

## **Part IV. Regionalism and Regionalisation**

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### **Region, regionalisation, regionalism**

#### **Introduction**

The region, regionalisation and regionalism are at present the matters of mounting interest in Poland. Regionalisation has become a major political problem and is used as a fashionable political watchword. Its implementation is supposed to be a crucial element of the reform of the political, social and economic systems of Poland because of the changes it would introduce in the territorial organisation of the State.

In Europe, too, interest in regionalisation has been growing as a result of two conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, there is advancing integration and elimination of interstate barriers; on the other, separatism, nationalism and ethnic and cultural differences have been on the increase. This strengthens the role of regional and local communities and their self-government.

The interest in these topics is not always accompanied by the knowledge of their theoretical foundations and a deeper reflection on them. This, however, is indispensable both in the research on regions and regionalisation as well as in discussions about them and the formulation of programmes of changes in spatial structures.

This is the aim of the present article to present an outline of the theoretical background of the notions of a region, regionalisation and regionalism.

## 1. The region

The notion of a region gives rise to disputes and reflections concerning its "essence", definition, characteristics, division and types, cognitive and practical roles, etc. An accurate diagnosis of this situation has been offered by Tinkler (1973: 5):

*"... the region as such suffers from an identity crisis. (...) Certainly, much of the controversy surrounding the regional concept in this century derives from a lack of a precise terminology or theoretical background and an inability to provide satisfactory answers to a number of crucial questions".*

It can be supplemented with a statement by Beaujeu Garnier (1976: 79):

*"Few terms can be as imprecise as the word region. It means all things to all men, and is used in both colloquial language and in the technical vocabulary of economists and administrators, in both geographical descriptions and tourist brochures".*

While the concept of a region is used in a variety of disciplines history, economy, socioeconomic statistics, sociology and ethnography, political science, ecology and town planning, it developed in geography, and in the 1960's it became a key notion of a new discipline called Regional Science (cf. Isard 1956, 1960; Chojnicki 1981; Funck 1991).

In geography, the assumption underlying the concept of a region was that the Earth's surface could be divided into areas, each having its own character. Thus, the concept of a region as a marked area provided a basis for dividing the Earth into regions and for their geographical description. Hence the development of the concept of a region as an area of a strictly defined category. It was then used to study and model spatial differences and to make various territorial divisions.

The concept of a region is variously understood and defined. Odum and Moore (1938) mentioned over forty definitions. Since that time a lot of others have been added. Opinions on what a region is cover a wide variety of definitions with different underlying aims and assumptions not always clearly realised. Moreover, defects in the definitions make it hard to systematise the problem and distinguish main concepts.

As a basis of such systematisation, we shall adopt the distinction made by Dzięwoński (1967) between:

- 1) a region as a tool of research,
- 2) a region as a tool for action, and
- 3) a region as an object of knowledge.

He gives the following justification for the distinction (1967: 34):

*"The term 'region' is commonly used (...) in three different, but mutually linked senses corresponding to three different notions of 'a part of an area'. In the first two of these senses the division of space into areas regions serves as a tool either for intended research, i.e. for cognitive purposes, or for the organisation of a specific social activity in space. In the third case, the very division of space is the object of study; in other words, we tend to distinguish regions parts of the space which we are dealing with, which we are investigating. (...) The three notions of a region thus defined are distinct, but in practice there are many interdependences among them. A division of space for the purposes of research will always eventually be reflected in its results. It offers a basis for spatial analysis which, after all, can never go beyond the initially adopted frame of reference, viz. this division. A division of space for the purposes of analysis is usually connected to a greater or lesser degree with an administrative division which, as we have stated already, represents the notion of 'a region as a tool for action'. On the other hand, a rational division into regions tools for action must accommodate, must be adjusted to, a real division of space, i.e. the division into regions objects of study".*

This categorisation will provide a basis for the characterisation of the concept of a region, but the categories will be modified. First of all, we do not accept the assumption that a geographical space, or any space understood as a substance is the reference of the concept of a region. We shall also present the categories in a different order, because it will facilitate a better use of various notional distinctions and assertions made in the course of the characterisation.

