

## The return of Poles from France and Belgium and Their Adaptation in the Post-War Reality of the Polish People's Republic in the Memory of Returnees and Their Families (1945 – 1975)

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**Abstract** | Background: The return of Poles from France and Belgium was one of the most significant migratory movements in the post-war history of Poland. From the end of military operations in 1945, the communist authorities of Poland began to appeal to Poles residing in France and Belgium to return to their homeland. Objectives: The aim of this article is to show, from the perspective of the Dąbek, Pawlik and Szotek families, how those returning from France and Belgium met with the realities of communist Poland. A common denominator among these three families is not only the longing for their home country, but also their decision to return under the influence of propaganda, and then a very perceptible feeling of “otherness” on their return to their home country. Experiences tied to making the decision to return to the homeland and adapting again, was something that many migrants went through in history. The particularities of oral history sources depend on giving priority to “silent” social groups: migrants, peasants, and workers. Their testimonies pass on the meaning of the event to the interviewer, not information about it, therefore, in their fundamental function they supply additional material from which a historian can compose the structures of historical meaning. The starting point for consideration is 1945, when, Aniela Szotek decided to return to Poland with her children. 1975 marks the ending point, when the elders of the Dąbek family decided to leave Poland forever. The longing played the most important role in the decision made by Alina Szotek. In turn, the Dąbek, Kulis and Pawlik families decided to return from France, influenced by campaigning from the Polish community organizations there, as well as assurances from acquaintances about the then conditions in Poland. The returnees considered conditions in Poland to be primitive and difficult. It is no wonder that they were overcome with feelings of hopelessness and regret at the decision to return to Poland. They experienced “civilizational shock,” they were hurt by unjustified aversion and hostility from other Poles, but also due to the fact that other Poles were jealous of them as ‘wealthy’ individuals. Moreover, an inadequate knowledge of Polish and worse living conditions, and the increasingly – as felt by “Frenchmen” (as those who came from France and Belgium were called) – tense Polish-French relations and the growing “spy-mania” hysteria also did nothing to ease their adaptation process. Conclusion: The feelings of “otherness” and “strangeness” through their stay on French and Belgian soil turned out to be strong enough upon their return to prevent their integration into the culture of their native country. In coming to Belgium or northern France they were called “Poles,” but upon their return, they were called “Frenchmen” by their compatriots.

**Keywords** | Poles in France and Belgium, migration, returns, adaptation, oral history

## Background

The changes in Poland's borders after 1945, the incorporation of the Recovered Territories and the acquisition of the coal mines located there, as well as multi-hectare, post-German properties, led the authorities in Warsaw to speak up in Paris and Belgium for the Polish citizens employed in those mines and farms. It was obvious to the Polish government that the "forces from France and Belgium" would play a meaningful role in the development of Poland's industries, so it guaranteed Polish workers worthy employment and living conditions[1].

## Objectives

The aim of this article is to show, from the perspective of the families D., P. and Sz., how those returning from France and Belgium met with the realities of communist Poland. In the course of research conducted on the return of Poles from France and Belgium, the author met with a dozen or so accounts of families who returned and who, before coming to Poland, had lived in French and Belgium in mining settlements called "corons". Using the method of representative sampling, well-known in the oral history technique, she selected the respondents by method of representative sampling; since the aim was to create a representative group of families arriving in the Recovered Territories from these two Francophone countries.

By creating a „snowball chain"[2], the author met with three families who, unlike the information in the available administrative sources and scientific studies, which report the settlement of returning compatriots in the country in dense mining and agricultural clusters, e.g., Wałbrzych, Zabrze, Bytom[3], were settled far from such clusters. Moreover, a common denominator among these three families is not only the longing for their home country, but also their decision to return being under the influence of propaganda, and their very perceptible feeling of "otherness" in their home country. Disillusioned with life in Poland, they again experienced nostalgia – this time for their second homeland of France and Belgium.

Therefore, from a historical point of view, the oral history testimonies cited, supplementing the analysis of administrative documents, allows us to broaden the knowledge on the subject of everyday life in communist Poland. The interview with the family Sz. and the questionnaires from the families D. and P. were conducted and obtained with due diligence. Due to the protection of their personal data, the initials of their first and last names have been used in the article.

The starting point for these considerations is 1945, when, after the end of the World War II, economically and demographically-ruined Poland began to speak up in Paris and Brussels for Polish workers in businesses and mining companies in those countries. This is also the year that A. Sz. decided to return to Poland with her children. 1975 marks the ending point, when the elders of the family D. decided to leave Poland forever.

