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Abstract of the doctoral thesis

***The life and work of Ludwik Ręgorowicz (1888–1970)
in light of his legacy in the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences***

This thesis presents the life and work of Ludwik Walenty Ręgorowicz (1888–1970). The aim of the research was to reconstruct his life and his scientific and official activities, which were set in the changing reality of the late 19th and 20th centuries. An attempt was made to create his biography, but also to present the reasons behind Ręgorowicz's choices.

One of the reasons for devoting attention to Ręgorowicz was that he left behind a wealth of interesting materials documenting his professional and scientific activities in various regions of the country. His extensive legacy from the collections of the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences has so far been little utilized. So far, only a few authors have explored his biography, particularly in studies on the history of education, the history of Upper Silesia, or in dictionaries.

The methodology employed source research, press analysis, and studies. Publications discussing the times and environments in which Ludwik Ręgorowicz's work was associated were used to outline the historical outline. The research was based on his legacy held in the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. It contains diverse material, including documents, accounts, scholarly works, reports, and, in particular, unpublished versions of his diaries. The carefully concealed area, accessible only in fragmentary form, concerning his political beliefs allowed for the extraction of information necessary to create a relatively complete picture of Ludwik Ręgorowicz. A particularly significant portion of the archives consists of handwritten memoirs, which were not self-censored by the author.

His activities as a teacher in Galicia, a civil servant, and an implementer of state policy in Silesia and Greater Poland were analyzed. The research reconstructed Ludwik Ręgorowicz's academic career, focusing on the development of education in Polish lands.

It revealed his official career, entirely subordinated to the service of the state, and the successive stages of professional advancement, closely linked to politics.

The attempt to create a biography of Ludwik Ręgorowicz by presenting his personal and family life, professional activities, and the values he espoused, provided insights into the history of 20th-century Poland, the ongoing political and social changes, and, finally, the directions of historical, social, and political policies pursued during the Second Polish Republic, the German occupation, and the Polish People's Republic. The research allowed for the creation of a picture of the life of a representative of the Polish intelligentsia who lived during these groundbreaking and complex times.

This understanding of the essence of biography required the use of specific materials, established a chronological framework and research directions, allowed for the formulation of specific questions and the refinement of research hypotheses. A number of questions arose related to the various stages of Ręgorowicz's life: what significance did his home upbringing have on his social and political attitudes and activities? How did his academic education, including historical studies, shape Ręgorowicz? What were his views on the actions taken by Poles to shape the borders of the reborn Polish Republic? How did he find his place in the community of Silesian officials gathered around Michał Grażyński? How did he cope with the trauma of war and occupation? Finally, how did this pre-war official and activist navigate the post-war reality?

Ręgorowicz, although not a leading figure, played a significant role in regional politics. His biography provides insight into the fate of the intelligentsia, which – like others like him – undertook activities to build the administrative structures of the reborn state.

Due to Ręgorowicz's numerous changes of employment and residence, the territorial scope of his work is extensive, from Dąbrowa Tarnowska, his birthplace, through Tarnów, Kraków, Poznań, Nowy Targ, Spisz, and Orawa, to the Silesian region with Opole, Katowice, and Szopienice. Ręgorowicz's work also encompassed Cieszyn Silesia, and then successively various voivodeships of the Second Polish Republic, including Silesia, Poznań, Lviv, Kraków, and Warsaw. The war period also included Sachsenhausen and then Warsaw. Tracing the diverse places with which Ręgorowicz was associated required reference to their histories, a closer understanding of events and people, and, understandably, reviewing studies on local history. Analyzing his career path required reference to various official structures.

The analysis of Ręgorowicz's materials employed the method of induction, i.e., direct fact-finding. The principle of confirmation was also adopted, confirming the veracity of the descriptions of the issues discussed and his beliefs. The source criticism also included an analysis of the author's intentions, which was particularly important in the case of differing versions of the same events. Additionally, the geographical method was employed, allowing for the presentation of the political and economic processes taking place in various parts of Poland with which Ludwik Ręgorowicz was associated during the period covered by the research.

