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*Kostrzyn upon Odra in the transformation process of political and socio-economic situation in the years 1989 – 2013*

Paweł Gondek's doctoral thesis describes the changes that took place in Kostrzyn in the years 1989-2013. This time interval was chosen deliberately in order to thoroughly show a process of transformation that was made in Kostrzyn in terms of political transformation, social and economic.

As the main objective of the work the author included: analysis of the decision making processes in government at every level, a description of the role of the local community, cross-border partnerships, foreign investments and geopolitical transformation that has taken place in the once insignificant town, and today's economic and cultural power in the Lubuski region. Additional objectives of work are: comparison of social and economic processes that took place in Kostrzyn post 1946 with processes that occurred after 1989, an answer to the question - how the opening of border crossing influenced the dynamics of city development, growth Kostrzyn's entrepreneurship among residents, increase in crime, smuggling and the overall safety level of the city, the analysis of relations with partner cities, presenting economic changes that have taken place in Kostrzyn after 1989, and to show the correlation between the process of Polish integration with the European Union and Kostrzyn's border position.

The topic of the thesis, objectives and research problems taken determined the selection of research methods. The author has applied the dissertation historical method, the systemic method, the institutional and legal decision-making and the comparative method.

The first chapter describes the history of the city since its inception up until 1989 year. For most of that time, the city was German. During its history it was repeatedly conquered, burned, destroyed. Each time it was rebuilt and strengthened. The greatest destruction took place at the beginning of 1945, when it Kostrzyn was completely destroyed by the Soviet army. After World War II the city was in Polish hands. Kostrzyn became a border town. Abandoned and destroyed. Its first inhabitants were the soldiers, railwaymen and postmen.

The town revived thanks to the restoration of Kostrzyn Cellulose and Paper Factory. Railway, numerous large stationed troops, opening of the border crossing, local trade as well as opening of the special economic zone - later affected on the development of the town.

In the next part, the author described the local elections, parliamentary and presidential elections. Kostrzyn is a town that really trusts their authorities. This made it possible to realize a number of controversial projects such as Woodstock Festival.

In the third chapter was described the town's economy. Thanks to industry development, border crossing, local bazaar, beneficial location and well-functioning local authorities the town has become one of the richest in region. Kostrzyn borough is richer and more developed than even the neighbouring German district of Seelow.

The fourth chapter presents the transformation of social life. It describes the labour market, demography, social assistance, health care, public safety and the activities associated with several floods that occurred in Kostrzyn in the described time.

The fifth chapter is devoted to the education, culture, sport and recreation. The author described the education, community centre activities, libraries, museums, sport events and tourism. In the last chapter Kostrzyn has been described as a European city. An important role is played by the international activity of the town, Kostrzyn's participation in the Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina, launch tourist activities in the old town, and cooperation in the partnership towns.

Important for the thesis was the current state of the research in this area. The most important literature publications include books by Alicja Kłapoczek „Kostrzyńskie klimaty – powojenne lata polskiego Kostrzyna oraz Kostrzyńskie dekady 1960-201”. The author has also published an earlier book „Kostrzyńskie pejzaże – powojenne dzieje nadodrzańskiego miasta”.

Analysis of the ancient Kostrzyn's history and New March of Brandenburg region were published by authors such as Wolfgang Damian Bryll in „Kustrin – Kostrzyn sięgając w przeszłość (ed. with Bogusław Mykietów Scientific, 2008)”, or in „Bracia spod znaku trzech globusów na Ziemi Lubuskiej, Liczebność Kostrzyńskiej Łoży Masońskiej w latach 1811-1935”. Bogusław Mykietów, Katarzyna Sanok, Marcei Tureczek (ed.), focused in detail in one of his works on the history of the ancient fortress in “Kustrin – Kostrzyn – z dziejów miasta i twierdzy (2007)” and “De Oppido et Castello (2004)”. A similar description of the fortress made Mariusz Wojciechowski in „Twierdza Kostrzyn Przeszłość i terażniejszość twierdzy Kostrzyn (2004)”.

Valuable work describing the history of Kostrzyn Upon Oder until 1989 is a book edited by the late historian Jerzy Marczewski “Kostrzyn nad Odrą – dzieje dawne i nowe”. It is a huge work published by the Poznan Western Institute in 1990.

In order to present the historical background proved to be useful German-language publications which are showing the fate of the pre-war Kostrzyn, including a four-cycle

primarily "Gesprache mit ehemaligen Kustriner. Uber Kustrin, Vertreibung und Neuanfang in Kustrin-Kitz und anderswo (2004)", by S. Neubauer.

In the dissertation have been used materials held by the National Archives in Gorzow Wielkopolski, Archives of the City of Kostrzyn, Archives of the Border Guard in Szczecin, Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance and verbal relations officials and regionalists.