## State of research

Research on the subject of the returns[4] and resettlements of Poles after World War II and their adaptation processes has produced a rich literature[5]. In the case of the return of fellow Poles from France and Belgium, it is easy to notice that in the collective memory of Poles, the migration from Belgium is treated as one in the same with Poles returning from France. This results from the fact that in both of these migrant destination countries, French was used, and Poles mainly found employment in mines. The lower visibility of arrivals from Belgium was also influenced by the absence of proper bilateral agreements between Warsaw and Brussels along the lines of those signed with Paris[6].

The obvious disproportion in diaries and reminiscences[7], archival sources accessible in Poland, and especially oral accounts, do not clearly indicate vectors of return from both Francophone countries. In the online databases of oral history archives, above all, the testimonies of those returning from France are available[8]. Only in the Archives of the “Remembrance and Future” Centre in Wrocław, can we find the account of W. G., who returned from Belgium[9]. Several accounts of communist activists from Belgium are stored in the collections of the Testimonies and Accounts Department of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party (KC PZPR) in the New Files Archive in Warsaw, ref. No. R-246.

Experiences tied to making the decision to return to the homeland and adapting again, was something that many migrants went through in history. The particularities of oral history sources depend on them giving priority to “silent” social groups, including migrants, peasants, and workers. Their testimonies pass on the meaning of the event to the interviewer, not information about it, therefore, in their fundamental function they supply additional material from which a historian can compose the structures of historical meaning[10]. They cannot be rejected just because they do not factor into the “sacrosanct facto-graphical canon,” since the accounts of “lesser mortals” do not concentrate on “great” events, but rather on the daily routine[11].

In the case of migration studies, it should be remembered that a critical analysis of the literature and administrative sources does not give a full account of the life of a migrant in the country of settlement, and after their return to their home country. This is also why the author of the article used it as the main factor to highlight the subject of the returns of Poles from France and Belgium, as well as their adaptation into the post-war reality in the memories of the returnees and their families, since the participants in the events supply information about which administrative reports, and the subject literature is silent[12]. However, from a historical point of view, in order to present the fates of families, it was essential to analyze academic studies, archival sources and the available memoir material.

## **Adaptation to the Communist Reality in Poland in the Memory of Returnees and Their Families**

### *Returns*

The dilemma “to return or stay?” was experienced by almost every Polish family in France and Belgium. The longing for the homeland resounded strongly in these tempestuous discussions. This is precisely what played the most important role in the decision made by A. Sz., who in 1942, after the death of her husband, not seeing a future for herself in Belgium, decided to return to Poland with her children in 1945, even before bilateral actions in the matter of organizing returns from Belgium to Poland were taken[13]. In turn, the families D.<sup>[14]</sup> K. and P.<sup>[15]</sup> decided to return from France, influenced by campaigning from the Polish community organizations there (including the National Council of Poles in France), as well as assurances from acquaintances about conditions in Poland[16].

Despite the reluctance of the French government towards losing qualified personnel in mines and on farms (miners, farmers and industrial workers), the return was possible thanks to four Polish-French agreements concluded between Warsaw and Paris: 20 February, 10 September, 28 November 1946 and 24 February 1948[17]. As far as the legal framework delineating the return of Polish workers from Belgium, the situation presented itself differently, since the Belgian authorities were unwilling to reach agreements as those signed with France[18]. Brussels – like Paris – was averse to the idea of Polish miners returning to their homeland, even though they did not formally question their legal right to return at their discretion[19]. In France, the returns back home were

organized by the Polish-French Mixed Commission [*Komisja Mieszana Polsko-Francuska*], while in Belgium it was with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Brussels, in agreement with the Belgian Commissioner for Repatriation (*Commissaire Belge au Rapatriement*). Transport was by train, and the train routes ran through occupied Germany as well as Czechoslovakia. The trains ended their journey at border crossings: for returnees from France, in Międzylesie in Upper Silesia, and from Belgium in Czechowice-Dziedzice. It was also where those returning to the country had their French and Belgian passports taken away[20].

