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## **THE EUROPE OF MINORITIES: CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND ETHNIC BOUNDARIES<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** The paper deals with the creation of cultural landscapes by European minorities. Looking at the map of European linguistic minorities we observe strong assimilation processes (connected with globalization, new media, a uniformity of lifestyles) resulting in the diffusion of minorities into the dominant culture. It also seems that the presence of minorities in Europe has become increasingly expressive. It is not concealed within the private lives of individuals, but has a strong influence on the creation of cultural landscapes, delimits their space and uses its influence for the promotion of the minority cultures. One can see an increasing number of visual indicators of bilingualism, such as street signs, names of institutions, inscriptions on billboards, etc. Events organized by the minorities, such as picnics, festivals, fairs, etc. are also more noticeable. There is a debate on the actions of civil disobedience (in Wales and in Brittany) and their consequences leading to the implementation of visual bilingualism. The circumstances and results of the introduction in Poland of bilingual signs in the areas inhabited by linguistic minorities – the Kashubs and the Lemkos – are publicly discussed. Finally, the actions taken up by the Kashubs are presented in the media. These actions serve the cultural management of their space and the strengthening of their identity through the invented traditions and cultural engagement. The visual presence of minority languages and cultures in a specific territory create sharper ethnic boundaries.

**Keywords:** linguistic landscape, minority cultures, invented traditions, bilingualism, ethnic borders.

In my article I will concentrate on the way the autochthonous linguistic and cultural minorities in Europe impact the visual shape of the spaces they inhabit and on the significance of this influence on creating new forms of the cultural identity of their communities and on entrenching ethnic boundaries. The topic is very broad; I will therefore focus only on some aspects of this phenomenon. I will outline the changes undergone by the minorities in the

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20<sup>th</sup> century and their meaning for the functioning and the status of European minorities. Following this I will present the non-violent actions of civil disobedience (especially those conducted in the 1960s-1980s, as well as some modern examples of similar movements), whose aim was to establish clear visual bilingualism in the areas inhabited by the minorities. To present the influence of the construction and creation of the bilingual and bicultural landscape on consolidating the ethnic borders, I will describe the tensions resulting from the gradual introduction of bilingual road signs in the areas populated by the linguistic minorities of Poland (the Kashubs and the Lemkos) and also the significance of the cultural (touristic, promotional) endeavors to accentuate the cultural diversity of a certain locality. The majority of my examples comes from the field research on minority cultures I have been conducting for the last few years with the Kashubs, the Bretons and the Welsh, although I am also going to refer to the research conducted in the territories inhabited by other groups.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the situation of the autochthonous, stateless minorities has changed on a significant scale. The most important of the many contributing factors should be enumerated here. They include industrialization, which imposed a change of lifestyle; the introduction of the railways, which facilitated early emigration on a greater scale and the increase in the number of visitors to previously rather isolated regions inhabited by the minorities. This was followed by the urbanization and the progressive breakdown of territorial communities; the two world wars and the post-war politics involving the minorities, with their demographic effects; and finally the advent of the mass media, broadcasting only in the dominant language. This has not only imposed this language on the sphere previously reserved for the ethnic language, showing it as a language of progress and modernity, but it has also strongly influenced changes in lifestyle promoting acculturation. All these processes have led to gradual, and more or less conscious and voluntary cultural and linguistic assimilation of the minorities.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the intergenerational transmission of minority languages was seriously extenuated (in some places, for example in Brittany, it has almost ended) and the members of the minority stopped being differentiated in any significant way from the representatives of the majority. They began to do the same jobs, dress in the same way, listen to and watch the same radio and TV programs, and speak the same language (at least in public life). The ethnic boundaries separating the minorities and the dominant cultures seemed to be progressively effaced.