### 1.1. A region as a tool of research

The concept of a region as a tool of research or spatial analysis consists in the delineation of homogeneous areas having a feature or set of features relevant to the problem studied. In the words of James (1959: 10):

*"a region is an area of any size that is homogeneous in terms of certain criteria and that is distinguished from bordering areas by a particular kind of association of are ally related features. The region is a device for illuminating the factors of a problem which otherwise would be less clearly understood".*

Thus, the basic conditions an area must satisfy to be regarded as a region are:

- 1) its homogeneity in terms strictly specified criteria of its delimitation, and
- 2) the relevance of the criteria to the problem being solved.

An additional condition is proposed sometimes, as does Whittlesey (1954: 30), namely, that the criteria should refer to spatially cohesive groupings of phenomena, but this condition has usually been disregarded.

This concept has been severely criticised on a charge of subjectivity and formalism. It is said to provide a basis for distinguishing an infinite number of various regions, each delimited by a different set of criteria. This is the kind of criticism levelled by Dzierwoński (1957: 722), who claims that

*"the notion of a region as a tool for economic-geographical analysis, as an element which the researcher fixes as his needs dictate (i.e. more or less arbitrarily), has a formal*

*character. The use of the notion of a region as a tool of analysis practically boils down to a territorial grouping of observed facts".*

However, as Wróbel (1965: 17) notes, the selection of criteria for delimiting a region

*"is closely connected with the aim of research; hence, for the fixed aim the choice of the criteria is not 'more or less arbitrary', because only one set of the most significant criteria is pertinent (at least theoretically, that is, given a satisfactory body of knowledge on the matter involved and free availability of data)".*

The notion of the homogeneity of a region, in spite of the objections it had raised, has proved to be a very fertile and, in a broad interpretation, has provided a basis for distinguishing two categories of regions: uniform and nodal. In Whittlesey's (1954: 3637) original words,

*"Uniform regions are so thorough. The uniformity is not complete, for there is always a certain range of characteristics permitted by the criteria, and there are irrelevant differences which are disregarded. But within the limits set by the criteria, regions of this kind are uniform. A climatic region is an example. If it is a multiple-feature region, its uniformity is defined in terms of the association of features. Nodal regions are homogeneous with respect to internal structure or organisation. This structure includes a focus, or foci, and a surrounding area tied to the focus by lines of circulation".*

The concept of uniform regions (also called zonal or scalar) was a starting-point of studies of the spatial differences in various social, economic and natural phenomena and gave rise to the delimitation of uni- and multivariate regions, e.g. agricultural, industrial, tourist regions, etc. Attempts were also made to divide Poland into uniform multivariate regions zonal regions (cf. Czyż 1971).

The concept of nodal regions turned out to be of particular interest. A nodal region is defined as a set of spatial units linked by a network of various mutual interactions and couplings with the main settlement

centre (a town or a group of towns), the boundaries of which determine the range of these links. The links may be services, commuting to work, etc.; they shape the region of a town or urban agglomeration. However, the concept of nodal regions has departed from its assumptions and turned into the principal model of a region in a structural approach.

Apart from this "classic" approach to the region in terms of homogeneity, there appeared a concept of a region as a class of areas. This latter concept, of a region as a class of areas or a spatial class brought into being as a result of a division of geographical (economic) space or a grouping of spatial units, was formulated by Grigg (1965: 481). However, not every spatial class is a region. Only "individuals" possessing their own combinations of features unique in space, can be regions (Chojnicki, Czyż 1973: 13). Proposals are also put forward to extend the notion of a region so as to embrace various types of spatial classes (cf. Parysek 1982: 146). This has brought about a shift of focus from the "essence" of regions to their delimitation, that is, to their spatial typology and regionalisation.

