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EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABEL-BASED EDUCATION AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MEMORY EDUCATION – THE POLISH CASE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to show how the EHL is used for the interpretation, awareness, and transmission of heritage and memory. As part of the EU European Heritage Label (EHL) program, Polish institutions received six distinctions in the years 2014-2019, which places Poland high in the ranking of the awarded Brands in Europe. Polish institutions are obligated to spreading knowledge about the cultural heritage of Europe. On the one hand, EHL's task is to raise awareness and transmit common values, elements of European history, and heritage, which can be interpreted as promoting "uni-memory." On the other hand, EHL aims to deepen intercultural dialogue and synergy, recognizing the values of diversity, which can be understood as promoting the idea of plural memory. The EHL organizers in Poland are obliged (by the provisions of the EU Program) to conduct a European narrative, but in practice, they sometimes remain at the stage of restoring and refreshing the memory of the site, organizing local memory, and revising the regional policy due to "dormant memory" during the communist period.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage Education, European Heritage Label, uni-memory education, national education, plural memory education

INTRODUCTION

According to Maria Cristina Paganoni, *common heritage is a recurrent catchphrase in several conventions, declarations, guidelines and policy documents produced at the supra-national European level by a number of institutional actors*.¹ Among these actors is the European Commission which manages the European Heritage Label (EHL) program.² With its strong educational component, the EHL program fits the cultural policy framework described by Chris Shore³ as one that instrumentalizes culture to create European citizenship and promote integration.

Indeed, history and heritage are indispensable elements of human upbringing and building social competence. We can thus argue that the goal of education is not only to enforce but also create among people a sense of community and shared value system. European heritage is additionally linked to the ideals of human rights and civil liberties. As such, it is *consistent with the sense of cultural 'pluri-affiliation'*.⁴ Thus, the EHL program recognizes the importance of the events, places and memory sites that strengthen the existence of European community and our identification with it. It also fosters understanding, interpretation and internalization of the past which are not only fact-based but also driven by emotions. In this way, education becomes a narrative. One in which⁵ a faithful description of the past (considered impossible) is replaced by diverse interpretations that include references to the presence and the future. In order to show that education is not only limited to the passing of knowledge but also aimed at enriching experiences and reflections, Johan Gustav Droysen⁶ coined the term "didactic narrative" (*didaktische Darstellung*). In line with this theory, we can define EHL-based education as public activities which are undertaken to influence social perception of history and heritage to strengthen recipients' identification with the European community. Institutions and teachers who carry out such activities can further be called memory creators or producers.⁷

¹ M.C. Paganoni, "Cultural Heritage is the Discourse of European Institutions", *Lingue Culture Mediazioni – Languages Cultures Mediation*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2015), pp. 117-130.

² The European Heritage Label (EHL) was established by Decision no. 1194/2011/UE of the European Parliament and Council on November 16th 2011. It is regarded as one of the European Union's flagship programmes. It contributes to the strengthening of EU cultural policy in regards to European heritage protection and promotion, which in fact is an implementation of article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). By 2022 the EU has awarded 48 EHLs to historical sites. The characteristic feature of all of the awarded sites is their significance for the process of European integration and mainstreaming European values to the public (Decision 1194/2011/EU, article 3 point 2).

³ C. Shore, "In uno plures' (?) EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe", *Cultural Analysis*, no. 5 (2006), pp. 7-26.

⁴ M.C. Paganoni, "Cultural Heritage is the Discourse..."

⁵ J. Topolski, *Jak się pisze i rozumie historię. Tajemnice narracji historycznej*, Warszawa 1996.

⁶ G. Droysen, *Historik*, Munich–Wien 1977.

⁷ W. Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies", *History and Theory*, vol. 41, no. 2 (2002), pp. 179-197.

1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

The aim of this article is to demonstrate how EHLs have enriched heritage education in Poland by adding new perspectives to earlier historical interpretations. Matter-of-factly, while the awarding of EHLs may not have led to any significant social changes, they allowed heritage educators to better elicit a European perspective from historical narratives and include various viewpoints in heritage promotion. The presented analysis is different from those previously presented in the literature, for instance by Krzysztof Kowalski or Bartłomiej Sura,⁸ because it focuses on the educational role of signs and ways of using signs to educate memory.

We analyzed EHLs in Poland to determine how this EU program is used to promote European interpretation of history to overcome nationalistic, or populist, historical interpretations. During data collection we conducted oral interviews with all Polish EHL operators. Among them were: museums, cultural institutions, local authorities and culture departments in city administrations. We also talked to schoolteachers who apply EHL in their work with pupils.