The minorities started to settle into the dominant cultures and were threatened by extinction. The politics of most European states was favorable to this process. These states – if they admitted the existence of minorities on their territory at all – tried to minimize their importance, using primarily the strategy of folklorization. As noted by Gupta and Ferguson, “a policy of alliance and acceptance increases the risk of inexorable loss of cultural identity; a policy of self-assertion may simply lead toward trivialization and folklorization of the peripheral population”<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, folklorization is based on the simplification of the aesthetic and semantic meanings of the complicated cultural totality, separating and reconfiguring them into new wholes. By putting an equation sign between the minority culture and folklore this strategy confirms the superiority of the dominant culture, because the minority culture is reduced to a relic of the past. Folklore thus indicates the folk/popular character of the minority culture which cannot achieve the level of modernization and create a high, elite culture to show its development. This kind of attitude may be illustrated with the “ethnographic maps” presenting couples most often dressed in folk costumes within the territory of a state. Those maps “purported to display the spatial distribution of peoples, tribes, and cultures”<sup>3</sup>.

The strength of the policy conducted towards a minority depended naturally on the country. In the People’s Republic of Poland, for example, the cultural diversity of the state was hidden under uniformed street names and relegating the symptoms of the existence of ‘local’ cultures to ethnographic parks, museums, or CEPELIA (the Co-operatives of Folk Handicraft and Artistic Industry). No alternatives to folkloristic visual indicators of cultural variety in the public sphere were permitted (there were no minority flags, monuments dedicated to them, signs in the minority language) so the minorities could not create their cultural landscapes.

However, at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s the social movements in Western Europe (anti-capitalist, ecological, hippie, etc.)<sup>4</sup> led to the development of ‘ethnic revival’.<sup>5</sup> Those events precipitated the revaluation of minority languages and cultures by motivating them to act and supplying them with

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<sup>2</sup> J. Edwards, *Minority Languages and Group Identity. Cases and Categories*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2010, p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> A. Gupta, J. Ferguson, Beyond “Culture”: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference, *Cultural Anthropology* 1992, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> In the Eastern Europe the changes appeared after the collapse of the communism.

<sup>5</sup> A.D. Smith, *The Ethnic Revival in the Modern World*, Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge – New York – Melbourne 1981.

adequate tools of pressure and political support.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the minorities began to re-establish or to construct from scratch their cultural identity in the territories they inhabited. The appropriation of space by the minorities was extended to those areas that only had a vicarious connection with those groups. On the one hand, the activities embraced those territories populated by the minorities in the distant past which were symbolically re-connected with them (through the construction of monuments, commemorative plaques, organization of cultural events)<sup>7</sup>. On the other hand, the minorities began to mark their presence in the areas which they had not historically inhabited: the big cities, which became the leading centers for the protection and development of minority languages and cultures, with minority institutions and organizations placed close to the centers of political pressure. Of course, claims for the recognition of minority rights and of the languages they used were made at the same time and in many domains, at the political, economic, cultural and social levels. The minorities taking advantage of the new strategies had to adjust to the requirements of the new world and to the procedures required by the dominant cultures.

The changes in the lifestyle and in the functioning of the minorities in the modern world causing group reorganization were described by Ferdinand Tönnies as involving a passage from community ties to society ties<sup>8</sup>. Today belonging to a minority is no longer based only on objective, 'natural' indicators or primordial ties resulting from the place of birth, of residence, blood ties, participation in rites and common cultural practices. One's sense of cultural belonging and one's identification with a minority is now the result of individual choice. It involves a declaration of minority identity, a willingness to take part in the activities on behalf of the group and a more or less ardent manifestation of this belonging. Ethnic ties can be thus understood as instrumental, created and used as a way to mobilize the group to achieve various political or economic aims<sup>9</sup>. If we consider Fredrik Barth's classic theory of ethnic boundaries, we will notice that it is not possible to notice those boundaries on the basis of a group possessing some particular

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<sup>6</sup> Z. Bokszański, *Tożsamości zbiorowe*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa 2006, pp. 81-82.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. L.M. Nijakowski, *Domeny symboliczne: konflikty narodowe i etniczne w wymiarze symbolicznym*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. F. Tönnies, *Community and civil society*, ed. by Jose Harris, transl. by M. Hollis, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. W. Burszta, *Konteksty etniczności, Sprawy Narodowościowe – Seria nowa 1997, Vol. 1*, pp. 155-157.

traits of their culture<sup>10</sup>. Ethnic borders cannot be defined any more exclusively by strong cultural and linguistic differences, but they have to be created from scratch on the basis of small cultural and social distinctions, or they have to be created in a completely arbitrary way.<sup>11</sup> One of the strategies for the creation of ethnic borders by minorities is the appropriation of a territory and the creation of a new cultural landscape.

