

GERARD LABUDA

## THE HISTORY OF PRUSSIA AS A HISTORIOGRAPHIC PROBLEM

On the assumption that the level of studies in Prussia's history does not permit a full synthesis, the author has only made a review of the more important publications on the following problems:

- a) ideas on Prussia in former historiography (prior to 1947);
- b) views of non-German historians before 1947;
- c) Prussia in historiography of the last twenty years.

All these German monographs issued before 1947 are in general characterized by a taciturnity on Polish problems involved in the genesis of the Prussian state; by spreading news on the alleged exceptional role of Prussia in the history of Germany; by assuming a cooperation of territorial and universal factors in the formation of the Prussian state; and by gloryfying the Great Elector, Frederick II and Bismarck.

Chapter II is concerned with the achievements of Anglo-Saxon, French and Polish historiography. It is made clear that prior to World War II the Anglo-Saxon, mainly English, historiography was notably influenced by the ideas of German authors. A review of French publications has shown France from before 1871 not to have appreciated the role of Prussia in Germany's history.

The author criticizes the influence exerted by the actual political situation, especially that of the XIXth century, on Polish historiographers; and he emphasizes the fact that the most eminent works of Polish researchers have so far not invited any sound discussion from the part of the Germans.

In the last chapter the author concentrates on contemporain papers of German historians. Scientists of the German Federal Republic include a numerous group of enthusiasts of the Prussian past, composed of minimalists, apologists and glorifiers. Achievements of historiographer of the German Democratic Republic and of Poland are likewise considerable and the author suggests several important problems which should be subject to detailed elaboration.

JERZY KRASUSKI

## PRUSSIA AND THE GERMAN SYSTEM OF STATES

Unification of Germany was a very long process meeting with exceptionally great difficulties. In 1792 there were 289 German states, in 1815 — 41, in 1866 still 28. In 1871 the German Reich under Prussian leadership was created consisting of 25 states. Three states: Austria, Lichtenstein and Luxemburg remained outside. In the Constitution of Weimar of 1919 the states composing the Reich were called lands (Länder). Their number fell to 17. In the nazi period further two of them were abolished.

During the time of the German Empire (before 1918) Prussia occupied 64%, during the Republic 62% of the Reich territory. According to the Constitution, king of Prussia was at the same time German Emperor, and in the practice Prussian prime-minister was usually Reich chancellor as well. All important industrial



areas were on the territory of Prussia. The state revenues of Prussia amounted to 4,2 milliards of Marks in 1913, the revenues of the other states jointly 2,5 milliards, the revenues of the Reich only 4,1 milliards.

On the strength of the Versailles Treaty of 1919 only Prussia as well as the Reich itself (i. e. Alsace-Lorraine which had been administered directly by the Reich) suffered territorial losses. Thanks to nazi annexations Prussia recovered only a small fraction of territories she had lost in 1919. The former Prussian provinces of "West-Prussia" and Poznań, annexed by Hitler in 1939 after his conquest of Poland, as well as other annexed territories (Austria and the Sudetenland) were administered directly by Reich authorities and divided into "Reich counties" (Reichsgaue).

Sovereign rights of the states composing the Reich were strongly limited by the Weimar Constitution of 1919. On the other hand no division of Prussia into smaller units was carried out so that her preponderance was maintained. It was of great importance that the Reich had no police force that sphere belonging to the competence of the Länder. On July 20, 1932 Reich chancellor Papen made a coup d'état grasping the government power in Prussia and thus her police force. This made it easier for the nazis to get the Prussian police in their hands next year. A nazi Goering was appointed Prussian minister of the interior and then prime minister and he created the Gestapo in April, 1933. Another nazi Himmler took over the police power in the other Länder. In April, 1934, Goering had to yield his Prussian Gestapo to Himmler but it was not until 1936 that a uniform German police was created for the first time.

Hitler did not abolish the Länder governments but transformed them into mere organs of the Reich government. At the same time he appointed Reich lieutenants (Reichsstatthalter) in each of them. Beside these two branches of Reich authority in the Länder much power belonged to heads of party districts (Gauleiter). Some of them were appointed Reich lieutenants, but not all of them because there were more party districts (32) than Länder (15). All of this amounted to chaos. Essential power belonged to a fourth factor. It was the police which became almost identical with the SS. The superiority of the SS over the wider nazi party or NSDAP resulted from its strict racial exclusivity, realizing the Hitler ideal in the highest degree.

JÓZEF KONIECZNY

#### INFORMATION ON POLAND IN THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

Mutual relations of two nations, especially of two bordering nations, are assumed to be determined not only by international policy; opinions and attitudes of the communities have also their significance. Social attitudes and the public opinion depend on broad information, not only transmitted by mass communication means, but also by other channels. Deliberate moulding of public opinion, i. e. propaganda, is closely associated with information — the latter being a condition sine qua non of propaganda. Nevertheless, there is a reversed correlation in that propaganda renders possible acceptance and comprehension of information. Moreover, there is an interdependence between propaganda and upbringing, especially tuition, which mainly consists in transmission of information. Examples from German textbooks prove that even in disciplines not based on transmission of information such as e. g. mathematics, tuition can also be utilized for propaganda