Even though education is an integral part of the EHL program, in Poland there has been no institution officially assigned to promote EHLs through educational activities. So far, the only organized educational activities based on EHL have been those carried out by the Label operators, especially those that include non-formal education in their work. In addition, none of the Polish places that have been awarded EHL reported that their activities aimed at promoting the Label have been supervised by local government agencies. In the same way, none of these places reported official co-operation with local government agencies and schools. Therefore, inclusion of EHL promotion in school activities and teaching programs depends solely on the knowledge and engagement of individual teachers. There is no formal coalition of EHL operators either. If there is any cooperation between them, it is only a result of personal contacts.

We completed our interviews with a CAWI-method questionnaire which we distributed among school teachers who work in, or near, cities or localities of EHL operators. The aim of the survey was to find out how teachers use EHL in their work and whether, when using EHL, they focus on a national or European narrative. We also carried out a qualitative analysis of educational materials, such as lesson plans, and evaluated outcomes of educational activities organized within the EHL framework. The latter included competitions and educational tracks.

As stated above, the subject of our analysis are Polish EHLs. They comprise six objects which have been granted the title European Heritage Label in 2015, 2016, and 2019 respectively. The first three of the analyzed EHLs are the Union of Lublin (1569), the Constitution of 3 May (1791), and the Historical Shipyard in Gdańsk. The next

⁸ K. Kowalski, "Między narodową historią a dziedzictwem europejskim. Kilka uwag o Stoczni Gdańskiej posiadającej Znak Dziedzictwa Europejskiego", *Zarządzanie w Kulturze*, vol. 15, no. 3 (2014), pp. 321-334; B. Sura, "Znak Dziedzictwa Europejskiego jako narzędzie konstruowania dziedzictwa", *Studia Etnologiczne i Antropologiczne*, no. 14 (2014), pp. 58-66.

two objects are the World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 in Łuźna-Pustki and the Military Cemetery in Łambinowice. The last EHL granted to a Polish object belongs to Werkbund housing estate in Wrocław.

Overall, EHLs serve as a tool for negotiating and renegotiating the past. As such, they have created space for narratives that is not monopolized by one entity. Instead, they stimulate understanding of what is shared. That is why Oriane Calligaro⁹ believes that European heritage can be seen as a tool to counteract populism, which now threaten simple mentation of European values in some member states. Understandably, Polish EHLs could also serve this goal. They can offer an impulse to multi-cultural dialogue and thereby lead to what is called “Europeanisation of heritage.”

Below, we present the analysis of all six Polish EHLs as well as the models that their operators apply to promote cultural heritage education.

2. EHL-BASED EDUCATION

As stated above, the EHL program is aimed at exposing richness, diversity and common elements of European culture. Thus, we can argue that EHLs aim at transferring historical memory to build a European community. This understanding of the role memory is in line with the thinking of Jan Assmann,¹⁰ who theorized a socially conditioned interpretation of the past.

The decision of the European Parliament defined the aims of the EHL program and its functions. Precisely, it is meant to help build relations, or ties, between European nations, contribute to development of cultures of EU member states, contribute to greater respect of national and regional diversity, promote European values, such as freedom, democracy, human rights, tolerance and solidarity as well as stress the importance of common cultural heritage. The aim of the program is also to deepen knowledge about European heritage and popularize it, especially among young people. Thereby the program is meant to strengthen the sense of belonging to the European community and intensify intercultural dialogue.

The authors of the EHL program stressed the educational importance of the Labels which should benefit all Europeans. The language of the European Parliament’s decision presented in Article 3 points to two goals of European heritage education. On the one hand, through EHL European educators can raise awareness about common history and heritage, which can be interpreted as promotion of the so-called “uni-memory.” This idea of one shared memory is not yet free of interpretation problems. Kansteiner puts it this way: *I am doubtful about the existence of a European collective memory because it is not as yet reproduced in a similar fashion in everyday lives across Europe.*¹¹

⁹ O. Calligaro, “From ‘European Cultural Heritage’ to ‘Cultural Diversity’? The Changing Core Values of European Cultural Policy”, *Politique européenne*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2014), pp. 60-85.

¹⁰ J. Assmann, “Kollektives und kulturelles Gedächtnis. Zur Phänomenologie und Funktion von Gegen-Erinnerung”, in U. Borsdorf, H.T. Grütter (eds), *Orte der Erinnerung. Denkmal, Gadenstätte, Museum*, Frankfurt am Main–New York 1999.

¹¹ W. Kansteiner, “Finding Meaning in Memory...”