## 1.2. A region as a concrete object

The concept of a region as a concrete object is an expression of the traditionally strong realistic standpoint in geography. According to Wróbel (1965: 8), in geographical literature

*"one can find many statements expressing the thesis that geographical regions (or 'landscapes') are actually single parts of a 'whole' having their own 'form, structure and function'; the assertion often repeated in this context was that geographical regions were 'organisms' more or less resembling living organisms".*

This approach is summarised succinctly by Dumolard (1980: 21), who says: *"regions exist outside scholars; they must discover them, not create them".*

The very concept of a region as a concrete object has, unfortunately, often been formulated in an ambiguous and metaphorical manner. Skipping its various formulations, we shall restrict ourselves to its presentation in a structural systems approach.

The structural systems approach allows the fullest grasp of the complexity and the many aspects of a region as a concrete object. It is based on the assumptions of the systems approach, which has recently come to the fore in the categorisation and interpretation of complex wholes particularly difficult to distinguish, just as the region is, and their conceptualisation.

Systems formulations of the region have found expression in several models of its reference. They include:

- 1) spatial models of the regional economy presented by Lösch (1954), Isard (1960, 1969), Domański (1990) and others;
- 2) socio-ecological models of a region (e.g. Nira 1990);
- 3) models of an urban region (Wilson 1981); and
- 4) socio-territorial models of a region (Chojnicki 1988, Murphy 1991).

When characterising these models, the focus shifts to their different aspects: spatial-economic, ecological, development, or nodal structure. On this basis there emerges a holistic conception of the reference of a region in the structural systems approach. It can be presented as follows.

A region is a socio-territorial subsystem of a country. As any concrete system it is characterised by a specific composition, surroundings and structure (cf. Chojnicki 1988). The composition of a region, besides the human community that occupies, uses and controls a specific area of the earth, i.e. a specific territory, includes also the cultural and technical infrastructure in the form of a settlement system located in a given geographical environment. The surroundings of a region consist of a set of regions as subsystems of the same order with which it is linked by interactions. We can distinguish internal surroundings, i.e. a set of regions of the same country (the regional system of this country), and external surroundings, i.e. regions belonging to other countries with which it is connected. The structure of a region is made up of relational, sectoral and spatial structures. The relational structure of the region can be subdivided into internal and external. The internal one embraces the whole of social, transformational and ecological interactions binding elements and complex components of the region; its external structure

embraces its interregional links. The sectoral structure consists of activity subsystems fulfilling specialised functions, e.g. the industrial subsystem (which embraces a set of interlinked industrial enterprises), the agricultural subsystem, etc. The spatial structure of the region embraces territorial subsystems of a lower order: sub-regional and local.

The identity, or referential distinctness, of a region is determined by the following elements:

- (1) the nodal structure of the settlement system,
- (2) a high level of social, economic and cultural integration,
- (3) a high level of self-organisation, and (4) the nature of the region's closure and boundaries. Let us comment briefly on each of them.

Re (1): The nodal structure of the settlement system with a main urban centre or agglomeration and a network of lower-order centres is the main factor shaping internal links, or couplings. They are generated and polarised by a hierarchical system of towns containing various infrastructure facilities and fulfilling various production and service functions. Their range of impact defines the area of the region.

Re (2): The integration of the region rests on three types of links: socio-cultural, economic, and political. These links can be registered in people's consciousness or take an institutional or material form. The community consciousness and the positive evaluation of the community's specific properties, especially economic as well as civilising and cultural activity, are significant factors of the integration. Apart from them, an essential role is played by economic links in the spheres of production and services affecting the standard of living of the community and its economic development. A major role in political links may be played by ethnic and national aspects.

Re (3): The level of self-organisation of the region as a social-territorial system is defined by the scope of developmental problems solved and the influence on its socioeconomic life. The basic components that define it are:



- 1) the development of the region's own economic base (industrial and service enterprises, banks, etc.),
- 2) the effectiveness of socioeconomic activity, and
- 3) the development of self-government.