In preparing the necessary historical outline of the individual periods of Ludwik Ręgorowicz's official and political activities, various studies were used, allowing for the political and social context of the issues under study during the most historically significant periods of his life. To provide a reliable account of Ludwik Ręgorowicz's life, scholarly studies, period press, and printed sources were utilized, among which various reports were particularly valuable. In addition to archival materials from Ręgorowicz's legacy in the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences, materials from the Archives of Modern Records, the Jagiellonian Library, the Diocesan Archives in Tarnów, and the Silesian Library in Katowice were used.

During the analysis of the materials, attention was also drawn to the elements that shaped Ludwik Ręgorowicz's personal characteristics, academic interests, and political preferences. The influence of historical individuals and processes on his worldview and social attitudes was also highlighted.

Born in Dąbrowa Tarnowska, a small town in Galicia, after completing primary school, Ręgorowicz continued his education at Tarnów's secondary school. The local school and the local community of this large – by Galician standards – town shaped his sense of patriotism and respect for work ethic and duty. It was also during this period that his political beliefs and preferences began to take shape, which would guide him into the future.

His family and high school education shaped Ręgorowicz. He grew up in an environment faithful to the ideals of the armed struggle for independence, respecting values such as honor and patriotism. His adult life was largely determined by his university studies and contacts with eminent scientists. It was the Kraków university environment that significantly influenced Ludwik Ręgorowicz's worldview. As a result, he became a humanist who understood historical processes but also recognized the role of individuals.

After passing his final exams, he enrolled as a philosophy student at the Jagiellonian University. Kraków, with its multitude of political parties and student associations, was a city where views on Poland's future fate clashed in the coming global conflict. Contacts with Jagiellonian University lecturers and activists helped to define his academic interests. The history of Polish education became the main focus of his research.

His time as a student had a significant impact not only on his education but also on his future life and work. The Jagiellonian University was where Ludwik Ręgorowicz entered, as it later turned out, the world of science for good. His mentor was the eminent Polish scholar, Professor Wincenty Zakrzewski, who introduced him to the secrets of scientific research. His participation in the Jagiellonian University Students' History Club led Ręgorowicz to acquaintances with a group of distinguished historians in Kraków at the time, as well as later influential figures in science. Participation in the history seminar was a time when lasting friendships and collegial relationships were forged, which influenced his future career.

A proposal to Ludwik Ręgorowicz to write a history of the Kraków Institute of Technology permanently focused his scholarly interests. The history of Polish education during the partition period became the main topic of his future research and publishing activities.

Kraków was also a place where young Ręgorowicz encountered and learned about new socio-political views and various political and student organizations. His views were shaped by his participation in the Jagiellonian University Students' Fraternal Aid, the "Zet" fraternal group, and the "Zarzew" movement. His political beliefs were strongly influenced by his participation in the Kraków student strikes, and especially by his participation in the patriotic commemorations of the Battle of Grunwald.

During his time at the Jagiellonian University, Ludwik Ręgorowicz actively participated in organized tourist expeditions to the Tatra and Beskid Mountains. His acquaintance with Professors Władysław Semkowicz and Walery Goetel, as well as his knowledge of Polish-speaking mountain regions, influenced Ręgorowicz's future.

The years 1907–1911 were quite a challenge, as the student Ludwik Ręgorowicz had to support himself and learn independence and responsibility for his own life. Despite taking up gainful employment, he often found himself in poverty.

An analysis of the collected material from this period of his life reveals the crucial influence of the Kraków university environment and his personal experiences on shaping

Ludwik Ręgorowicz's worldview. His future decisions, both in life and politics, were informed by his character and sense of patriotism.

The next period of his biography covers the period between the ages of 23 and 32, and two locations assigned to this period: Kraków and Poznań. Undoubtedly, Ręgorowicz, of short stature and poor health, was released from compulsory military service in the Austrian army. This event would have a significant impact on his fate in the coming war. The years 1912–1913 encompass Ręgorowicz's efforts to obtain qualifications allowing him to work as a high school professor. This decision would define his professional future in education.

1913 was the year when Ludwik Ręgorowicz joined the 2nd Polish Rifle Team, a proponent of Józef Piłsudski's policies. The war years forced him to undertake various income-generating activities, but also prompted a thorough assessment of reality. In the light of his unpublished memoirs, it can be seen that he judged the behavior of the occupying Russian army quite harshly.