On the other hand, the EHL program aims at deepening intercultural dialogue and synergy, and recognizes the value of diversity. This in turn, can be interpreted as promotion of pluralistic memory. This idea in turn assumes implementation of such values as multiculturalism, multilingualism, and religious plurality. Application of this belief allows us to include different, at times contradictory, historical perspectives in our academic and non-academic reflections.

These different perspectives can vary between countries and are determined by national sources and context. This observation is in line with Hans-Georg Gadamer's¹² historical philosophy which assumes that plurality of cultures and nations explains why there are different interpretations of the past. Thus, education based on pluralistic memory narrative also allows for many perspectives to be used in explaining historical facts. Most importantly, it facilitates both better understanding of history and existence of its different interpretations.

Yet, Gadamer did not differentiate between understanding and acceptance, which was pointed out by Veronica Vasterling¹³. Her observation is of crucial importance for the understanding of pluralistic memory. Specifically, while relying on pluralistic memory means an ability to take into account different perspectives, it is not tantamount to acceptance of diversity. And yet the purpose of education focused on building pluralistic memory is to teach tolerance and acceptance of diverse visions of the past. It may make history more complex, but also more faithful to reality.

3. POLISH EHLS AND EHL-BASED EDUCATION IN POLAND

3.1 The Constitution of the 3 May and the Union of Lublin – PLURALISTIC MEMORY

Contemporary European memory is created first and foremost by written historical documents, which is argued by such researchers as Le Goff,¹⁴ Paul Connerton,¹⁵ and Adam Schaff.¹⁶

In Poland, the proclamation of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 was preceded by the establishment of the Commission of National Education in 1773. This was the first central and secular educational authority in Europe operating under the auspices of the king. The importance of this institution for the further cultural and social transformation of the Polish state cannot be underestimated. Seen as the first step towards large social changes, it was also an inspiration for many European countries. *As first in*

¹² H.G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, London–New York 2006.

¹³ V. Vasterling, "Postmodern Hermeneutics? Toward a Critical Hermeneutics", in L. Code (ed.), *Feminist Interpretations of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, Pennsylvania 2003.

¹⁴ J. Le Goff, *History and Memory*, New York 1992.

¹⁵ P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge 2010.

¹⁶ A. Schaff, *Geschichte und Wahrheit*, Vienna 1970.

*Europe, this central educational authority was not based on any earlier model and had to establish a path for itself with its own creativity and at times difficult experiences.*¹⁷ The commission was a political instrument of national revival, in line with the belief of René de Caradeuc de La Chalotais, who stated that good educational organizations are important for positive social developments and as such should be under the influence of the state and not the church. The commission defined science and its role in the state's development in a very modern way. The reform of education which it proposed envisioned that well-educated citizens would be able to work for the homeland and adequately respond to both external and internal challenges. This new educational model was a reflection of the achievements of the European Enlightenment, especially its definition of humanism and rational social order. It also profited from the French and German education reforms.

As a result of the changes that were introduced by the commission, a new civic culture emerged in the Polish state. Everybody, regardless of their social class, was taught critical thinking, justice, tolerance, righteousness, punctuality, honesty and respect for property. Emotions such as bitterness and fanatic beliefs were rooted out. This new model of education attracted a generation of activists who saw the need for rebuilding of the then deteriorating state. The gradual changes that they proposed for system reform led to the proclamation of the Constitution of 3 May. Thus, it is often argued that the Constitution was aimed at reforming the state through education.

The authors of the Constitution, led by King of Poland and Duke of Lithuania Stanislaus II Augustus, were all well-travelled and well-educated. They were acquainted with the American constitution and the draft of the French constitution. They also knew the language of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. The king himself travelled to many European cities where he got familiar with the philosophy of Enlightenment and British parliamentary system. The political elite in Europe was also impressed with the Polish reforms. Based on its example, they introduced their own reforms. Thus, as early as four months after the proclamation of the Constitution of 3 May, France also proclaimed its constitution.

Evidently, the Constitution of 3 May should not be seen as a written document only. It is a symbol of a historical event which should be seen as a watershed in Europe's history. Arguably, the proclamation of this first European constitution could even be seen as a non-violent revolution which inspired similar acts throughout Europe. Most importantly, it recognized the people as "the only source of authority in the state" and introduced separation of powers. The Constitution also stipulated equality of all citizens, regardless of their nationality, in regards to law and guaranteed religious freedom for all. For these reasons the first Polish constitution was granted EHL as an important contribution to European heritage.