Re (4): The region's closure means neither its self-sufficiency nor isolation, but a specific network of internal links and a system of its distinctive properties. In this approach the boundaries of the region are fuzzy; they are fluid zones of impact. In the terminology of Gale and Atkinson (1979: 94), they are nonarithmetic, which "is meant to imply a state of flux, indeterminacy, and context dependency; they are neither crisp nor do they (necessarily) imply a completely partitioned set of territories".

### **1.3. A region as a tool for action**

Let us recall that in Dzięwoński's (1967: 94) conception these regions are tools for organising a social activity in space. Thus, this concept of a region refers to an area which is a unit of the territorial organisation of a State. Hence, it can be called a region of territorial organisation.

The territorial organisation of a country is a single or multilevel system of territorial units into which it is divided, mostly to facilitate administrative performance. The system has two dimensions: horizontal and vertical, which gives it a complex hierarchical structure.

There are two kinds of division in the territorial organisation of a country: general (public) and special administration. Accordingly, we can distinguish administrative and special regions.

The concept of an administrative region refers to decentralisation of the activity of general, or public, administration in a territorial dimension. Hence, these regions are territorial units of a specific level (rank) the authorities of which are endowed with some power to act towards subjects residing on their territory. Depending on the authorities' scope of competence, their functions and way of nomination, the regions can be divided into those of government and self-government administration.

Regions of government administration are units of the highest and medium levels (like voivodships and poviats) which serve primarily to decentralise the power of the State in the field of management. This category of regions is presented by Muir (1983: 132) in the following way:

*"Administrative regions:*

- (a) are territorial units with well defined boundaries;*
- (b) have been inaugurated by central government and designated as functional regions to be used in the performance of one or more administrative services;*
- (c) are distinct from the local government and (should they exist) federal division of the state in which they are found;*
- (d) have administrations with clearly defined terms of reference and which occupy a specified niche in the overall system of territorial organisation".*

Self-government regions, in turn, are the units of a lower or the lowest level of the territorial division, the authorities of which are independent of the government administration and endowed with power to act in matters relating to local and supra-local "problems". The very concept of local regions depends on the crystallisation of the character and functions of self-government and its authorities. It assumes different forms at the local level (self-government of towns and communes) and the supra-local one (associations of towns and communes). Different countries have different types of the territorial organisation of self-government and different relations between self-government and State authorities.

It is hard to present all the complexity and complication of this matter in a short outline. In principle, it is customarily assumed that the higher levels of division are connected with the activity of the State authorities, while the lower ones with self-government ones. This may be an expression of two forms of the democratisation process central and regional-local.

The notion of a region as a unit of the territorial organisation of a country assumes a different meaning in the case of a federal state. Without going into details, let us state that attempts at a definition of

an "autonomous region" in the territorial structure of Poland require a shift of the ground on which such considerations are based to that of the nature of the political system of the State.

For the purposes of some social and economic activities it is necessary to use different units, not coinciding with the administrative division, viz. special regions. They include: electoral districts, church dioceses, electric power districts, railway management districts, state forests districts, water economics districts, etc.

We should add at this point that it is impossible to adjust some divisions into special regions to the administrative one. Nevertheless, we should tend to minimise the number of special divisions. It is a condition of an efficient management of the economy in its territorial aspect.

## **2. Regionalisation**

Regionalisation is the delimitation of regions on the basis of certain methods of research procedure. It can, however, be understood not only as an activity aiming at establishing a specific regional division, but also as a concrete regional division, i.e. a result of this activity. Regionalisation as a research activity and as its product are complementary notions, hence an analysis of one requires reference to the other. In research practice the first meaning of regionalisation (the very act of division) is thought to be primary, and the other secondary.

In turn, each regionalisation procedure requires the adoption of a specific concept of a region and satisfaction of the conditions it imposes on the research activity.

In the present work the starting-point is provided by three basic concepts of a region with their corresponding regionalisation procedures:

- (1) analytical-cognitive,
- (2) structural, and
- (3) practical.

### 2.1. Analytical-cognitive regionalisation

Analytical-cognitive regionalisation follows from the understanding of a region as a tool of spatial analysis. Its aim is to reveal homogeneous areas in terms of phenomena under study. It consists in classification, typology and spatial generalisation.