Each period was a time of intense professional and academic work. Upon returning to Kraków, Ręgorowicz became a high school teacher, defended his doctorate, and began publishing his first academic works, which fundamentally changed his financial situation and gained recognition in the historical community. During this period, he became involved in the Youth Welfare Society. The socio-political conditions he learned at that time, the needs of children and young people, and his concern for their upbringing and education were to become a future element of his social activism, permanently linked to both his professional and academic work.

Events recorded between the winter of 1913 and the summer of 1914 were omitted from diaries, memoirs, and documents. It is uncertain whether this knowledge gap can be remedied and to what extent it influenced the life of the protagonist of this study.

Studying Ludwik Ręgorowicz's diaries, one can discern his pro-Piłsudski sympathies, his indignation over the Treaty of Brest, and his frequently expressed views on Czech iniquity, which can also be found in his later assessments of the reality surrounding the loss of Cieszyn Silesia.

In November 1918, as a member of the Citizens' Guard, he expressed great sympathy for the socialist movement. A sense of patriotism and a conviction of his duty to defend Lviv are also clearly evident, while simultaneously bearing painful and traumatic memories of his students who died fighting for independence.

After completing his studies, he remained in Kraków, where he began working as a high school teacher. In 1916, he earned his doctorate from the Jagiellonian University. The subject of his dissertation was "The History of the Technical Institute."

Outside of his professional career, he was involved in independence activities. After the end of World War I, following a request from the Poznań Supreme People's Council, he moved to the capital of Greater Poland, where he took up a professorship at St. Mary Magdalene High School.

Ludwik Ręgorowicz was not afraid to make difficult decisions. At the end of the winter of 1919, he decided to transfer to work at the Poznań high school, which heralded a new chapter in his life. As it later turned out, a sense of duty to a young homeland fighting for its borders and a series of events from his youth determined his immediate future. He was a participant in the dramatic events of 1920 and 1921, which again had a decisive impact on the subsequent years of Ręgorowicz's life.

In the winter of 1920, the Kraków academic community offered him a position preparing for the national referendum in Spisz and Orava. He became a member of the Plebiscite Committee in Nowy Targ. As head of the agitation department, he was responsible for propaganda activities in Polish territories and for combating Czech indoctrination. Unfortunately, a decision by the Council of Ambassadors ruled out the possibility of holding a vote to annex the Spisz and Orava regions to Poland. During this period, he befriended Michał Grażyński, a young Polish Army officer at the time. This acquaintance proved to be a catalyst for his future life.

He was then assigned to work in the plebiscite preparation structures in Upper Silesia. In early November 1920, he arrived in Bytom, where the Polish Plebiscite Committee was headquartered. From there, he was assigned to Opole, where he became chairman, responsible for the Committee's work in the district. Under his leadership, rallies and meetings were organized, and Polish groups were mobilized. The specific nature of the region, with its German administration and police, as well as economic pressures and low national awareness, contributed to Poland's defeat in the March referendum in the Opole district.

On the eve of the outbreak of the Third Silesian Uprising, Ludwik Ręgorowicz was assigned to an insurgent unit. On May 3, 1921, he took part in the battle for Katowice. The very next day, at the initiative of Michał Grażyński, the chief of staff of the "Wschód" group, he was responsible for the creation and operation of the "Powstaniec" press organ.

While working at the newspaper, Ręgorowicz was informed of the growing conflict between Wojciech Korfanty and the command of the "Wschód" group regarding the future of the Third Uprising. The suggestion to suspend military and strike action was met with outrage from supporters of the fight against the Germans, including a negative assessment by Ludwik Ręgorowicz. As a result of these disputes, on May 13, 1921, the editorial team was sent to Szopienice, where they remained under Korfanty's supervision and at his disposal until the end of the uprising. From the end of the fighting until February 1, 1922, Ludwik Ręgorowicz was on leave, during which he married Olga Zarzycka, his colleague at the newspaper "Powstaniec," and settled his family affairs. After returning to Poznań, he resumed his teaching, research, and social work. He also became active in the Union for the Defense of the Western Borderlands. He served on the organizing committee of the 4th General Congress of Polish Historians and on the editorial board of the "Miracles of Poland" publishing series.