The basic type of landscapes created by the European minorities are linguistic landscapes, thanks to which the presence of a minority and the “visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region”<sup>12</sup> is asserted. The term ‘linguistic landscape’ is now very popular in sociolinguistics. Researchers study how the languages of different ethnic groups function in their relevant territories, how they are used in multilingual societies and what emotions they generate. All the manifestations of the language in public spaces are taken into consideration, starting with the official ones, such as its presence of road signs, buildings, institutions, town names, street names, billboards and advertisements, visiting cards and shops, and the unofficial ones created by the inhabitants: graffiti, wall inscriptions, etc. The linguistic landscape of a region functions as “an informational and symbolic marker of the relative power and status of the linguistic communities inhabiting the territory”<sup>13</sup>. The visual presence of the minority language can be understood as a sign of the recognition of its equal status in a specific area, but is frequently reduced to a symbolic function. In this case “the presence of a minority language in the linguistic landscape might be used as an alibi by the majority in rejecting future measures with the line of reasoning that the state of the minority language cannot be too bad if it is visible here and there”.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. F. Barth, *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo 1969.

<sup>11</sup> L.M. Nijakowski, Tworzenie, odtwarzanie, niszczenie i zanikanie granic między grupami etnicznymi, in: *Etniczność, pamięć, asymilacja: wokół problemów zachowania tożsamości mniejszości narodowych i etnicznych*, ed. L.M. Nijakowski, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warszawa 2009, p. 61.

<sup>12</sup> L. Rodrigue, R.Y. Bourhis, *Linguistic Landscape and Ethnolinguistic Vitality An Empirical Study*, „Journal of Language and Social Psychology” 1997, nr 16(1), p. 23.

<sup>13</sup> E. Shohamy, *Language Policy. Hidden agendas and new approaches*, London – New York, Routledge 2006, p. 112.

<sup>14</sup> D. Gorter, H.F. Marten, L. Van Mensel, *Studying Minority Languages in the Linguistic Landscape*, in: *Minority Languages in the Linguistic Landscape*, ed. D. Gorter, H.F. Marten and L. Van Mensel, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2012, p. 7.

The co-existence in one territory of a minority and a dominant language is always connected with the political, social, historical and economic context. It is important to consider why the existence of visual bilingualism has such significance for the minority that it is often the first postulate put forward in the long process of the gaining of rights. There are several reasons for this situation. Firstly, the visual change in a landscape from monolingual to bilingual is in its own way a kind of statement. It rejects the existing monolingualism accompanying the ideology of the one-language nation state which guarantees social unity and internal coherence. It objects to the idea of 'internal colonialism'. This protest gives the minorities the justification and power to demand recognition. And importantly, it is certainly the easiest and most effective way – in legal and practical terms – for the minorities to mark their presence and to change the status of their language, sometimes even the status of the minority itself. It is also a challenge for the minority. Striving for the introduction of bilingualism is a form of struggle for the minority's rights, for its identity and the recognition of its existence. Engaging oneself in a struggle to bolster and consolidate the collective identity gives the minority more power to assert their position.

A good example of the struggle for the implementation of visual bilingualism is provided by Wales. There, in the 1960s the pressure group Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg [The Welsh Language Society] was established. The fundamental achievement of this organization of civil disobedience was to draw peoples' attention to the absence of the Welsh language in public life and public spaces through the destruction of monolingual, English only, street signs or plaques, and covering English-only inscriptions with stickers in both English and Welsh.<sup>15</sup> At the beginning of the 1970s, the group had so many supporters and active adherents that the authorities could no longer ignore its demands. The activities of this association led to a gradual installation of bilingual signs, acts recognizing the Welsh language, the introduction of bilingual and Welsh-language education, and finally the recognition of the Welsh language which joined English as the second official language of Wales, and recently the creation of the Welsh National Assembly. Of course, all these changes were not the result of the activities of one organization. However, one should not underestimate the significance of the emergence of visual bilingualism achieved by the determined Welsh people. It instigated the awareness of the Welsh population, still under the influence of the British