The result of this approach is the spatial diversification of socioeconomic phenomena produced by various territorial divisions. As a result of this procedure we delimit e.g. regions of the standard of living in Poland, or regions of migration.

The analytical kind of regionalisation plays the same role as classification in natural science. The homogeneity in terms of phenomena in question and areal cohesion characterising a region allow it to be treated as a spatial class. Hence the regionalisation procedure can be regarded as an activity of distinguishing these classes, i.e. as spatial classification.

The concept of regionalisation as a form of classification is of crucial importance for devising an algorithm of regionalisation (cf. Domański 1964, Berry 1967, Wróbel 1967, Chojnicki 1970, Johnston 1970). What it is supposed to do is start with  $N$  basic spatial units having  $n$  number of features and determine a smaller number  $k$  of regions ( $k$ ) constituting spatially continuous classes of maximum homogeneity in terms of the given set of features. The methods used to achieve this goal are those of numerical taxonomy, i.e. statistical methods of classification of objects.

The algorithm of regionalisation consists of three basic operations:

- (1) the construction of a matrix of geographical information,
- (2) the estimation of similarity between basic spatial units, and
- (3) a regional grouping or division (cf. Chojnicki and Czyż 1973, Parysek 1982, Nowak 1990).

The starting point is the recognition of the system of basic spatial units. A basic unit is operational in character and usually corresponds to the smallest administrative unit on which there are official statistical data. The system of units is described by inalienable properties called attributes or relative features, i.e. ones referring to relations holding among the units. One should choose only those

features which are adequate to the purpose of regionalisation and significant for the maximisation of the fund of information about the basic units. The significance of the features is determined using statistical methods of multivariate analysis.

The estimation of similarity consists in evaluating the degree of multivariate similarity among the units using similarity functions. Similarity or dissimilarity is the criterion of the grouping or division made in accordance with two types of spatial classification. We can distinguish:

- (1) Typological classification by the criterion of homogeneity which produces discontinuous spatial classes called spatial types. They have a mosaic distribution and derive their names from the nature of phenomena, e.g. agricultural spatial types, demographic spatial types, etc.
- (2) Regional classification by the criteria of homogeneity and adjacency of basic units, leading to the delimitation of regions as homogeneous and spatially cohesive territories. Regions are unique spatial classes not only due to their geographical situation, but also due to the specific combination of phenomena (variables) they represent. This classification procedure produces a specified region, e.g. the north-eastern region of Poland.

Hence, the homogeneity of an area may be considered in terms of: (1) the similarity of attributes of the basic units, or (2) the degree of cohesion of links expressed by relative features of the basic units. This allows the distinction of homogeneous areas (zones) corresponding to the distribution patterns of phenomena, and nodal areas corresponding to the patterns of relations. Each of these concepts of areal homogeneity requires a specific delimitation procedure using specific classification methods.

The criterion of delimiting homogeneous regions is the similarity of basic units with relation to a number of features, expresses as value intervals. Within a similarity interval the whole of a region's area is treated as homogeneous. The delimitation of regions is a procedure grouping similar and adjacent units into spatial classes of the distribution of phenomena using taxonomic methods.

The criterion of the delimitation of a nodal region is socio-economic links among the basic spatial units which are symptoms of their functional complementarity. Relations holding in the system of spatial units can be asymmetrical, especially in the situation when only one kind of links (i.e. one relative feature) is taken into consideration. This asymmetry of relations derives from the domination of some spatial units over others, or from their subordination to others, hence it is a manifestation of hierarchy in the system of units. The set of spatial units containing units of various hierarchical orders organised around one of the highest order, or node, constitutes a nodal region.

The delimitation of nodal regions consists in establishing a continuous set of spatial units which display stronger links among themselves (i.e. internal links) than with units not belonging to this set (i.e. external links), and in the analysis of the hierarchical order of the units, i.e. their respective roles in the system of relations.