The family D. (consisting of J. D. and M. K. and their sons E. D., L. D. and Ju. D. with his wife S. B.) and the families K. and P., returned to Poland on the basis of Polish-French agreements signed in November 1946 and February 1948. The families K. and P. – in the fall of 1947 and the family D. – a year later in October/November 1948[21]. Certainly, the Polish government's guarantee of transportation was an additional motivation to say "yes." The family D. also made the decision because living conditions in post-war France were worsening: "food was gotten through coupons all the time, and in the meantime, letters were coming from friends and neighbors who had decided to return to Poland earlier, with information encouraging a return. The most important was that 'there is work in the country and apartments are waiting' "[22].

The return of the family Sz. family from Belgium, however, unfolded in a different way than those described in available sources. As it turns out from W. Sz.'s account, the family returned to Poland on the first train transport, organized by the Soviet army. The family did not have to pay anything for the trip and each member had the appropriate, Soviet travel documents issued to them. The Russians eagerly suggested that Poles staying in Belgium join the transport, since they needed to reach a total number of people before they were authorized to depart[23].

#### *Life in communist Poland*

The archival material and oral testimony analyzed shows that most of the returnees considered conditions in Poland to be primitive and difficult, and expressed regret for having left France and Belgium[24]. Z. C., the son of a miner from France, believes that the feeling of disillusionment among miners after the return was ubiquitous[25]. What is worse, returning from communist Poland to France turned out to be impossible, even for those with French citizenship. From the moment of their arrival in the country, the family D. tried to depart back to the land on the Seine, without effect. These efforts were not successful until 1973 and 1975 – when D. D., Ju. D.'s daughter was the first to leave Poland, forever, and then the seniors of the family D., J. D. and M. K. left for Bollwiller[26].

The Polish authorities were rightly concerned that the opinions of Poles returning on the first transports would influence the decisions of the Poles remaining in France and Belgium. This is confirmed by archival material and oral reports, since the family D. did this, sending a letter to their family in France right after their return (though it has not been preserved in the family archive), discouraging them from returning to the country. Concerned about the inspection of correspondence by the secret services, they described the difficult living conditions in Poland in subsequent letters under the code words "bad weather." Influenced by the disturbing news from Poland, the rest of the family D. abandoned plans to return[27].

The family D. was settled in Kędzierzyn, near Opole (they then moved to Cracow in 1960) in the vicinity of repatriates from Eastern Borderlands and settlers from central Poland[28]. Because of the industrial plants being built there, the families K. and P. were sent to Elbląg (near Gdansk), and the family Sz. returned to their home town, Ujków Stary. J. D. obtained the position of stoker and caretaker in a school in Kędzierzyn, and his son Ju. D. worked in book-keeping in Blachownia. After

moving to Cracow, Ju. D. carried out Protestant evangelization work. S. P. first obtained a job in the Heavy Machine and Turbine Factory in Elbląg (later the Karol Świerczewski "Zamech" Mechanical Works) and then worked in one of the local construction companies. In Elbląg, in January 1948, he married his fiancée, M. K. A. Sz., after leaving Ujków Stary in 1946, managed a twenty-hectare farm in Bystrzyca Kłodzka, and then, when she could no longer run such a large farm, after her father died, found work in a local match factory[29]. In material terms, the situation of Polish families was much worse than in France[30]. Ł. D. recalls that the household budget was basically saved by the J. D.'s great-grandfather's French pension, which well-exceeded wages in Poland. Even though the family finances were in better shape than their neighbors, the family D. were aided by their family in France, including through the purchases of household goods[31].

It is no wonder that the "Frenchmen" (as those who came from France and Belgium were called) were overcome with feelings of hopelessness and regret at the decision to come to Poland. They experienced "civilizational shock," they were hurt by unjustified aversion and hostility from other Poles, not only because they were fluent in several languages (e.g., the grandparents and great-grandparents of Ł. D. spoke French, German and the Alsatian dialect), but also due to the fact that other Poles were jealous of them as "wealthy individuals." They stood out with their clothing's style and quality. Not only women drew attention, but also young men and boys in their characteristic berets, jackets or scarves. Not infrequently, Poles spoke of them with jealousy, saying that "they dress French."

1. Sz.'s accounts also show that the family encountered outright ostracization from other residents. As newcomers, the family Sz. were "foreign" – they looked and behaved differently and were wealthier. To this day, he still regrets the lack of understanding among his peers for his language struggles: born and raised in Belgium, he spoke French fluently, and when speaking Polish he used feminine grammatical forms, which became an object of mockery in the Polish school.
2. B. reacted in a similar way, asking her children not to speak French outside of the house, since she kept telling them that in Poland they should speak Polish. Wary of unjustified hostility from Poles, as someone whose Polish was weak, she avoided contact with them. She only spoke French at home, but she made sure that the children mainly spoke Polish. As Ł. D. remembers, this is also a reason why her five children did not learn French at home. Thanks to S. B., who made sure to maintain her French citizenship, the family enjoyed the privilege of obtaining food packages from the French consulate during the holidays (coffee, tea, canned foods, oranges, bananas, sweets). Moreover, she also made sure that her children could also obtain French citizenship.