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<sup>15</sup> More about Cymdeithas Yr Iaith actions can be found in: D. Phillips, *The History of the Welsh Language Society 1962-1998*, in: „*Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*”. *The Welsh language in the twentieth century*, ed. G.H. Jenkins, M.A. Williams, University of Wales Press, Cardiff 2000.

patriotic slogans of World War II, and their willingness to assert the distinct Welsh and British identities. Their increasingly determined actions strengthened those re-created ethnic boundaries and led to the development of the collective consciousness. These processes can be observed in the results of surveys (and in the political choices), in which more people identified themselves as ‘Welsh’ and not ‘British’<sup>16</sup>. The nationalist party Plaid Cymru, the only Welsh party in Great Britain, is gaining more political support. As Graham Day observed, “The politicization of the language issues in Wales made the future of the Welsh language into the central question of national or ‘ethnic’ politics”<sup>17</sup> for many decades.

A few years ago, similar actions were undertaken in Brittany by the group Ai’ta, calling itself a pacifist group of civil disobedience. Ai’ta organizes demonstrations, spontaneous, so-called ‘savage’ fest-noz<sup>18</sup> in public places, with acts of civil disobedience performed by young people who remove French-only signs and demand the introduction of the Breton language into public offices.

Its purpose is to draw peoples’ attention to the problem of the nonexistence of the Breton language in public life. In its approach Ai’ta not only refers to the Welsh Cymdeithas Yr Iaith, but to the group Stourm ar Brezhoneg [Fight for the Breton language] from the 1980s functioning in Brittany which from the start took radical steps to force the French government to make some changes. Stourm ar Brezhoneg managed the campaign of destroying and spraying monolingual signs and information plaques in Brittany.<sup>19</sup> In 1984, the year

<sup>16</sup> It is confirmed by the results of the 2011 census. Almost 60% of the Wales inhabitants stated to have a Welsh identity, while only 26% declared to be ‘British’. (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-unitary-authorities-in-wales/stb-2011-census-key-statistics-for-wales.html> accessed 24.10.2013).

<sup>17</sup> G. Day, *Making sense of Wales. A Sociological Perspective*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff 2002, p. 218.

<sup>18</sup> *Fest-noz* is a party invoking the traditional Breton community festivities, during which people accompanied with alcohol and music are dancing in chains. In 70’s of XX century *fest-noz* have become a symbol of the fight for the ethnic and linguistic revival in Brittany. Cf. N. Dołowy-Rybińska, *The Fest-noz: A Way to Live Breton Culture*, “Colloquia Humanistica” 2013, 2, pp. 233-254.

<sup>19</sup> Association did not limited itself to the postulates of introducing bilingual road signs, similarly to the Welsh Cymdeithas Yr Iaith. They have claim an officialization of the Breton language, creating the Breton language radio and television channel, introduction of the bilingual education system etc. The most often used slogan was: “Brezhoneg, yezh ofisiel”, which means “Breton, the official language”. Cf.: M. Nicolas, *Bretagne, un destin européen ou la Bretagne et le fédéralisme en Europe*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, Rennes 2001, p. 108.

they were founded, they destroyed ten thousand signs. Many Breton and Welsh activists were fined for this kind of activity, for the destruction of public property; some even spent time in prison.

In Brittany the changes did not occur as fast as in Wales, nevertheless the first bilingual signs in France were eventually put up in Brittany. Today, Ai'ta is still waiting to achieve the same goals because despite some improvement in the situation of the Breton language in the last thirty years, Brittany is still far from being a bilingual region. It is interesting that the measures undertaken by the activists on behalf of the Breton language encompass the whole of Brittany, although historically Upper Brittany was not a Breton-language region, but one whose inhabitants spoke French and Gallo. This is today of little importance, because the struggle for the Breton language is not only the struggle for maintaining this Celtic language and its revitalization where it has ceased to be used. It is most of all a struggle for ethnic boundaries, for the creation, re-creation and strengthening of the collective identity which would connect the people wishing to call themselves Bretons, regardless of their parentage and language use.