To delimit nodal regions, use is made of taxonomic methods of hierarchical grouping, graph methods, principal components analysis (Q technique), and Q analysis (cf. Czyż and Kotkowski 1987).

Thus, the delimitation of regions as tools of analysis consists in the "extension" of the procedure of regionalisation and distinguishing regions *ex post*.

## **2.2. Structural regionalisation**

The structural systems approach to the region as an object entails regionalisation which is a procedure aiming at its recognition in the complex structure of socioeconomic reality. Since in this approach the region is a concrete territorial-social system, it is not merely an area, but a territorial whole distinguishable from its surroundings because of its internal links. Hence, in its delimitation use can be made of the concept of a region as a system of links (i.e. a nodal region).

Thus, a nodal system of links is a crucial element of the model of a structural region. The nodal system is the skeleton of the region; it embraces the principal urban centre and lower order settlement units among which the links hold. The basic characteristic of a region as a

system of links is its closure. The degree of closure is closely associated with the problem of separating regions from one another, i.e. of establishing their boundaries.

The boundaries of a region are the result of its integration produced by strong internal links, social and economic. The boundaries, however, are not clearly defined and are rather fluid zones of influence.

The delimitation of regions as territorial systems consists in:

- 1) determining their hierarchical systems of links, and
- 2) testing their closure.

When delineating regions, it is assumed *ex ante* that an area is a region, and this assumption is verified through the identification of its system of links and the degree of closure. This principle of the research procedure offers the possibility of a positive verification of the system studied via testing successive variants of the initial hypothesis (cf. Dziewoński 1967, Kaczmarek and Parysek 1986).

When delimiting a system of links, one can make use of the methods of delimitation of nodal regions mentioned previously. The measure of the region's closure is the ratio of intra to interregional links, while multivariate analysis of variance can be the method verifying the closure.

There remains an important problem of establishing and selecting measures of social and economic links in a region. For example, Domański (1970) defined the degree of closure of the Konin-Łęczyca-Inowrocław region using production flows. Among social and economic links, those usually adopted as the most significant measures of concrete regional relations are journeys to work and migration, because they are diagnostic features indicative of a wider set of social and economic relations. The choice of these measures is also facilitated by the availability of statistical data. Regional relations are also defined on the basis of theoretical variables from the gravity and potential models.

A particularly valuable measure is the population potential (Chojnicki 1966). It shows a close correlation with a lot of social and economic phenomena, and its use means the introduction of a systems approach to regionalisation. Analysis focuses on the configuration of links in the form of a population potential surface estimated

at the scale of the regional system of a country. Regional peaks of the potential enable the identification of regional nodes in the form of higher order towns. Concentric patterns of isolines near a peak correspond to systems of links. In this way it is possible to determine the number and locations of regional centres and their range of impact.

The boundaries of regions-territorial systems are fuzzy. The assignment of marginal areas to particular regions is not clear cut and gradable. The boundaries are not those of a disjunctive division, but are sets of points of an estimated degree of belonging. The assignment of contact (marginal) areas to a given region can be carried out using L.A. Zadeh's fuzzy set theory (cf. Leung 1985).

The boundary of a region as a limit of influence of two regional nodes can also be delineated on the basis of individual preferences of residents concerning their regional belonging, i.e. by reference to their regional consciousness.

### **2.3. Practical regionalisation**

Practical regionalisation is a procedure aiming at establishing or testing territorial divisions for the purposes of practical action, i.e. the formation of the territorial organisation of a State.

According to Wróbel (1965), the division into organisational regions requires the satisfaction of two groups of conditions. The first, of internal ones, refers to the relation between the given territorial division and the existing regional structure. In the words of Wróbel (1965: 62):

*"These conditions need not consist in the statement that the boundaries of the division should map those of some regional systems; more frequently they can be formulated negatively, i.e. as a condition forbidding the division to cross certain systems, or 'cores' of these systems, that is, areas in which the relevant features of space are especially distinct (e.g. it is hard to imagine a division into larger administrative units which would separate the groups of towns of the Upper Silesian Industrial District)".*



An organisational region should be adjusted to the range of nodal systems of socioeconomic phenomena, because it facilitates practical activity.