The director of Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, which is the institution that houses the Constitution, is of the opinion that the granting of the EHL to this historical document was an important impulse to develop educational activities

¹⁷ S. Kot, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773-1794*, Kraków 1923.

aimed at popularizing both the importance of the Constitution of 3 May and the EHL. These activities were both virtual and physical, and included: exhibits (permanent and temporary) which were showed in different cities, public readings of the constitution, guided walking tours, production of educational films, preparation of lesson plans and teaching materials, workshops for teachers, academic conferences, etc. Some of these activities were undertaken in cooperation with Lithuania, which was meant to expand the awareness that the Constitution of 3 May was proclaimed in the shared state of Poland and Lithuania, which at that time was called the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The above mentioned activities are also meant to facilitate teaching about European heritage based on the idea of pluralistic memory. In the view of the director of the archives, it is actually impossible to use the Constitution of 3 May to promote a solely national memory. The fact that the constitution was proclaimed by a federation of states, namely Poland and Lithuania but also Belarus and Ukraine, and that its day is celebrated in a few different locations shows that this historical fact cannot be interpreted through the prism of Polish history and heritage only.

The Union of Lublin is another Polish EHL. Signed in 1569, it was an agreement to establish a federation, which became known as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and which took the form of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state. As such it lasted until the third partition of Poland in 1795.

The years of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth mark also the history of a state which guarantees civic liberties as well as freedom of political views and religion. This fact, although praiseworthy, should not hide the fact that the commonwealth was also negatively affected by numerous problems, including internal political fights. Therefore, its memory should also include critical components and not be limited to glorification only.

Indeed, the Union of Lublin and the commonwealth that it created are often presented as a prototype of the European Union, mainly because of the federalist component.¹⁸ Keeping this interpretation in mind, we would argue that it is better to look at this even through a different prism, namely Europe's uni-memory. Or, more precisely, through the prism of a uni-memory of one specific part of Europe – the region of Central and Eastern Europe. As evidenced by the numerous educational and academic projects that are organized around the topic of the union and the commonwealth, this memory is pluralistic and not limited to one or two states only.

Also, the narratives that emerged about the union after the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and which were influenced by the 19th century developments, especially the nationalistic movements and the wars that erupted in Europe, explain why we have different interpretations of this historic event. First of all, each state that was once part of the commonwealth subordinated the narrative about this state to its own historical policy. In Poland, for example, it was argued that the republic was in fact a Polish state. *Too easily* – argues Kłoczowski – *the multinational character of the*

¹⁸ J. Kłoczowski, *Unia Lubelska. Lublin – miasto Unii*, transl. by W. Horabik, Lublin 2019.

*commonwealth was eliminated through this simplistic picture, and sometimes it went as far as denying the existence of the other nations: the Lithuanians, the Belarusians or the Ukrainians.*¹⁹ Evidently, Polish historical policy exploited the idea of Poland's greatness during this period.

The other states opposed this narrative and developed their own interpretations. They often present the period of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as that of a strong cultural domination of Poland. Also the 20th century disputes, wars and totalitarianisms led to new tensions in relations between the four states (Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus) that are the commonwealth's heirs. As a result, a more nationalistic discourse²⁰ was built around mutual history and individual national narratives became increasingly distant from one another. It was only during the transformation period that started in the late 1980s and early 1990s that we could see the first mentions of the need to present history of the commonwealth not through the prism of one state, but by searching for ways to reconciliation with other states.

This meant abandoning the myth of lost lands and replacing it with a discourse that stresses the need to build good neighborly relations between Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus. Driven by such belief, representatives of all heirs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth met in Rome in 1990 where they agreed that completing national narratives with perspectives of other states would give a fuller picture of the past. Later on, in the 21st century, Poland and Lithuania's membership in the European Union only strengthened dialogue between these two states and resulted in many mutual meetings and initiatives. Kłoczkowski²¹ believes that it also "outlined the obvious need to start comparative research into southern areas of Central and Eastern Europe, meaning Czechia, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia and Romania." It was the beginning of creating a shared (not uni-) memory of Central and Eastern Europe.

Nationalistic historical narratives are not tantamount to national stories. The former are meant to monopolize history and give ground to xenophobic ideas, while the latter are one of the many ways to interpret the past. As such, they fit the EU principle of "unity in diversity."

As evidenced by our research, granting EHL to the Union of Lublin has contributed to the debate among Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian and Belarusian historians on the importance of the Union of Lublin series of educational activities. They are undertaken by both the city of Lublin and a Polish high school (also in Lublin) which is named after the Union of Lublin. Among these activities are various workshops and competitions.

The Union of Lublin is a part of Polish school curricula, which makes working with the EHL easier for educators. However, the Lublin high school is the only secondary

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Nationalism here and below is understood following the understanding of conservative, right-wing political groups in Poland as worshipping one's own nation and treating other nations in a way that diminishes their values.