The year 1926 and the May Coup brought a fundamental change to the lives of Ludwik Ręgorowicz and his family. His friend from the plebiscite and uprising era, the newly appointed Silesian Voivode, Michał Grażyński, offered him a position as head of the local Department of Public Education in Katowice. The issue of Polish primary education in this region was extremely complex. Local conditions resulting from historical differences, the provisions of the Geneva Convention, a cultural and economic sphere distinct from the rest of the country, the overwhelming influence of German industrial circles and the propaganda and economic machinery behind them, determined the exceptionally complex nature of Ludwik Ręgorowicz's work. As the person responsible for public and vocational education in the Silesian Voivodeship, he implemented the Sanation policy assumptions with remarkable effectiveness, including limiting German influence on the education of Polish youth. This required balanced decision-making. Ręgorowicz, understanding the importance of education, nurturing the younger generation, and creating conditions for the development of the local intelligentsia, initiated the establishment of, among others, the Pedagogical Institute, the Conservatory of Music, and the Katowice Branch of the Polish Historical Society. He consistently implemented his assigned and authorial initiatives, utilizing his extensive knowledge of German minority education.

On April 30, 1933, Ludwik Ręgorowicz, relieved of his official duties by the voivode, concluded the first, Katowice-based chapter of his history. As head of such a prominent department, he undertook an extremely dangerous and complex mission.

As head of the WOP, reporting directly to Michał Grażyński, he was responsible for building Polish education in Upper Silesia. While supporting the voivode's policies and methods aimed at uniting the voivodeship with the motherland, he was also obligated to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention. Operating in an environment with a different historical, economic, and cultural past, and facing resistance from the Silesian Parliament, opposition parties, and the German minority to the policy, required effective yet subtle solutions. As Silesian curator, Ludwik Ręgorowicz spearheaded the process of unification of the Silesian school system, which, with varying degrees of success, continued until 1939. The knowledge of Silesian national relations and education, including minority education, acquired during his tenure at the WOP (Department of Public Education), was the subject of his scholarly work and journalistic output. It was also utilized in subsequent stages of his professional and scholarly career.

Appreciating the originality and effectiveness of his official work in the Silesian Department of Public Education of the WOP, his loyalty, committed political activity, competence, and knowledge in the field of education, on April 15, 1933, the Council of Ministers appointed Ludwik Ręgorowicz as a ministerial school inspector of the fourth degree in the Central Board of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education. As an outstanding researcher of the history of Polish and minority education, who, despite his extensive responsibilities, continued to pursue research, he was promoted and employed as an inspector on May 1, 1933. Subsequently, as head of the Department of General Education, he oversaw the implementation of a new school reform. He authored memoranda addressing issues of national and religious relations. As an official at the MWRiOP, he worked to create materials for developing educational programs consistent with government policy, the content of which could be accepted within the policy framework for national minorities.

His work at the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education also included serving on the Advisory Committee and developing a proprietary recovery program for the State Higher Secondary Schools (PWKS) in Lviv. Ludwik Ręgorowicz also oversaw the development of primary education within the Central Higher Secondary Schools (COP). During his time in Warsaw, he served as president of the Warsaw District of the Polish Western Union and was a member of the presidium of the Warsaw-Śródmieście District of the Camp of National Unity.

The outbreak of war radically changed Ludwik Ręgorowicz's sense of security and stability, marking the beginning of the end of the world he knew and the prevailing

values. At that time, he and his family lived in Warsaw's Ochota district, in a tenement house on Opoczyńska Street. Along with ministry employees, his wife, and daughter, he was evacuated from the capital eastward. The Soviet invasion forced his family to seek refuge with their sister, who lived in Katowice. When it turned out he was wanted by the Gestapo, they decided to move to Kraków. There, he began collaborating with the emerging clandestine school system. However, on November 9, 1939, he was accidentally arrested during "Sonderaktion Krakau" and imprisoned, along with his Kraków professors, in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. There, he experienced traumatic experiences, participating in inhumane treatment and widespread death. The ailing Ręgorowicz was released in February 1940. Upon arriving in Kraków, aware of the threat of arrest, he decided to separate from his family. In July 1940, he returned to Dąbrowa Tarnowska, where he returned to his family home with some of his siblings.