An inadequate knowledge of Polish and worse living conditions, the increasingly – as felt by "Frenchmen" – tense Polish-French relations and the growing "spy-mania" hysteria also did nothing to ease the adaptation process for S. P. Disillusioned with conditions in the country, which he judged to be worse than in France, at the turn of 1948/1949, he and his wife, M. P., sought to return to France through the French consulate in Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz. A meaningful piece of evidence of the lack of acceptance of life in the Stalinist reality and longing for France, is the brave but risky decision of Ju. D.'s brother – E. D. At the beginning of the 1950s he worked in the Volunteer Work Troops (OHP) during the construction of Nowa Huta. Then, along with a friend, he decided to escape to France. The "independent journey" towards France lasted three months and ended in success – E. D. reached Pulversheim. There he spent a large portion of his life in the Foreign Legion. He never returned to Poland[32]. Alongside these daily concerns for securing material needs, the "Frenchmen" also had to struggle with the investigations of the Security Service (UB), which contrasted starkly with the propagandistic slogans of Poland's communist authorities, who had called for returns to the homeland. For some, the situation turned out to be even worse if they

had French or Belgian citizenship. Every contact with relatives or friends in France and Belgium, as well as consular representatives of both countries, was seen as an indication of betrayal[33].

1. Sz. recalled that when he attended the night school in Bystrzyca, he and his friends, also born in the West (including in Canada, the United States and Belgium), avoided arrest during one of the lessons thanks to a warning from a teacher. W. Sz. also recalled that out of fear of arrests by the UB, which was intensively investigating the “French” community, there was an informal ban on communication between people who had returned from Belgium. In the Silesian coal mines where W. Sz. worked for his entire professional life, suspicion towards someone like him, born and raised in Belgium, was just as strongly expressed through accusations of sabotage[34].

False accusations of spying on behalf of the French were levelled against S. P. after a fire in hall no. 20 of the Karol Świerczewski “Zamech” Mechanical Works on the night of the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1949. The fire caused huge losses for the enterprise, the great hope for a lasting solution to employment problems and industrial development in the region. This is why it also bore serious consequences for the residents of Elbląg, since the high rank assigned to the accident by the political authorities and the UB meant that it could not have been merely relegated to the socio-economic aspects of the city. As an effect of the growing tension in international relations, the ongoing “spy-mania” and the employment of “Frenchmen” at “Zamech,” the functionaries of the Ministry of Public Security (MBP) adopted a “sabotage” thesis and proceeded to arrest innocent people (mainly “Frenchmen”). The UB carried out arrests randomly, trying to demonstrate their supposed efforts to determine the circumstances of the fire with their zeal[35]. In the collective memory and local historiography of the city, these events are called the “Elbląg affair”[36].

1. P.’s trips to the French consulate in Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz in 1948 and 1949, and his conversations with the consul at the time, René Bardet, concerning a return to France, became the basis for the UB to accuse S. P. of espionage. As M. P. said: “He is a spy because he wants to save himself [leave for France – M.P.]”[37]. In the indictment assembled, the investigators accused him of belonging to the spy network of the “chief of the French northern base” Bardet, operating on Polish territory. According to them, S. P., with “full awareness,” was to have given Bardet “information in the area of military science and the economy”[38]. In spite of the consulate’s protection, S. P. could not avoid giving testimony and admitting to cooperation with a foreign intelligence agency, which was forced through torture. Beaten, harassed and psychologically abused, he admitted to the charges, which he later retracted. It is exceptionally moving in M. P.’s reminiscence, when she showed her granddaughter, Ma. P., his destroyed identity card photo, which S. P. kept well-hidden in his sweatshirt throughout the entire period of imprisonment.

By the verdict of the Regional Military Court (WSR) in Gdańsk on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1951, S. P. was sentenced to ten years in prison[39], but later, as a result of the first manifestations of the alleviation of Stalin’s terror, he was released on the basis of the 27 April 1956 amnesty law. Four years after his release, in 1960, M. and S. P. left Poland forever, returning to France. S. P. did not want to talk about his time in prison as it was too painful for him.