²¹ J. Kłoczkowski, *Unia Lubelska...*

school in Poland which is named after this event and probably the only one which in its everyday work promotes the idea of the federation and the values that were cherished in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Its pupils are also engaged in promoting the heritage of the union among preschoolers for whom they prepare different activities and organize comic book competitions. Most importantly, teachers who are assigned to oversee these activities admit that they ensure that different perspectives are included in presented narratives. To achieve that, they engage youth from other states that once belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Educational activities focused on the Union of Lublin are also run by the city of Lublin which co-operates with the city of Vilnius in promoting values of the republic. Illustratively, both city centers have installed internet connections which allowed their residents to see each other. This project was envisioned to establish a virtual bridge between Poland and Lithuania that points to the relationship existing between both nations and their shared roots in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Both of the above discussed EHLs serve two goals. On the one hand, they present historical events as a source of inspiration, which is important for the present time and the future. On the other hand, they also show that history can be presented through a plethora of voices and without pointing out who is right. Most importantly, history can teach us about European values, such as integration, federation of states, multiculturalism and religion freedom.

These EHLs should also be seen both as having a local and global impact. In Lublin, for example, thanks to some EHL-based activities, it was reported that some pupils admitted that they had stopped seeing themselves as second-category EU citizens. They changed their thinking after realizing that their city also played an important role in European history, which allowed them to link their local identity with a sense of belonging to Europe.

3.2 EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CENTRE – one place, three educational models

The European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk is a place where culture is not seen as an artistic event but as *a value sphere and a tool to build civic society, which is now needed in Poland (...)*. [It] is an attempt to build a new quality of civic life in the city, which we attempt through the narrative of our permanent exhibition and the high level of our cultural, educational and academic projects.²²

Historically, the area of the shipyard is important for both Polish and European memory. That is why the third EHL in Poland was awarded to the European Solidarity Centre (ECS) in Gdańsk, which is located on the premises of the historic Gdańsk shipyard. As it is also articulated by Basil Kerski,²³ the director of the center, the ECS mission is to commemorate the legacy of *Solidarność*, which was the largest social

²² B. Kerski, "Idea", in *Europejskie Centrum Solidarności. Portret pierwszego dziesięciolecia*, Gdańsk 2017.

²³ B. Kerski, "Modern Europe – forged in the Gdańsk Shipyard", *New Eastern Europe*, no. 5(LIII) (2022), pp. 136-144.

movement in the socialist bloc and which started the peaceful transformation in Europe, one that *led to a fundamental change on the continent's political map*. The non-violent nature of this transformation allowed the British historian, Timothy Garton Ash,²⁴ to call it a refo-lution which meant it was based on reforms and negotiations.

In the film titled *European Heritage Label for Gdańsk Shipyard*, Kerski says that the EHL *shows that you can fight for your freedom by thinking about the political situation of other nations. You can only be effective if you are not only thinking about your own interests. If you are thinking about the whole European order – and that is the philosophy of Solidarność*.²⁵ It is this philosophy that has been awarded the EHL and at the same time allowed for the commemoration of the place which pays tribute to the history of the peaceful revolution.

As widely known, the Solidarity movement contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union by setting up foundations for a modern state and political emancipation in the region of Central and Eastern Europe in the post-war period.²⁶ This movement also helped establish international cooperation both within the communist bloc and between East and West. As Kerski notices, *it was an attempt to build a new pluralistic reality, an alliance of citizens aimed at defending human rights*.²⁷ Thus, ECS educators use EHL in their work to teach about the movement's history and tradition, but also to build trust and a sense of community.

Since having been granted the EHL, the European Solidarity Centre has strongly concentrated on European-focused education. However, it needs to be also stated that the European perspective was part of the center's mission from the beginning, as it is even expressed in the name of the institution. That is why, in the view of its educators, ECS has a privileged position compared to other EHLs in Poland.

Even though the EHL has been granted to ECS's permanent exhibition, it is clear that the most important element of the center's educational activities is the narrative of common European values. This means promotion of dialogue, partnership, overcoming barriers and divisions. Together with the educators, participants of ECS activities, who represent different age groups and backgrounds, attempt to collectively come to an understanding of who today's Europeans are. They take part in discussions about Europe, which suggests that ECS promotes the idea of a uni-memory. The educators thus stress the value of pluralistic memory, which is not necessarily understood in horizontal (international) terms, but also vertically and locally. Overall, pluralistic memory allows for different opinions and value systems to coexist. It also fits the model of education which exposes "our" experiences, suggesting that history belongs to a wide community.

²⁴ T.G. Ash, *Wiosna obywateli. Rewolucja 1989 widziana w Warszawie, Budapeszcie, Berlinie i Pradze*, transl. by A. Husarska, Kraków 2019.