In 1940, Ręgorowicz became involved in clandestine educational activities at the primary, secondary, and vocational levels. From 1942, the Polish Government Delegation in London assumed control of education in this part of Poland. In January of that year, Ręgorowicz became chairman of the district education committee. This required constant travel within the former district office and contact with numerous individuals. To secure legal documents allowing for travel and to improve his dire financial and living conditions, in early 1941, Ręgorowicz officially took up employment as a district officer at the Central Welfare Council in Tarnów. He was responsible for providing modest assistance to the most needy residents.

The end of the German occupation initiated a rapid process of new political, economic, and social conditions. Polish citizens, thrust into the new realities of the postwar era, were forced to develop new adaptive attitudes, often contradicting their preconceived worldviews.

With the end of the war, Ręgorowicz effectively joined the process of rebuilding Poland. In April 1945, Ludwik Ręgorowicz arrived in Katowice. Thanks to his acquaintance with Czesław Wycech, he assumed leadership of the PZWS (Polish Union of Fighters) established in Katowice. Thanks to his knowledge, professional experience, effective action, and loyal stance to the new government, he became a member of the local political elite, which directly translated into social and financial advancement. His brilliant civil service and political career, underpinned by the effectiveness of his efforts in establishing and managing the PZWS in Katowice and his loyalty to the only true ideology, was abruptly interrupted at the turn of 1949 and 1950.

At the end of 1949, during the intensifying Stalinist regime, due to Ręgorowicz's pre-war socialist and Sanationist leanings, the then political authorities in Upper Silesia dismissed him from his prominent position. This began a forced separation from his family for several years, a period of official demotion, loss of prestige, and ensuing poverty. A move to Bielsko-Biała then followed, ushering in a seven-year period of decline, marginalization, and stagnation. Despite his difficult life situation and the ostracism he faced, Ludwik Ręgorowicz continued his research on the history of Polish education. The year 1957 marked a turning point in his life. Political changes in Poland and his participation in a memoir competition organized by the Department of Education at the Polish Academy of Sciences fundamentally changed his story.

The Polish Academy of Sciences, recognizing his scientific achievements and intellectual potential, offered him a position in Warsaw. Within a short period, he collaborated with the PAN Department of Educational History, moved to the capital, and settled with his wife. The academic community once again began to utilize his work, particularly his research on the history of education. A period of collaboration with the PAN began, the importance of his scholarly achievements was recalled and revived, and his extensive knowledge of the history of education was utilized. The capital became a place of stability, where Ludwik Ręgorowicz conducted historical studies and engaged in social activities in organizations promoting the memory of the Silesian Uprisings. He saw this as a debt he repaid to former colleagues who had participated in military operations.

After retiring, Ręgorowicz, oblivious to his experiences in Katowice, became involved in the political activities of party structures and political organizations, particularly the Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy (ZBoWiD) and the Union of Silesian Insurgents. He continued his academic and social work until his death in 1970.

Through his involvement in independence-promoting, educational, administrative, and scholarly activities, he was closely linked to the processes of state-building, shaping Polish education, and laying the foundations for the scholarly study of the history of education in Poland. As a man thrust into a changing world, he experienced the ongoing transformations, becoming a participant in them, and often co-creator. Ręgorowicz's life and work are embedded in Poland's complex history and unfolded during a period of crucial events. Beginning in the late 19th century, through World War I, the struggle for borders, the period of the Second Polish Republic, the years of German occupation, through Stalin's purges, and culminating in the Gomułka era. His life

exemplifies the attitudes of the Polish intelligentsia during the sweeping political transformations of the 20th century.

Another issue is Ręgorowicz's scholarly achievements, which can be a valuable resource for research not only into the history of Polish education. Therefore, in a separate chapter, an effort has been made to create a relatively complete list of his published works and materials remaining in the archival legacy held in the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences. An annex has also been prepared, compiling his published and unpublished works. These constitute an additional resource for research on the history of Polish education, among other things.

It is worth emphasizing once again that Ręgorowicz's extensive legacy has not yet been exhaustively utilized, and it still contains much valuable information for research on the Second Polish Republic, educational issues, and the work of offices and officials at various levels.