej na Ziemiach Zachodnich*, "Przeł d Zachodni" No. 2, 1945, p. 19. Footnote 1 there explicated that the paper was to be an incentive to debate migration issues and was written in June 1945.

<sup>57</sup> Z. Wojciechowski, *Grunwald*, "Przeł d Zachodni" No. 1, 1945, p. 4.

To conclude, the studying of images of Germans and two German states in *Przeł d Zachodniö* in 1945-1990 teaches one much also - if not more - about the People's Republic of Poland and its society. *Przeł d Zachodniö* is a source of information about the huge job done by Poles while developing the economy of the western lands, about the evolution of Poland's political system, efforts to ensure inviolability of its western border, about censorship, propaganda and the living conditions.

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#### ABSTRACT

*On the basis of articles published in *Przeł d Zachodniö* in 1945-1989, the author attempts a reconstruction of the image of Germans and Germany conveyed in them. The image changed depending on the intensity of censorship, transformations of the political system in Poland and foreign policy of the Polish People's Republic. Immediately after the Second World War, the image of Germany was highly negative and emotional, and amounted to equating all Germans with Nazis. Later on, a revisionist picture of Germans and the FRG was sketched and contrasted with the good Germans from the "progressive" GDR. The latter image was evidently counterfeited. A marked change took place after 1970 and in the 1980s. Since criticism of the GDR was avoided, less and less was written about Germans in the GDR, whereas information about the FRG became more and more matter-of-fact. The analysis culminates in the conclusion that authors of the researched texts gave priority to the Polish *raison d'état*, i.e. recognition of the finality and integrity of Poland's western border, while texts on Germany and Germans contain a significant message about life in the Polish People's Republic.*