Such activity has a double significance. It influences the perception of the minority population as a coherent, distinct community, separated by an ethnic border. This is because the minority takes possession of the territory by marking it in a visible way through its language and signs. The presence of ethnic symbols influence people by enhancing their sense of relationship with the others who create this 'invented community'<sup>20</sup>.

Making the ethnic boundaries effective can, however, evoke anxiety in the neighboring groups. A good example and illustration of this observation is the story of the establishment of the first bilingual signs in Poland. The Act of National and Ethnic Minorities and the Regional Language from 2005 gives the right of existence to bilingual signs where the National Census has confirmed that more than twenty per cent of the population declare themselves as belonging to a minority. If there is less than twenty per cent minority participation, it is possible to introduce bilingual place names after social consultations.

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<sup>20</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London 1983.

Although many bilingual signs in Kashubia were put up before the Act of National and Ethnic Minorities and the Regional Language<sup>21</sup> came into force, when the opportunity was given officially, the idea encountered much opposition. Organizational and financial problems were cited, and it was claimed that bilingual signs with place names were not necessary because the Kashubs knew the names of their villages nonetheless. It is interesting to note that the objections against the installation of bilingual signs did not come from those inhabitants of Kashubia who did not identify themselves with the Kashubian culture, but from the Kashubs themselves, who were afraid that the presence of the signs could provoke a negative reaction against them. The emergence of these anxieties on the part of the Kashubs testifies to the existence of deeply-rooted fear of exclusion and of being treated as someone 'other', different or 'alien', rather than showing an effective cultural assimilation of this group. The Kashubs had encountered a similar problem during the work on the 'Act of National and Ethnic Minorities and the Regional Language' in the 1990s when the status of this group was discussed. The Kashubs then did not want to be recognized as a 'minority'. They preferred the neutral position of a 'group using a regional language'. Nevertheless, the active involvement of the Kashubian elite led to the appearance of bilingual signs in the Kashubian territorial communities. Not only did they not provoke any problems, but they became the trademark of the Kashubian villages, and a tourist attraction. The real problem appeared, however, when the signs with the inscription 'Gduńsk stolëca Kaszëb witô' [Gdańsk, the capital of Kashubia welcomes you] were installed at the entry to Gdańsk. The presence of those signs provoked a very strong reaction from the inhabitants of this city, who accused the Kashubs of lording over and appropriating someone else's territory. As a result, this sign was regularly sprayed and destroyed.

Agnieszka Pasiëka has analyzed the opposition provoked by the social consultations carried out before the installation of the bilingual Polish-Lemko signs<sup>22</sup>. Her ethnographic research has shown how the debate before the putting up of the signs produced a division of the community into 'the Poles' and 'the Lemkos'. The village population who had called themselves 'neighbors' or 'inhabitants' began to define themselves in ethnic or ethnic-religion terms. We can see that the consultations brought back the ethnic boundaries which had been treated as nonexistent for many decades. The possibility of

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<sup>21</sup> E. Pryczkowski, *Język kaszubski w działalności publicznej i obrocie prawnym, a zwłaszcza w reklamie, prasie, radiu i telewizji oraz administracji*, *Biuletyn Rady Języka Kaszubskiego* 2007.

<sup>22</sup> A. Pasiëka, *Wielokulturowość po polsku. O polityce wielokulturowości jako mechanizmie umacniania polskości*, [in Press].

introducing visual bilingualism was interpreted as a disruption of the social order, based on the silent consensus that the Lemko population could function as a folkloric tourist attraction of the region which boasts of their cultural heritage but does not grant the Lemkos real political and social subjectivity.