## Conclusion

The histories of three families presented in this article are an example of the challenges of everyday life for economic emigrants, who, in the changing socio-political-economic conditions of their native country, which they had no control over, were forced to make the decision to first leave Poland for Germany, France, or Belgium, and then, after the end of World War II, pulled by a longing for their country, returned to it – only to ultimately experience rejection and alienation. It turned out that life in their native country was more difficult than in the countries where they had

settled – France and Belgium. Some of them, like the family P., experienced cruelties from the authorities, who only a few years earlier had encouraged their return.

Their accounts also draw attention to issues related to identity. As in the case of the “Frenchmen” settled in dense clusters, the disillusionment caused by the Stalinist reality did not allow those who lived outside the dense clusters to integrate into their country either. The feelings of “otherness” and “strangeness” known to them from their stay on French and Belgian soil, turned out to be strong enough upon their return that it prevented their integration into the culture of their native country. In other words, in the sociological context, their “otherness” and “strangeness” in post-war Poland was defined by the heritage of their native country, combined with the culture and realities of the countries from which they had returned[40]. In coming to Belgium or northern France they were called “Poles,” but upon their return, they were called “Frenchmen” by fellow Poles in their country.

Personal accounts are a very subjective look at a childhood spent in the country of birth and the realities of the Polish People’s Republic. Disillusionment caused by Stalinist realities, as Anna Kurpiel described as the “French structure of feeling” of Polish reality, generated nostalgia for the country where the returnees had spent the years of their childhood and youth[41]. This subjectivity is felt most strongly in the account of W. Sz., which resounds with regret and sorrow tied to having returned to Poland. This account contains no pleasant memories from teenage years and professional activity experienced in Poland. This personal testimony stirred up unpleasant memories. The testimony of M. P., however, told to her granddaughter seventy years after her grandfather’s trial, sounds different. The account is characterized by calmness and distancing those events, perhaps because M. P. left the place permanently and it reminded her of the arrest of her husband.

Nostalgia for the France they left dominated the family D. household, since, as Ł. D. recalls, the dream of returning to France “never left part of our family.” In 1975, the seniors of the family D. – J. and M. D. – returned to Bollwillier, two years earlier, their granddaughter – D. D., daughter of S. B. and Ju. D. – had also left Poland.

The issue of the adaptation and identity of Poles living in France and Belgium enters into Abdelmalek Sayad’s concept of “double absence.” This researcher drew attention to the exceptional legal and social situation of the children of migrants who had returned to their native land: born and raised in their parents’ destination country, they remain foreigners there; on the other hand, they also feel alienated and are in fact treated as “foreign” in the country of their parents’ birth[42].

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Because of the sensitive nature of the data collected for this study, requests to access the dataset from qualified researchers trained in human subject may be sent to [aneta.nisiobECKA@interia.pl](mailto:aneta.nisiobECKA@interia.pl).

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[3] NISIOBĘCKA, A. *Z Lens...*

[4] The author use the terms 'repatriation', 'return' and 'returnee,' to describe the migration from France and Belgium after World War II. In English, these terms are used to describe the return of both refugees and economic migrants to their native country. This differs from the terminology used in Polish in accordance with the PWN Polish Dictionary, like 're-emigration' (the return of economic emigrants) and 'repatriation' (the return of wartime emigrants).

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<https://doi.org/10.4467/25444972SMPP.21.003.13315>.

[14] The migration history of the family D. begins with M. K. and J. D., who in 1920 left the Łódź and Tarnobrzeg region in search of work in Germany. They married in 1923 in Neu Schlagsdorf, where their son Ju. D. was also born. In 1925, they decided to return to Poland. Three years later, J. D. decided to emigrate again, and on the basis of the Polish-French Convention on Immigration and Emigration from 3 September 1919, he left for France. The family D. took up residence in Bollwiller in Alsace, where J. D. went to work in the local salt mine. After several years, the family moved to Pulversheim and there their second son E. D. was born. Their oldest son, Ju. D., worked in a salt mine in 1946 and got married. His wife, S. B., came from a Polish mining family from northern France. Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021.

[15] The families K. and P. emigrated to France in the 1920s, also on the basis of the Convention. They resided in Rémy, Ribécourt, Saint-Crépin-aux-Bois and Cambronne in the Oise department. Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimony of Ma. P., correspondence of 5 July 2021.