The other group of conditions is external in relation to the existing regional structure. They refer to the size of an area, its shape, an a priori definition of its regional centre, certain regionally aggregated magnitudes, e.g. the number of the population, and its economic potential. External conditions derive from the assumed functions of the territorial division and the necessity to accommodate the principles of good management and administration, as well as the satisfaction of people's needs with a minimum of effort.

Among external criteria, the conditions especially important for the administrative division are that of an equal "size" of units and that of their minimum economic potential. The latter is significant in a free market economy in which local budgets receive only meagre subsidies from the central one.

As Wróbel (1965: 39) states:

*"In simple cases, like e.g. the delimitation of areas to be served by several wholesale warehouses belonging to a single enterprise and located in various places, its criteria can be purely external. This is so because they are described by a set of equations with the help of which we can find extreme values of certain quantities, like transport costs, distance totals, etc." However, in the majority of regional divisions for practical purposes, and always when such a complex task as a division of a country for administrative purposes is involved, the criteria employed are both external and internal (cf. Kukliński 1974, 1982).*

One thing that should be added here is that relations between a region of territorial organisation and a region-territorial system are bidirectional. A consequence of a division into administrative units regions for economic management is the development of socioeconomic links conducive to the formation of nodal regional structures. Thus, the division of Poland into 17 voivodships in the years 1950-1975 adapted older regional forms and imposed specific spatial framework of development on economic and social life. In

the conditions of the relative stability of this division there developed nodal systems of socioeconomic links within particular voivodships. The result was a degree of coincidence of the division into voivodships and the system of regions-territorial systems. Simultaneously, however, socioeconomic development led to the formation of ever more complex spatial socioeconomic structures and, in consequence, to an increasing diversification of regional structures. This, in turn, has become one of the reasons necessitating an alteration of the administrative division.

In accordance with the adopted division of regions of territorial organisation into administrative and special, different procedures of territorial division should be distinguished. When delimiting administrative regions two strategies are employed. The first is a two-step procedure, starting with the recognition of the country's regional structure and the degree of its diversification and integration. Then structural regionalisation is transformed into one carried out in terms of administrative units and based on additional, arbitrary criteria.

The other strategy consists in the verification of a hypothetical system of administrative regions. An administrative unit established *ex ante* is tested for its conformity with the actual system of socioeconomic links. The role of the hypothetical system may be played by

- (1) the existing administrative division, or
- (2) a standard, regular and geometric, system defined in terms of the models of the spatial organisation of settlement and services presented in the theories of W. Christaller and A. Lössch. In the first case the results of studies only provide a basis for a possible correction of the administrative division.

From the methodological point of view, the delimitation of administrative regions is carried out with the help of taxonomic methods, multivariate analysis (analysis of variance, discriminatory analysis), and models of Markov chains (cf. Cliff et al. 1975, Chojnicki and Czyż 1978, Czyż 1981).

The procedure involved in territorial divisions for special purposes is different; it is based on a single criterion or several ones. The problem

of the delimitation of special regions based on a single criterion consists in finding an optimum solution. For example, the delimitation of school districts on the assumption of transport cost minimisation boils down to solving a transport problem using linear programming (cf. Yeates 1963). The procedure based on multiple criteria is more complicated. For instance, the determination of urban constituencies takes place in two stages and embraces regionalisations by a single criterion (the number of voters, the shape of the district, the indivisibility of town limits) and finding an optimum system of constituencies for each regionalisation variant. When there is no correlation among the criteria features, the procedure does not allow for an optimum solution with relation to the many criteria, but adopts a compromise (Johnston and Rossiter 1981).

Besides optimisation models solved by linear programming methods, in the procedure of the delimitation of special regions use is also made of methods of measuring the effectiveness of the shapes of spatial units, centrographic measures, and taxonomic methods (cf. Massam and Goodchild 1971, Haggett et al. 1977).