The introduction of visual bilingualism is only one of the ways of creating and strengthening the community spirit of a given group through influencing the cultural landscape of the region it inhabits. Another way of marking the landscape is based on different types of cultural and commercial events, most of all those connected with tourism. These kinds of activities are directed both at those inside and outside the community, at the same time giving it a strong symbolic ethnic character. An excellent example of this can be found in contemporary Kashubia, where it is becoming increasingly fashionable to identify oneself as Kashubian. In recent years many campaigns were conducted on behalf of Kashubia and the Kashubian culture and language. Thanks to the 'protection' guaranteed by the Polish state in the Act of National and Ethnic Minorities and the Regional Language of 2005, the Kashubian language has entered schools, churches, the media (unfortunately in this last case only in a limited measure). It is also visually present in the region: on bilingual signs, plaques, names of objects, restaurants, shops, and on every possible souvenir made for tourists. Kashubia has become an attractive region for tourists not only because of the beauty of its landscape (the coast, lakes, hills and forests ...) but also because of its own cultural specificity which is emphasized at every opportunity. The recent years saw an increasing number of Kashubian events: picnics, regional meetings, open days in the villages and towns with the presence of Kashubian flags, costumes, music and food.<sup>23</sup> All the events and objects produced there are described as Kashubian. This is how Kashubianness is not only more visible in the cultural landscape of Pomerania, but is becoming a fashionable trend. This fashion is sometimes severely criticized as 'identity for sale'.<sup>24</sup> However, when we view it as the strengthening of the Kashubian awareness, it is difficult to challenge its important influence. The Kashubs who are engaged in the activities connected with the promotion of the culture and language (regardless of their motivation) become at the same time the recipients of this culture and consolidate their relationship with it. As John and Jean Comaroff have written,

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<sup>23</sup> On significance of those symbols for the collective identity see: M. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, Sage Publications, London 1995.

<sup>24</sup> E. Nowicka, Etniczność na sprzedaż i/lub etniczność domowa, in: *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce w świetle Narodowego Spisu Powszechnego z 2002 roku*, ed. L. Adamczuk, S. Łodziński, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2006.

“the producers of culture are *also* its consumers, seeing and sensing and listening to themselves enact their identity – and, in the process, objectifying their own subjectivity, thus to (re)cognize its existence, to grasp it, to domesticate it, to act on with it”.<sup>25</sup>

On the one hand the new dimension of Kashubianness has entered the everyday life of the people, and on the other, the Kashubian elite has been undertaking initiatives and actions orientated at reinforcing the ‘imagined’ Kashubian ties, on creating a supralocal Kashubian community. Over the last 15 years, they have organized Kashubian Congresses, and initiated the celebration, since 2004, of the Day of Kashubian Unity, and since 2012, the Day of the Kashubian Flag. These type of activities can be called ‘invented traditions’, which launch a continuity through their symbolism and repetitiveness, and which serve to “establish or symbolize social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities”<sup>26</sup>. Those celebrations organized every year, whose symbolism is strengthened by the use of such Kashubian symbols as flags, gryphons, car stickers with the inscription ‘Kaszëbë’, black and yellow T-shirts, Kashubian embroidery, the presence of the people dressed in traditional folk costumes, Kashubian folk music played by folk groups, or modern music sung in the Kashubian language, Kashubian-speaking masters of ceremonies at picnics and celebrations etc., affect the people’s imagination. This reinforces the feeling that their culture ‘really’ exists, that it is interesting and important, and most of all it creates a sense of affiliation with other, not directly known, Kashubs. Thus they create Kashubian ethnic boundaries in a new way. It is also a means of constructing a symbolic landscape, which “communicates social and political meanings through specific public images, physical objects, and other expressive representations. It includes public spaces and especially sacred (but not necessarily religious) sites and other emotionally important and visible venues, as well as representations associated with a group’s identity found in mass media, theater, school textbooks, music, literature, and public art”<sup>27</sup>. The symbolic landscapes demonstrate how people construct and present their world to other people and how they perceive their place in this world as well as the position of other populations.

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<sup>25</sup> J.L. Comaroff, J. Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago-London 2009, p. 26.

<sup>26</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *Introduction: Inventing Traditions*, in: *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, Cambridge 1983, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> M.H. Ross, Cultural Contestation and the Symbolic Landscape. Politics by Other Means?, in: *Culture and belonging in Divided Societies. Contestation and Symbolic Landscapes*, ed. M.H. Ross, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 2009, p. 6.