[16] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021; Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimony of Ma. P., correspondence of 5 July 2021; Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères à La Courneuve (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in La Courneuve, hereinafter referred only as AMAE), AMAE, Série Z, Europe 1944–1960: Pologne 1944–1949, art. 85, Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à l’Ambassade de France à Londres, Paris, le 25 février 1945, fol. 12; NISIOBĘCKA, A. *Z Lens...*, pp. 120–141.

[17] NISIOBĘCKA, A. *Z Lens...*, pp. 120–204.

[18] GODDEERIS, I. *Polonia belgijska...*, pp. 151.

[19] Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych w Warszawie (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, hereinafter referred only as AMSZ), AMSZ, Fonds 22, fasc. 1, vol. 21, Letter from the chargé d’affaires a.i. in Brussels inz. Edward Bartol to the Director of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw Józef Olszewski, 25 II 1947, fol. 5–7.

[20] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021; AMSZ, Fonds 22, fasc. 1, vol. 22, Repatriation plan from Belgium for 1947, 26 February 1947, fol. 5; KULESA, A. – NISIOBĘCKA, A. The Migration of Poles..., pp. 67; NISIOBĘCKA, A. *Z Lens...*, pp. 145–244.

[21] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021; Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimony of Ma. P., correspondence of 5 July 2021.

[22] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021.

[23] Personal archives of Agnieszka Kulesa, Testimonies of W. Sz. of 12 July 2018 (Bolesław) and 14 July 2018 (Bukowno); KULESA, A. – NISIOBĘCKA, A. *The Migration of Poles...*, pp. 73–74.

[24] *W sprawie górników polskich we Francji*. In: *Narodowiec* 16–17 XII 1945, p. 3; Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021; Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimony of Ma. P., correspondence of 5 July 2021; Personal archives of Maryna Pawlik, Testimony of M. P., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dnqjtb4x5I>, Downloaded on 16 December 2021; DSH AHM, Testimony of J. G., ref. No. AHM 1138; AMAE, Europe 1944–1960, Pologne 1944–1949, art. 70, Guy Monge, Consul de France à Wrocław à Son Excellence Monsieur Robert Schuman ministre des Affaires Étrangères, Direction d'Europe, Wrocław, le 15 décembre 1948, fol. 195–196.

[25] DSH AHM, Testimony of Z. C., ref. No. AHM 1140.

[26] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021.

[27] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021.

[28] By 1960, when Ju. D. and S. B. were living in Kędzierzyn, five children were born to them: A. D. (Ł. D.'s father), D. D., Ja. D., L. D. and Jo. D. Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021.

[29] Personal archives of Agnieszka Kulesa, Testimonies of W. Sz. of 12 July 2018 (Bolesław) and 14 July 2018 (Bukowno); Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimony of Ma. P., correspondence of 5 July 2021; Personal archives of Maryna Pawlik, Testimony of M. P., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dnqjtb4x5I>, Downloaded on 16 December 2021.

[30] NISIOBĘCKA, A. *Z Lens...*, pp. 269–281.

[31] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021.

[32] Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimonies of Ł. D., correspondence of 6 August 2021 and 10 October 2021; Personal archives of Aneta Nisiobęcka, Testimony of Ma. P., correspondence of 5 July 2021; Personal archives of Maryna Pawlik, Testimony of M. P., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dnqjtb4x5I>, Downloaded on 16 December 2021; Personal archives of Agnieszka Kulesa, Testimonies of W. Sz. of 12 July 2018 (Bolesław) and 14 July 2018 (Bukowno); JAROSZ, Dariusz – PASZTOR, Maria. *Robineau, Bassaler i inni. Z dziejów stosunków polsko-francuskich 1944–1954*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Marszałek, 2001.

[33] NISIOBĘCKA, A., *Z Lens...*, pp. 307–316.

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[37] Personal archives of Maryna Pawlik, Testimony of M. P., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dnqjtb4x5I>, Downloaded on 16 December 2021.

[38] Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Gdańsku (Archives of Institute of National Remembrance in Gdańsk, hereinafter referred only as AIPN Gd), AIPN Gd, 0120/79, Indictment against S. P., son of J. P., accused on the basis Article 7 of the Decree of 12 June 1946, no date, fol. 21–25; AIPN Gd, Judgment of the Military District Court on 28 December 1951, fol. 29–32.

[39] AIPN Gd, Judgment of the Military District Court on 28 December 1951, fol. 29–32.

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