²⁵ Europejskie Centrum Solidarności / Gdańsk, *Znak Dziedzictwa Europejskiego. Historyczna Stocznia Gdańska*, 6 October 2021, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXpqlGRDh6U>, 6 June 2022.

²⁶ A. Trzeciak, *Nieopowiedziana historia Stoczni Gdańskiej*, in A. Trzeciak (ed.), *Stocznia Gdańska. Miejsca, ludzie, historie*, Gdańsk 2019.

²⁷ B. Kerski, "Modern Europe..."

As part of its educational activities ECS does not only organize lessons and workshops, but also thematic walks and meetings with history witnesses. It also supports NGOs and local projects. Equally importantly, it engages in programs for immigrants. In this way, ECS stimulates civic activism and counteracts nationalistic understanding of citizenship.

Matter of fact, EHL awarded to the Historic Gdańsk Shipyard has in fact been granted to four different objects. The Label was granted based on the application prepared by the European Solidarity Centre in 2013, although not all of the objects are currently under ECS's auspices. For instance, the Historical Gate Number 2 and the Monument to the Fallen Shipyard Workers are under the auspices of the city of Gdańsk, while the BHP Hall has been, since 2019, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the newly established Solidarity Heritage Institute. The latter promotes historical narrative that is in line with the official policy of the current Polish authorities and that inclines a Polish-centered, nationalistic interpretation. The mission of this institution, established in parallel to ECS, is to commemorate the memory of the independent trade union "Solidarity" and promote it in Poland and abroad. The works of the institute primarily focus on the August 1980 Accords.

The EHL awarded to the Historic Gdańsk Shipyard thus points to two different narratives that are being developed in regards to the same events, historical figures and their world visions. While one narrative is focused on building a uni-memory, the second is subordinate to the official interpretation of the past aimed at creating a nationalistic Polish identity.

3.3 World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 in Łużna-Pustki and Military Cemetery in Łambinowice – global uni-memory and uni-memory vs. national memory

Violetta Rezler-Wasielewska²⁸ notes that for a long time historians have not been interested in the history of prisoners of war. When they started looking into this topic, they usually focused on one camp. This however can lead to finding some aspects of the POW history that go beyond national interpretation and are universal. Such is the case of the Military Cemetery in Łambinowice, which has also been awarded EHL. This site includes the premises of a former prisoner camp, military cemeteries and a monument commemorating the soldiers. The site is unique as it has also been a witness to border changes, escalation of military conflicts and breaching of human rights in labor camps which affected both the civilians and the POWs. During the First and Second World Wars, Łambinowice were the location of the biggest POW camp where around 300,000 soldiers of different nationalities were kept by the Germans and where around 40,000 of them were buried in mass graves.

²⁸ V. Rezler-Wasielewska, "Wstęp", in V. Rezler-Wasielewska (ed.), *Między Wehrmachtem a SS. Jeńcy wojenni w niemieckich obozach koncentracyjnych*, Opole 2010.

In 1946, Polish communist authorities opened in Łambinowice a labor camp for German-speaking population of the Silesia region who were later relocated to Germany. At that time, around 5,000 prisoners stayed at the camp. Around 1,500 of them died. Thus, in Łambinowice the memory of Nazi crimes intermingles with the memory of communist crimes. Joanna Lusek²⁹ claims that although for many years the history of this place divided Poles and Germans, today it has a symbolic meaning – that of the Polish-German reconciliation.

What differentiates Łambinowice from other similar memory places is a complicated, multi-layer history of this place. In fact, Łambinowice has been recognized as a witness of traumatic experiences of European significance. Thus, it would be difficult to present the history of this place through the prism of one national narrative. The monuments erected here commemorate the memory of victims who represented different nationalities and who lost lives during different wars.

More than anything else, Łambinowice serves as a witness to repetition of wars, violence and discrimination. That is why the museum created an education program that focuses on human rights, the Geneva Convention, repressions, refugees, and the victimhood of children in military conflicts. It also explores the topic on the universal mechanism of violence and aggression. Museum educators, by adopting the “education through memory” program, organize different competitions, meetings with witnesses, field games, workshops, walks, and classes during which they show that wars tend to be recurring and that there is a certain universality in their causes and courses. During these activities they also stress the need for civic education, indicating that history can serve as a starting point in this process.