In this article I have attempted to show that the creation of cultural and linguistic landscapes by contemporary European minorities is essential not only for the perception of their presence, but also for the consolidation and sometimes even the creation from scratch of ethnic boundaries. As Akhil Gupta and James Fergusson have written: “The irony of these times, however, is that as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient. It is here that it becomes most visible how imagined communities come to be attached to imagined places”<sup>28</sup>. Marking a visual presence by the minorities, both at the level of signs, symbols, organized events and on the level of introducing visual bilingualism, has a significant influence on their sense of community and collective identity. The measures taken by the minorities, manifesting their presence, marking the areas they inhabit, strengthen the internal relations of those groups and their impact on ethnically indifferent individuals, and compels them to reflect on their identity. This sometimes leads to their decision to identify with the group, which then itself grows stronger. With this ‘authority’, those measures influence the people surrounding the minority. In their eyes the community which presents its culture and shows that its language can function in public life on an equal level with the dominant language, becomes more distinct from the society around it. Anthony Cohen has written that “The boundary represents the mask presented by the community to the outside world; it is the community’s public face. But the conceptualization and symbolization of the boundary from within is much more complex. To put this another way, the boundary as the community’s public face is symbolically simple but as the object of internal discourse it is symbolically complex”<sup>29</sup>. The ethnic boundary is perceived differently by the outsiders – in a simplified, schematic or even stereotypical way – and by the people belonging to the minority. Every person today can choose his/her identity and the way he/she perceives it. However, many factors influence this choice. Among the most important ones is the impact of the different activities of the community with the creation of its cultural landscapes at the forefront.

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<sup>28</sup> A. Gupta, J. Ferguson, *Beyond “Culture”: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference*, *Cultural Anthropology* 1992, Vol. 7, No. 1, p.

<sup>29</sup> A.P. Cohen, *The symbolic construction of community*, Ellis Horwood Limited, New York 1985, p. 74.

**EUROPA MNIEJSZOŚCI. OBRAZY KULTUROWE I GRANICE ETNICZNE  
(streszczenie)**

Artykuł dotyczy konstruowania krajobrazów kulturowych przez autochtoniczne mniejszości w dzisiejszej Europie. Przyglądając się mapie europejskich mniejszości językowych, obserwować możemy z jednej strony silne procesy asymilacyjne (związane m.in. z globalizacją, nowymi mediami, ujednoceniem sposobu życia), w związku z czym przedstawiciele mniejszości wtapiają się w kulturę dominującą. Z drugiej strony wydaje się, że obecność mniejszości w Europie jest coraz bardziej wyrazista. Nie zamyka się bowiem w prywatnym świecie jednostek, ale silnie wpływa na kształtowanie obrazów kulturowych, naznaczając przestrzeń i wykorzystując ją do promocji kultury. Pojawiają się coraz liczniejsze wizualne oznaki dwujęzyczności, takie jak tablice, nazwy instytucji, organizacji. Coraz bardziej widoczne są również działania mniejszości przejawiające się m.in. poprzez organizowane jarmarki, festiwale, imprezy. W tekście analizowane są działania i konsekwencje działań społecznego nieposłuszeństwa (w Walii i Bretanii) prowadzące do wprowadzenia wizualnej dwujęzyczności. Pokazane zostały okoliczności i rezultaty wprowadzania w Polsce dwujęzycznych tablic w miejscach zamieszkiwanych przez mniejszości językowe – Kaszubów i Łemków. Na końcu przedstawiam działania Kaszubów służące kulturowemu zagospodarowaniu przestrzeni i umacnianiu tożsamości poprzez wynalezione tradycje oraz działania kulturalne. Wizualna obecność języków i przejawów kultur mniejszościowych wpływa silnie na wyostrzenie granic etnicznych mniejszości.

**Słowa kluczowe:** krajobraz kulturowy, kultury mniejszościowe, tradycje wynalezione, dwujęzyczność, granice etniczne.