The boundaries of administrative and special regions must be well defined. They must be distinct and disjunctive territorial units with boundaries established in a suitable legal act. Boundaries are the starting point; by marking out a territory they shape its internal links.

### **3. Regionalism**

The notion of regionalism refers both to the social consciousness dominant in the community of a region and its opinion creating circles, as well as to its economic, cultural and political activity.

Underlying regional consciousness is the sense of links of a human community with the territory it inhabits which is sometimes called regional identity. However, the attitude of the community to the territory is not the only constituent of regional consciousness; it also comprises interpersonal relations on this territory. The bonds people feel with their area and specific habits, philosophies of life and desires associated with them constitute a psychosocial link among the residents and make them aware of their common existence.

Regional consciousness is a form of social consciousness expressing a sense of uniqueness of one's own territory and one's own society.

It produces the conviction that all individuals of the regional community share values associated with the whole of the community.

The state of regional consciousness is characterised by a set of convictions or opinions saying that

- (1) the community has specific economic, cultural and political properties,
- (2) these properties, or at least some of them, are judged by the community to be positive and therefore treated as values which should be maintained and reinforced, and
- (3) it is necessary to pursue those activities in the diverse fields of social life which implements those values and increase its independence.

Thus, regionalism is an exponent of various properties specific to the human community inhabiting a given area and defining its distinctness. In this sense it defines the region's uniqueness.

Regionalism manifests itself in an ideological movement declaring its programmes and in the tendency to institutionalise this movement and on this basis to devote to this end all activities in the various fields of social life, including the enlargement of the scope of self-government.

On the one hand, regionalist movements and tendencies are a response to excessive centralisation and cultural and economic uniformity, and on the other they derive from cultural and ethnic differences reinforced by differences in economic and civilisation levels and opportunities for economic development.

The political, social and economic breakthrough of the 1990's in Poland has also strongly animated regionalist feelings. Regionalism has two aspects: cultural-historical and organisational-reformatory. The first is traditional in character and results from cultural and historical differences. The other manifests itself in the tendency to institutionalise regions as large voivodships in a new administrative division of the country and to provide them with a degree of autonomy, mainly economic.

Regionalism assumes different forms due to a variety of factors at play in particular regions and their inter-twinings. The consequences

of regionalism differ in the perspective of the country and that of Europe (the continent). In the national perspective regionalism is the basis on which develops the unique character and 'identity' of a region, hence the basis for the development of regions as concrete territorial systems and the territorial structure of a country, and on the other hand it provides the basis for increasing their self-government, or even for the struggle for economic and political autonomy. Striving for more economic independence or autonomy is characteristic of regions with relatively strong economies which have more opportunities for effective investment and launching new economic and technical enterprises on their territories. Hence, one of the components of regional consciousness is the opinion that the means produced in an area should also be invested there. However, despite many advantages connected with regional effectiveness and multipliers, this can lead to the fossilisation of the existing disproportions in the development of particular regions and to the reinforcement of the inertia of the existing regional structure of the country.

The consequences of enlargement of regional self-government and autonomy are clearly different in the political-administrative aspect. Putting aside reflections on the advantages of increasing the scope of self-government not only at the local but also the regional level, let us note that it stimulates initiative and activity, especially in those domains where local or regional syndromes have a decisive influence.

Regional autonomy, especially when resting on separate legal and political foundations, is conducive to the disintegration of the State system and diminishes its political and economic resistance and independence. In some cases, e.g. ethnic autonomy, it may release centrifugal tendencies, which may have destabilising effects especially in the situation of some East and Central European countries. A full realisation of the programme of autonomous regions also leads to the transformation of a unitary State into a federal one.

In the European perspective the consequences of regionalism manifests themselves in the ever increasing role of the regional scale over the national (State) one in the processes of society diversification and integration. The decreasing differentiating role of the State and its boundaries in Western Europe due to integration has made regions more important in the formation of Europe's spatial structure and given them a new dimension (cf. Kukliński 1990). A lot of new regional structures have

been emerging, e.g. trans-boundary regions. This, however, is an issue calling for a separate and competent study.

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