One of the educators told us during an interview that in her view the topics that the museum pursues in its educational activities explore the complexity of human nature and are not limited to Europe only. Thus, during the activities that she organizes for the youth, she does not limit her interpretation to European or Polish history, but tries to show violence as a global problem. Based on her observations, we can say that the EHL in Łambinowice addresses the topic of global history of evil and commemorates the victims of aggression and human rights violations. The activities that are run by the museum’s education department allow their participants to expand their historical knowledge but also cultural and social skills. Also importantly, educational activities organized here allow for creating a uni-memory of evil and show that many stories about different nationalities can be told in one place.

Seemingly, the World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 in Łużna-Pustki has a similar educational potential. This place, located near Gorlice, is a burial site of the soldiers who fell at the largest battle in World War I’s eastern front. Known as “small Verdun,” this battle was of key importance for the further course of the war in this region. It allowed for the breaking through the Russian front and the start of the Central Powers’ offensive. During the fight, around 200 thousand soldiers lost their lives,

²⁹ J. Lusek, “Po wojnie – świat bez przemocy? Pamięć o powojennych obozach pracy i wysiedleniach w działalności Centralnego Muzeum Jędrzejów Wojennych w Łambinowicach-Opolu”, *Niepodległość i Pamięć*, vol. 62, no. 2(25) (2018), pp. 225-244.

including 150 thousand on the Russian side. Out of them 1204 are buried at the cemetery here.

This place has been awarded the EHL because it is regarded as the largest burial site on the territory of former Western Galicia. The fallen soldiers who are buried here served in different armies, including the German and Austro-Hungarian army, and were of different nationalities (Austrians, Bosnians, Poles, Romanians, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Russians and Jews). They also represented different religious denominations. All of them were buried in one place in individual graves or in mass graves but with consideration to the country of origin, religion or army they served in. A separate burial site was created for unknown soldiers.

The burial ceremonies were conducted both with respect to soldiers' religious beliefs and bravery but also in accordance with the aesthetics of this ecumenical place. Thus, the architecture of the place can also be regarded as an expression of its multicultural heritage. The cemetery was designed by two well-known architects from Poland and Slovakia. Each of them designed a different part: Jan Szczepkowski is the author of the gates and the monument in the Russian part, while Dušan Jurkovič is the author of the chapel and some monuments. In their work, they both made references to local and old Slavic aesthetics. In the opinion of Agnieszka Partridge,³⁰ these two artists were directly influenced by European art. They used some ancient motives, but were also inspired by Renaissance, Romanticism, and Classicism. It should be thus stressed that the ecumenical nature, democratic values and lack of unnecessary pathos are what make the message of this place truly European.

The military cemetery in Łużna-Pustki also presents two parallel historical narratives. On the one hand, the story of the site is a part of a larger European history – as the First World War had a large influence on the creation of Europe in its current shape. It allows us to understand the value of peace which is built through the European project. On the other hand, this place is also deeply rooted in Polish history. It commemorates the memory of those who fought in the 1914-1918 war which had a strong impact on Poland's history and identity. It was after this war that Poland regained independence after 123 of lost statehood. However, during the communist times, the history of this war was overshadowed by what happened during the Second World War and as such was pushed into oblivion. The renewal of interest in the First World War started in the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, after the collapse of communism in 1989, the memory of these places started to come to the surface and attract the researchers' attention.

Overall, it can be said that the World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 in Łużna-Pustki combines a few memories: a pan-national, a European, a national and a local memory. Which of them is exposed in educational activities organized at the site depends on who runs them. Among the institutions that work here is an NGO called Fundacja Plenerowa (Field Foundation). It focuses on the promotion and protection of cultural heritage, education and cultural animations. Its staff prepares lesson plans

³⁰ A. Partridge, *Otwórzcie bramy pamięci: cmentarze wojenne z lat 1914-1918 w Małopolsce*, Kraków 2005.

about the cemetery which include references to European heritage. This approach is based on the belief in the shared history of all Europeans and adherence to European values, such as respect of human dignity, freedom, justice, trust and human rights. In addition, it presents the cemetery as an example of ecumenism. The European education based on the EHL is further facilitated by the language courses organized in this area as well as collective cleaning of the cemetery or multi-denominational prayers.

Local elementary school, which also runs education activities about the cemetery, has a different agenda. It puts emphasis on the national and local heritage of this place and tries to build patriotism by commemorations of the battle that took place here but also other events from Poland's history, for example its baptism or the regaining of independence. The school also focuses on Catholic values and the promotion of the teaching of the late John Paul II.

3.4. WuWa in Wrocław – bi-memory accepted

The last EHL in Poland, which was granted to the WuWa housing estate in Wrocław, is quite different. The architecture of this place is regarded as an example of a style which emerged as a result of social protests and changes in the 1920s and 1930s.³¹ At that time, the role of architects also changed. Thus, the authors of WuWa wanted to *contribute to the creation of a new urban lifestyle*, and search for *positive space*.³² They wanted their estate to fit the residents' individual needs and be of high artistic value at the same time.

