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### *Beyond the National and the Cosmopolitan: Politics of Memory in a Central European City at the End of the Transition Period*

After the fall of communism, the city of Wrocław in south-western Poland has undergone a radical change in terms of its local collective memory. What distinguishes it from other Central European cities that share similar experience of post-communist transformation is that the past of Wrocław is often seen as uniquely complex, since the city has changed its ownership and dominant cultures many times over the course of centuries. The variety of interpretations and reinterpretations of the past, allowed by its apparent ambiguity, provokes efforts to renegotiate the past, but also leads to conflicts on many different levels (e.g. textual, political). Therefore, a thorough study of the whole local field of the politics of memory is required.

I follow two interrelated lines of investigation. In the first place, I provide a detailed description of main agents involved in the politics of memory in the city, that is, institutional and individual subjects that formulate or reproduce narratives about the city's past. Some of those agents are connected in a more or less formal way with local authorities, other may be considered autonomous. They also differ in scale, type and quantity of available resources, area of focus, etc. Furthermore, I point out various mutual references and relations between agents, both positive (leading to cooperation and reciprocal affirmation) and negative (leading to dispute and conflict). In the second place, I present competing narratives of Wrocław's past as a whole or at least for its particularly important periods, underlining the most striking differences and similarities, related commemorative gestures, as well as their effects on identity and legitimization. It is possible to compare local narratives of memory with reference to more general questions which arise around the processes of identity formation in Central and Eastern Europe, such as the alleged decline of national identities.

The basic assumption is to avoid two risks that are implied in the aforementioned lines of investigation. Firstly, when accounting for the process of memory transformation in postcommunist Central and Eastern Europe, one should not abuse the general, and somewhat oversimplified, notion of the democratization of memory. Although a certain democratization and decentralization of the memory discourse is a fact, there are numerous other processes that have to be taken into consideration as contributing to the present state of memory politics. Secondly, even though the conflict between nationalist and universal (cosmopolitan) threads remains relevant, a case study cannot simply consider it as the only, or even the key opposition that enables us to interpret the narratives of memory. Further examination is necessary. In my analyses, I draw on various theoretical concepts developed mainly in

sociological and cultural studies of collective memory. This case study is based on recent empirical research conducted in Wrocław.