WuWa estates are modernist estates which were created from 1927 to 1932 in six European cities: Stuttgart, Brno, Prague, Vienna, Zurich and today's Wrocław. The latter, which during the Weimar period, was called Breslau and belonged to Germany, was a liberal and modernist city. Historians Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse state that it was a part of the avant-garde and as such had a *good starting position for further development*.³³ Yet, the main challenge for the city was how to improve living conditions for its residents. The answer was the proposal of WuWa architects. Their design met the needs that emerged after the First World War.

WuWA estates were supposed to adjust housing construction to a changing society and as such were addressed to different social groups – lower-income, one person households, childless married couples, and the better-off. They were also meant to fit a new family model which was related to women's emancipation. Thus, in 1929, during the Second International Congress of Modern Architecture, Walter Gropius proposed estates with childcare facilities. The architects of the WuWA estate in Breslau also followed this idea. They proposed that the estate would include a modern kindergarten.

³¹ J. Urbanik, *Droga ku nowoczesności. Osiedla Werkbundu 1927-1932*, Wrocław 2016.

³² Ibid.

³³ N. Davies, R. Moorhouse, *Mikrokosmos. Portret miasta środkowoeuropejskiego. Vratislavia, Breslau, Wrocław*, transl. by A. Pawelec, Kraków 2011.

The WuWa estate is a small complex which even today is little known to Wrocławians. Thus, one of the goals of the activities organized in the framework of the EHL is to support neighborly relations between the city residents. Another goal of the EHL is to show that times have changed and Wrocław residents should accept their city's heritage, which is not always a Polish heritage. That is why the EHL-based educational activities concentrate on Breslau heritage. In this way, they expose the plurality of the city's history. These activities are organized by Wrocław's Museum of Architecture, which prepares urban games, among other things.

The WuWa example shows that teaching about heritage can be regarded as a social insight into the past. This EHL promotes a historical narrative that is reconstructed. It depends on different perspectives, which are driven by emotions and subject to different judgements, value systems and ethical principles.³⁴ For many years, the dominating narrative about this place was a Polish (or Polonised to be more precise) narrative. This put the German past to oblivion, even though there were still many physical traces of the German Breslau. It was only in the first years of the 21st century when the German past returned to the city's history and also Polish history. In this way, the story of Wrocław and Breslau got linked together, and turned into a sort of a hybrid, while the heritage of the city took a very pluralistic form. As a result, today's Wrocław is a city with the history of two cultures, two languages and two architectural traditions.

4. SUMMARY

In Poland, ELHs play several roles in regards to education. First, they promote pacifism and integration, but they also point to the value of democracy and separation of powers. They also show the important contribution of Central Europe to promoting tolerance and pluralistic societies that derive from the ideals of the Enlightenment. This part of European history is less known in the West, where Central European states are unjustly seen as stuck in a post-feudal mentality. The essence of the educational dimension of Polish EHLs is thus to help young generations enter the path of a conciliatory Europe. This could be achieved through a historical narrative that is built as a result of negotiations about the past and fits the ideal of pluralistic memory.

EHL is used in educational activities by teachers, label operators as well as non-governmental organizations that have attempted a revision of national narratives about the past. Inclusion of a European perspective shows into historical analysis how inadequate one-sided (national or even nationalistic) interpretations are. It shows that history requires a much more complex approach. Its understanding requires revision of existing narratives and replacing them with a new memory discourse. This discourse, in turn, requires combining, contrasting and comparing different memories. It also calls

³⁴ C. Coffin, "Reconstructions of the Past – Settlement or Invasion: The Role of JUDGEMENT Analysis", in J.R. Martin, R. Wodak (eds), *Re/reading the Past: Critical and Functional Perspectives on Time and Value*, Amsterdam–Philadelphia 2003.

for inclusion of new perspectives, even forgotten or erased memories. Recognition of a broader European heritage of a place or event allows us to create a new memory policy and a new model of teaching about the past.

Thus, education based on EHL is a form of transmission of memory of European heritage. It promotes uni-memory, which is local and as such European, but also regional. It also allows a bi-memory, meaning an inclusion of erased memory into the mainstream. Finally, it contributes to the creation of a pluralistic memory, which is based on dialogue and made of different perspectives.

Based on the above presented Polish examples, we can see how the EHL operators can push the European narrative into the background, be it for political reasons or lack of interest in the EHL program. Thus, although the goal of EHL is an element of a pro-European education, in Poland its implementation depends on the will and intentions of the Label operators.

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